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## Organisational Policy – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

### Purpose

At Afford, diversity, equity and inclusion are central to who we are and how we work. We are committed to creating a workplace where all employees feel respected, valued, safe and supported to contribute and succeed.

We recognise that a diverse workforce strengthens our organisation and helps us better reflect and support the communities we serve. Diversity includes the many backgrounds, experiences, perspectives and characteristics that make each person unique. Inclusion means creating an environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging and has equitable access to opportunities, resources and support.

Afford promotes a workplace culture that values equal opportunity, accessibility, respect and inclusion, and is free from discrimination. We are committed to identifying and removing barriers so all employees feel included and supported to thrive.

### Scope

This policy applies to all Board Directors, Board Committee members, officers, employees, volunteers, students, contractors, consultants, suppliers, and other persons that act on behalf of our organisation such as agencies or brokers.

### Definitions

**Board Director** is any person who is a Director of the Board of Afford

**Board Committee member** is any person who a Board Director of the Board of Afford and a member of a Board Committee and any person who attends a Board Committee as a subject matter expert.

**CEO** means Chief Executive Officer

**Director** means Chief Operations Officer (COO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Brand & People Officer.

**Client** is a person/people who use our organisation's services.

**Employees** are people who work for our organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

**Volunteer** is a person who works for our organisation in an unpaid capacity.

**Student** is a person who is undertaking a placement with our organisation through a formal arrangement with an educational institution.

**Contractor** is a person who is engaged by our organisation to work on a short-term contract, to provide a body of work, engaged through a labour hire company to fill vacant shifts.



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**Diversity** refers to the range of differences among people, including but not limited to disability, age, gender, cultural background, language, lived experience, beliefs, and ways of thinking

**Equity** means recognising that people have different needs and circumstances and providing fair access to supports, adjustments, and opportunities so comparable outcomes can be achieved.

**Inclusion** is the active practice of creating environments where all people are respected, supported, and able to participate fully, have a voice, and feel a sense of belonging.

**Services** are the various supports we provide, irrespective of what type they are.

### Policy Statements

1. Afford will actively seek to represent, support, and reflect the rich diversity of the communities we serve, the clients we support, and our employees.
2. Afford will take an active role in promoting diversity and inclusion as a provider of disability services.
3. Afford is committed to equity by recognising that people have different circumstances, needs, and strengths, and may require different supports or adjustments to achieve fair and meaningful outcomes.
4. Clients and employees will be able to bring their unique, authentic selves and feel safe, secure, and supported.
5. Afford values consultation and diverse voices and will use this to inform, influence and enhance our decision making to improve the quality of our services and the experience of our employees.
6. Diversity can broaden the pool for recruitment of high-quality employees, enhance employee retention, improve our organisations brand and reputation, and foster a closer connection with and better understanding of our clients. It is important that we are able to attract, retain and motivate employees from the widest possible pool of talent. With this consideration, Afford will:
  - a. Take a human rights based approach to decision making, in accordance with our Human Rights Policy, and aim to develop and promote a workforce based on inclusion where individuals, irrespective of individuals gender, age, disability, ethnicity, marital or family status, mental health status, criminal history, religious or cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy and language, are respected, supported and provided with appropriate opportunities.
  - b. Aim for our Board and Management composition to reflect the diversity of our employees, clients, and communities in which we work.
  - c. Recognise the differing needs at different stages of life, e.g., study, family responsibilities and retirement. Therefore, we endeavour to support and



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- accommodate individual changing life needs so that our employees reach their full potential.
- d. Actively seek to create career and employment pathways, leadership training opportunities, and diverse leadership representation for employees in underrepresented groups.
  7. Afford will actively seek to recruit and retain a diverse workforce as part of our Recruitment and Selection Policies and Procedures, by proactively sourcing candidates from diverse and inclusive backgrounds as well as identifying qualities and backgrounds in teams that may be underrepresented.
  8. An Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement must be included in all job advertisements and have specific strategies and measures aimed at attracting candidates with particular attributes underrepresented within our organisation's workforce. All employees involved in the recruitment, selection and development of employees must undertake these duties in a way that supports inclusion and equal opportunity as outlined in this policy.
  9. Afford employees must ensure recruitment and selection processes across all levels are structured so that a diverse range of candidates are sourced and considered. This includes understanding how institutional barriers and unconscious bias affect people's employment opportunities, making the recruitment process accessible to all candidates by advertising positions both broadly and in specific publications, using professional recruitment services where required, and providing guidance on its recruitment processes.
  10. Afford will undertake reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process, role specifications and workplaces, wherever practicable, to facilitate recruitment and selection of diverse candidates. This includes, but is not limited to, adjustments to work environment, the scope and hours of available roles, role types themselves, and provision of adaptive equipment and technology.
  11. Afford's goal is to create a safe and respectful environment. We will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, vilification, and victimisation including where it is based on religious, political, or personal views. All employees are required to follow the Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy at all times.
  12. Afford will maintain commitment to gender diversity and the fundamental principle that gender identification is not a barrier to participate in our workforce, management, Executive or Senior Leadership teams, and our Board.
  13. Afford will maintain commitment to an inclusive workplace that embraces and promotes diversity as part of our culture and leading inclusive and accessible services. This



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involves supportive and inclusive policies and practices within our practices. Initiatives and areas of focus will include:

- a. Understand the visible and invisible barriers to access, inclusion and belonging in measurable ways.
- b. Measurement of key diversity indicators in line with best practice including but not limited to, culturally and linguistically diverse, gender identification, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, and disability.
- c. Grow the cultural awareness of our employees through induction, training and other programs promoting cultural awareness and diversity.
- d. An organisation Reconciliation Action Plan
- e. Diversity action groups formed and functional. We will hear the voice of our employees and clients and learn from experts to regularly update our thinking and practice.
- f. Share opportunities, experiences and expertise in the disability sector and community to accelerate and grow inclusion for people living with disability.
- g. Establish, growth and maintain partnerships and relationships with strategic alliances to promote the interests of culturally and linguistically diverse, gender diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people living with disability.
- h. Develop thought leadership and advocacy initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion internally and externally.

Afford views equity as an ongoing practice and commits to continuous learning, consultation, and improvement to ensure our services and workplace remain fair, inclusive, and responsive.

The Board will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy, including in relation Board diversity.

### Breach of Policy

Director or Board Committee member breaches will be dealt with by the Board Chair.

Employee breaches of this policy will be dealt with by the CEO.



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### Responsibilities

All Directors and Board Committee members must adhere to this policy.

The Board Chair must ensure Directors and Board Committee members understand and adhere to this policy and that the Board skills and experience matrix reflects the organisations policy positions.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and up to date, and the Chief Brand & People Officer will monitor the policy for effectiveness and compliance.

Where a position or organisational unit title changes or is no longer the title that appears in a policy document, and where a position and/or deliberative body named in the policy approval pathway has changed, the nearest appropriate equivalent body or position will have the same role and/or responsibility until that policy is updated.

### Associated Documents

[Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)

[Human Rights Policy](#)

[Recruitment and Selection Policies and Procedures](#)

### Exceptions

Any exception granted will require approval confirmed in writing via email by the CEO.

### Consultation

The following were consulted during the development of this policy:

Board

People and Culture Committee

Executive Leadership Team

Document Review Group

### Policy Owner

The owner of this policy is the Board.

### Policy Approval

This policy was approved by the Board.

