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**Policy – Equal opportunity and anti-discrimination**

**1. Policy purpose**

Paralympics Australia (PA) aims to provide opportunities for all Australian Paralympic athletes to prepare and compete in their sport to the best of their ability, free from discrimination on the basis of age, gender, marital status, carer status, pregnancy and breast feeding, family responsibilities, physical features, sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity, social and economic circumstances, race, colour or ethnic origin, disability, religious and political beliefs and activities, industrial activity and personal association with a person who could be discriminated against.

PA aims to create a working environment that is free from discrimination in any form and where all members of staff are treated equally, with dignity, courtesy and respect at all times.

**2. Policy Statements**

- 2.1. PA is committed to providing its staff with a work environment which is free from discrimination.
- 2.2. PA is committed to providing its athletes, officers and volunteers with a sport environment that is free from discrimination.
- 2.3. PA aims to ensure that its structures, practices, policies and guidelines are free from direct or indirect discrimination on all relevant legislative grounds.
- 2.4. PA, its staff and its representatives shall comply with all relevant Australian equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.
- 2.5. PA, its staff and its representatives shall comply with the PA code of Conduct which is relevant to them (see P-OPP001 Codes of Conduct – for PA Games Team staff, PA athletes, PA staff and P-OPI-001 Board Code of Conduct).
- 2.6. PA will ensure that inclusive language is used for all spoken and written communications.
- 2.7. PA will ensure that all policies, procedures, official documentation and publications reflect equal opportunity principles.

2.8. PA will seek to provide equal opportunities for women, people with disabilities and disadvantaged groups in all areas of the organisation, including administrative and program staff, employees and volunteers and elected and appointed officials and, by doing so, reflect and benefit from the diverse make-up of Australian society within its organisation.

2.9. PA will encourage disadvantaged individuals to participate in training and staff development programs, to broaden their skills and equip them for positions of responsibility.

2.10. PA will maintain and develop programs to accommodate disadvantaged or disabled staff, adjusting where necessary the work environment and procedures.

2.11. PA will not tolerate discrimination under any circumstances.

2.12. PA encourages the reporting of behaviour which breaches this policy.

2.13. PA guarantees protection from any victimisation or reprisals to those who report discrimination.

2.14. This policy will be implemented in parallel with the PA Member Protection Policy (P-OPP-002).

### 3. Conditions

3.1. Discrimination occurs when a person is discriminated against:

- because of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, as defined under the Race Discrimination Act (1975); or
- because of their sex, marital status, pregnancy as defined under the Sex Discrimination Act (1984); or
- because of age as defined under the Age Discrimination Act 2004; and
- some grounds under the Human Rights Commission Act (1986).

3.2. The discrimination complaints procedures are based on the following principles:

- Complaints of discrimination or discriminatory harassment will be dealt with expeditiously to achieve prompt resolution.
- Based on the nature of each individual complaint, the most suitable complaints process (external or internal to PA) will be used.

- The principles of procedural fairness, including impartiality and good faith, will apply at all stages in the handling of complaints.
- Every effort will be made to maintain harmonious working relationships during and after the handling of any complaint of discrimination.
- Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality with respect to complaints.

3.3. Discrimination complaints will be dealt with using the process established in the PA Member Protection Policy (P-OPP-002) to deal with complaints of discrimination or harassment under that policy.

#### **4. Provision**

- 4.1. The CEO will be responsible for monitoring progress in implementing this Policy and for providing advice to the board, government agencies and PA members on the implementation of the policy.
- 4.2. The CEO will nominate a member of the PA senior management team to facilitate the implementation of this policy and compliance with relevant legislation and government requirements.
- 4.3. In establishing procedures aimed at implementing equal opportunity policy, there will be wide consultation with athletes, administration and sport staff, volunteers and honorary officials and PA members.
- 4.4. Managers and supervisors have a particular responsibility to ensure that the PA workplace is free from discrimination and discriminatory harassment, and that relevant policies and guidelines with regard to the resolution of complaints are followed.
- 4.5. PA will attempt to “reasonably accommodate” women who are breastfeeding. Requests by staff shall be treated sympathetically by managers and all efforts will be made to facilitate such requests and provide support. On a woman’s return from maternity leave, PA will seek to accommodate reasonable requests for changes to her work arrangements by the staff member, within the operational requirements of PA. While recognising that it may be difficult to meet all of the needs of feeding mothers, PA will identify appropriate spaces and facilities in the workplace for women who need to breastfeed and/or express and store breast milk.
- 4.6. If necessary, PA will implement training and awareness raising strategies to ensure that all employees know their rights and responsibilities under this policy.

## **5. Application**

- 5.1. This policy applies to all PA employees, Board members, volunteers, and all members (officials and athletes) of PA teams, including the Australian Paralympic Team.
  
- 5.2. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, Board member, volunteer, or member (official and athletes) of a PA team, including the Australian Paralympic Team, who breaches this policy.