



# **AGE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**2021 to 2025**

## INTRODUCTION

North Sydney Council's *Age Management Plan* has been developed to provide strategies to guide the Council and its employees through workforce and demographic change, transforming the career experience of people of all ages and all stages to create their future. This document sits under the umbrella of Council's *EEO Management Plan 2021 – 2025*, with several strategies/actions linked to the KPIs.

Other legislation that has relevance when implementing the objectives within this plan:

- *Anti-Discrimination Act (NSW) 1977*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986*
- *Carer Recognition Act (NSW) 2010*
- *Local Government (State) Award*

Council believes that a diverse network of employees which truly reflect the community it services and represents, is better equipped to understand and meet the needs of our customers. Through the *EEO Management Plan*, it identifies women, members of racial minorities and persons with disabilities, matured aged and young people in the EEO target group.

The *Age Management Plan* is introducing specific strategies for matured aged workers, as well as other employees, and by doing so will help to mitigate the following risks:

- Career progression blockages and ceilings for staff in early to mid-career
- Productivity plateaus in late career
- Limited access to new ideas and skills
- Loss of critical skills and knowledge
- Escalating loss to retirement leading to high replacement cost of skilled employees in critical roles
- Impact on customer relations and legacy account knowledge
- Manager's reluctance to have crucial conversations about late career and transition to retirement plans with team members, leading to uncertainty regarding intentions
- Employees retiring prematurely or not retiring at all

Council intends to address both exit and retention of matured age workers, based on the role and the employee needs. To help Council attain this, this plan will drive:

- Targeted retention and attrition while realising the associated cost savings
- Identification and exchange of critical knowledge and reduction in risk
- Heightened engagement and productivity amongst mature aged workers – plus sending a strong cultural signal to future workforce generations that Council is a supportive and inclusive employer

Supporting strategies and policies:

- *Home Based Work Policy*
- *Phased Retirement Procedure*
- *Flexible Working Arrangement Guidelines*
- *Purchased Leave Procedure*
- *Health & Wellbeing Strategy*
- *Disability & Inclusion Plan*

The *Age Management Plan*, like the *EEO Management Plan*, incorporates the principals of quadruple bottom line in that it is not just the economic performance of the organisation but also the environmental and social performance and good governance. This contributes to the overall protections for the employee within the organisation and assists in demonstrating good governance and contributes to the cultural wellbeing of the organisation.

### DEFINITIONS

**ABS** means Australian Bureau of Statistics

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)** means all employment and promotion decisions are made based on merit – the skills and abilities of the candidate as measured against the inherent requirements of the position, regardless of personal characteristics.

**Disability** is defined under *the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)* as: total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions. total or partial loss of a part of the body. the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness. the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body.

**Discrimination** occurs when a person or a group of people is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics.

Discrimination laws protect people from discrimination based on:

- a disability, disease or injury, including work-related injury
- parental status or status as a carer, for example, because a person is responsible for caring for children or other family members
- race, colour, descent, national origin, or ethnic background
- age, whether young or old or because of age in general
- sex
- industrial activity, including being a member of an industrial organisation like a trade union or taking part in industrial activity, or deciding not to join a union
- religion
- pregnancy or breastfeeding
- sexual orientation, intersex status or gender identity, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, queer or heterosexual
- marital status, whether married, divorced, unmarried or in a de facto relationship or same sex relationship
- political opinion
- social origin
- medical record

**Direct** discrimination can be when a person or group is treated differently than another person or group in a similar situation because of a personal characteristic protected by law. For example, a worker is harassed and humiliated because of their race or a worker is refused training or promotion because they are "too old".

**Indirect** discrimination can occur when policies, rules and practices which appear neutral or impartial adversely affect a group or individual, thus reducing opportunities. For example, if an employer has a policy that refuses to allow staff to work part-time, people with children or family responsibilities may be disadvantaged.

**Phased Retirement** includes a broad range of employment arrangements that allow an employee who is approaching retirement age to continue working with a reduced workload, and eventually transition from full-time work to full-time retirement.

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**Objective 1 - Communication & Awareness**

Council will raise awareness through effectively communicating the concept of the Plan, the responsibilities of employees and council and options available, reporting on the progress of the Age Management Plan and actively demonstrating Council's commitment to achieving its objectives.

| STRATEGIES/ACTIONS   | RESPONSIBILITY                  | PROGRESS                          | TARGET DATE       |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Communicate the results of the Aging Workforce Insights Survey                                   | Human Resources                 | Completed – Email went to all NSC | July 2021         |
| Communicate the Age Management Plan to all employees via JCC                                     | Senior Staff<br>Human Resources |                                   | Quarter 4 - 21/22 |
| Overview of Age Management Plan is included in all Managers Inductions                           | Human Resources                 |                                   | Annually          |
| Provide information for all managers and supervisory staff on the Age Management Plan            | Human Resources                 |                                   | Quarter 4 - 21/22 |
| Identify ways to positively portray and support employees who opt for flexible work arrangements | MANEX                           |                                   | Annually          |
| Linked to: EEO Management Plan Objective 1   |                                 |                                   |                   |

**Objective 2 – Policy & Practices**

Develop opportunities for enhanced work-life balance and flexibility for staff transitioning to retirement. Develop and implement education programs to assist staff prepare for and understand the needs of an aging workforce.

| STRATEGIES/ACTIONS   | RESPONSIBILITY                          | PROGRESS            | TARGET DATE        |
|--|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| Invite comment and input during the development of Age Management Plan from employees via Staff Consultative Committee                 | Human Resources<br>SCC                  |                     | Quarter 4 – 2021/2 |
| Develop a Phased Retirement Procedure which is aligned to the Award.   | Human Resources                         |                     | Quarter 4 – 2021/2 |
| Develop a Flexible Working Arrangements Guidelines which is aligned with the Award, incl job share, part-time, home-based work         | Human Resources                         |                     | Quarter 4 – 2021/2 |
| Develop Purchased Leave Procedure which is aligned with Award  | Human Resources                         |                     | Quarter 4 – 2021/2 |
| Encourage employees to talk to supervisors/managers about any concerns they have about balancing work and family responsibilities      | Human Resources<br>Supervisors/Managers |                     | Annually           |
| Monitor exit interviews to identify and eliminate issues negatively impacting on transition to retirement and retention                | Human Resources                         | See EEO Objective 2 | Annually           |
| Regularly review Human Resource policies and procedures to ensure they are non-discriminatory, are supportive to all employment groups | Human Resources                         | See EEO Objective 2 | Annually           |
| Linked to: EEO Management Plan Objective 2; Matured Age Workforce Policy; LG State Award; DIAP 2.3, DIAP 2.4                           |   |                     |                    |

**Objective 3 - Recruitment & Transition**

Council will review current recruitment, appointment, promotion and transfer processes to ensure they are based on merit and comply with EEO principles.

| STRATEGIES/ACTIONS  | RESPONSIBILITY                       | PROGRESS   | TARGET DATE |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| Encourage job partnering between employees who are transitioning into retirement  | Human Resources Managers             |  | Annually    |
| Identify opportunities for job redesign to create 'special skill and knowledge' transfer roles to assist staff transition from supervisory/mgt roles where skill and knowledge transfer is critical to ensure future organisational capability                  | Human Resources<br>MANEX<br>Managers |  | Annually    |
| Consider the use of mature-age apprenticeships and traineeships as a means of providing employees with opportunities for career changes or retraining into new areas  | Human Resources<br>Managers          |  | Annually    |
| Develop program/s and/or partner with other stakeholders to attract young people to council – graduate program, entry level traineeships, Elisa Dixon Aboriginal, school-based apprenticeship, work placement.<br>Develop a Work experience Placement Guideline | Human Resources<br>Managers          | Research being conducted on what other LGA have in place | Annually    |
| Linked to: EEO Management Plan Objective 3; Flexible Working Arrangements; Mature Age Workforce Policy; Recruitment & Selection Policy; Work Placement; DIAP 2.4, DIAP 2.3, DIAP 2.7  |                                      |  |             |

**Objective 4 – Professional Development & Knowledge Transfer**

To improve the transfer of skills and knowledge to ensure that critical corporate knowledge is retained. Create contingency plans to ensure there is a suitable pool of skilled internal applicants when key positions are vacated. Reduced perceived career progression blockages and job stagnation.

| STRATEGIES/ACTIONS   | RESPONSIBILITY                           | PROGRESS                                      | TARGET DATE |
|--|--|---|-------------|
| Identify the extent and timing of significant potential exits of employees who are approaching retirement age  | Human Resources                          |   | Annually    |
| Identify those retirements that will occur where expertise and skills are not readily available either internal or external  | Human Resources<br>Managers              |   | Annually    |
| Review strategies to address potential impacts on Council's capability to deliver services due to loss of key staff  | MANEX/Managers                           |   | Annually    |
| Develop / review systems and procedures for transferring knowledge/experience from transitioning staff onto others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing knowledge transfer-based training &amp; mentoring</li> <li>• Job shadowing</li> <li>• Job partnering</li> <li>• Knowledge mapping</li> <li>• Team based work practices</li> <li>• Linked in Learning knowledge development</li> </ul> | Human Resources<br>Managers<br>IT<br>DMS | Develop information/workshop for stakeholders | Annually    |
| Conduct skills/knowledge audit through contingency planning to identify the skills/knowledge that are likely to be lost through retirement/resignation.  | Directors<br>Human Resources<br>Managers |   | Annually    |
| Utilise contingency planning to conduct skills/knowledge audits against high risk positions  | Directors<br>Human Resources<br>Managers |   | Annually    |



| STRATEGIES/ACTIONS   | RESPONSIBILITY              | PROGRESS        | TARGET DATE  |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Offer leadership and skill development opportunities that build identified future capability or skill requirements across all levels of Council  | Human Resources<br>Managers |                 | Annually   |
| Provide interested employees opportunities for higher duties during project work   | Managers                    | See Objective 3 | Annually   |
| Ensure that managers and other supervisory employees are trained, informed, involved and committed to implement the strategies designed to address the needs of an aging and diverse workforce.<br><br>Introduce Pilot program to build a shared understanding of workforce data and specific challenges in each team or division, establish priority areas and develop an action plan to address challenges.<br><br>Incorporate into council's training program | Human Resources             |                 | Annually<br><br>Pilot Program<br>Quarter - 4 2021/22<br><br>Annually |
| Identify opportunities to retrain and/or redeploy older workers into different roles where their knowledge and experience can be utilised.   | Human Resources<br>Managers |                 | Annually   |
| Linked to: EEO Management Plan Objective 3 & 4; Mature Age Workforce Policy; Training & Development Policy   |                             |                 |  |

**Objective 5 – Health & Wellbeing**

Implement an education program around the Health and Wellbeing Initiatives to assist staff to understand the advantages and benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Develop a workplace wellbeing programs that are more specific to meeting the needs of an aging workforce.

| STRATEGIES/ACTIONS   | RESPONSIBILITY                     | PROGRESS   | TARGET DATE |
|--|------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| Provide all employees transitioning to retirement access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial planning sessions</li> <li>Centrelink info sessions</li> <li>Offer retirement planning which consider lifestyle &amp; financial planning</li> </ul>                                    | Human Resources                    | Discussion has started with Active Super – Reviewed presentation | Annually    |
| Provide information resources for employees on elder or spousal care support services, childcare services, incl being a carer, community services, respite care and counselling  | Human Resources                    |  | Annually    |
| Improve job & work task design, in consultation with affected staff and inline with advice and guidance from health professionals  | Managers<br>WHS Coordinator        |  | Annually    |
| Develop and implement educational programs on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporating 'start of shift' exercise</li> <li>Health &amp; illness prevention</li> <li>Healthy eating</li> <li>Benefits of accessing the EAP</li> <li>Promotion of topics through numerous comms</li> </ul> | Human Resources<br>WHS Coordinator | Health & Wellbeing Dashboard launched 2 August                   | Annually    |
| Provide an annual program of health screening tests for staff, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job specific functional assessments</li> </ul>   | Human Resources<br>WHS Coordinator | Program already in place   | Annually    |

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| STRATEGIES/ACTIONS  | RESPONSIBILITY | PROGRESS | TARGET DATE |
|---|----------------|----------|-------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hearing tests</li><li>• Skin checks</li><li>• Ergonomic assessments</li><li>• Selected immunisation/dust diseases check</li></ul> |                |          |             |
| Linked to: EEO Management Plan; Health & Wellbeing Strategy   |                |          |             |