

Disability Discrimination Act Policy

Responsible Officer	Manager Corporate & Community Services	Policy Number	C:7
Date Approved:	11 August 2008	Council Resolution Number	554.1-11/8/08
Previous Revision Date:		Date of Next Review	
Applicable Legislation	Disability Discrimination Act 1992		

Policy Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to state Council's position in regards to the Disability Discrimination Act. This policy provides guidelines on how the Rural City of Murray Bridge will meet the requirements of the Act.

The existence of this policy will assist the Rural City of Murray Bridge in aiming to provide services and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities and their carers.

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, services or facilities, against people on the basis that they have, or may have, a disability. It also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis that one of their associates has, or may have a disability. The DDA holds precedence over other Federal and State legislation unless exempted in writing by the Federal Attorney General. It is a legal requirement of Council to respond to issues and complaints raised relating to access to services under the control of Council, pursuant to the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

The main objective of the DDA is to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the grounds of disability. It is designed to ensure that people with disabilities are not deprived of equal opportunity by stereotype, prejudice or misconception, or by unnecessary barriers or restrictions. The DDA requires that a person's disability should be taken into account only where it is relevant and fair to do so.

The objects of the Act are:

- (a) to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability in the areas of:
 - (i) work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport; and
 - (ii) the provision of goods, facilities, services and land; and
 - (iii) existing laws; and

- (iv) the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs; and
- (b) to ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and
- (c) to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

The DDA reinforces Council's general obligation not to treat a person with a disability less favourably than they would treat a person without a disability in similar circumstances. The DDA recognises that people with disabilities constitute a significant proportion of the local community and that they have a right to participate as fully as possible in the life of the community.

Policy Statement

The Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 has a particular relevance to a number of Council operations, namely:

- Access to Council owned and/or operated facilities used by the community;
- The provision of Council services;
- The purchase, sale and usage of Council land;
- Council Employment (including volunteers);
- Council contract management;
- The provision of Council information to the community; and
- The development of Council policies and procedures.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge is committed to ensuring, as far as practicable, that the community is accessible for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

Council interprets an accessible community as one in which all Council functions, facilities, and services are open and available to people with disabilities providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all other people in the community, where it is relevant and fair to do so.

Council recognises that people with disabilities are valued members of the community who make a variety of contributions to social, economic and cultural life within the Rural City of Murray Bridge. Council believes that a community that recognises its diversity and supports the participation of all its members makes for a richer community life.

Council is required, under the Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992, to work towards providing equity of access to services and facilities to all sectors of the Community, including people with disabilities. Council also recognises that full compliance with the intent of the DDA comes at a financial cost that cannot be easily achieved in the short term. Thus Council is committed to implementing the spirit and intent of the legislation by:

1. Promoting a positive image of people with disabilities.
2. Ensuring the needs of people with disabilities is recognised in the development, planning and delivery of Council services and facilities.
3. Providing facilities, services and assets that, as far as practicable, comply with Australian Standards and Codes and the objectives of the Disability Discrimination Act.
4. Ensuring that all Council Members, staff and volunteers are aware of and understand the needs of people with disabilities.

5. Acknowledging the right of people with disabilities to contribute to the social, political, economic and cultural life of the community.
6. Ensuring, as far as practicable, Council's relevant Corporate documents address the needs of people with disabilities, in accordance with the principles outlined in the DDA and this policy.
7. Establishing and maintaining a DDA Action Plan under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer which will be reviewed and revised in line with Council's Strategic Plan review every four years.
8. Reporting to Council and the community about the achievements of the Action Plan at least every year.

Post Implementation Action

Electronic PDF version will be kept on the Rural City of Murray Bridge web site for public to view.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in the month of May and at the first meeting of a Council following a periodic election. Council may revise or review this policy at any time.

Endorsed by Council on 11 August 2008