



Moreland City Council

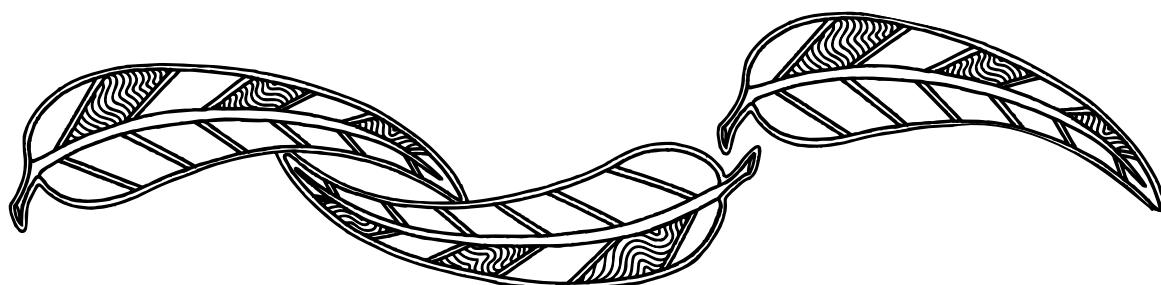
Moreland Human Rights Policy 2016–2026

**One Community,
Proudly Diverse**

MORLAND

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Moreland City Council acknowledges Moreland as being on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people. Council pays its respects to the Wurundjeri people and their Elders, past and present.¹

Managum by Judy Nicholson, Wurundjeri Artist

¹ Council's acknowledgement aims to validate and respect the rightful place of Australia's oldest living culture. We recognise this is a fundamental first step in developing positive and meaningful relationships with the Indigenous community and redressing history which continues to affect Indigenous families and communities. We respect the spiritual, physical and cultural connection of the Wurundjeri people to their country and understand this recognition contributes to contesting entrenched disadvantage and dispossession, provides an opportunity for belonging and supports working towards a more culturally sensitive and inclusive community.



Foreword by Mayor

Human rights are the bedrock of healthy and resilient communities, where everyone can participate and be included.

Human rights belong to every one of us. They acknowledge the fundamental worth of each person. On an individual level, it is treating others fairly, and everyone being treated fairly.

Moreland City Council exists to care for and meet the changing needs of our community in a sustainable way, providing conditions for people to have access to opportunities and control over their own lives.

Every day, Council engages with the full range of people who make up the community, including people of all ages and life stages, people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people of all faiths and cultures, including migrants and refugees, women and Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer (GLBTIQ) communities.

Moreland's first *Human Rights Policy* is inspired by the *United Nations Declaration of Human Rights*, the *Australian Human Rights Framework* and *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities* which sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all Victorians.

The *Human Rights Policy* gives us a common framework to bind and protect us all equally, so that each and every member of our diverse city has the opportunity to participate, contribute and access services.

The policy sets out how Council will work over the next ten years to ensure the human rights of all our residents are upheld. It will provide guidance to Council to undertake targeted projects in response to the needs of groups and individuals who experience disadvantage in our community.

The policy will increase participation by the community in Council decision-making. It will strive to remove the barriers experienced by some groups, and overcome the exclusion and marginalisation experienced by some members of our community. With its broad approach, it will allow Council to work with others to address current and emerging needs for all members of the Moreland community, equally and fairly.

I am proud to present Moreland's first *Human Rights Policy*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'S. Ratnam'.

Cr Samantha Ratnam
Mayor of Moreland

Vision

Council recognises that it has an important role in protecting and promoting human rights by ensuring that all people in our community are supported to fully participate in the life of the city and enjoy self-determination in decisions that affect them. All people should have dignified and equitable access to information, goods, services and life opportunities as a result of good governance and democracy.

Purpose

The *Moreland Human Rights Policy 2016–2026* provides a framework and objectives for the implementation of Council's human rights obligations. It is aligned with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*. An implementation plan will support delivery of the policy.

The policy provides Council with an overarching framework for delivering accessible, equitable and inclusive programs, services and decision-making processes. It aims to unite and strengthen Council's existing policies and commitments by adopting an intersectional approach* in addressing discrimination and promoting diversity and inclusion.

The human rights policy will:

- Assist all areas of Council to genuinely meet our human rights obligations
- Recognise the complexity of addressing discrimination for those who experience multiple disadvantage
- Encourage more efficient use of resources by working collaboratively, both in and out of Council on local, shared priorities across separate portfolio areas.

Context

This policy aligns with Commonwealth, Victorian and Local Government policies and legislation, and aims to achieve consistency in Council's approach to diversity. The policy also conforms to international declarations which seek to protect the rights of all people.

The policy applies to all areas of Council to inform the planning, development and evaluation of all policies, services, programs and infrastructure.

As a public authority, Moreland Council has an obligation to ensure that:

- All decisions give proper consideration to human rights and associated legislation;
- All actions, policies and services are compatible with upholding human rights;
- All local laws are interpreted consistent with human rights legislation;
- Council's contractors and volunteers also uphold human rights in any dealings carried out on behalf of Council.

The human rights policy replaces the following Council policies:

- *Moreland Reconciliation Policy*
- *Moreland Multicultural Policy 2011–2015*
- *Moreland Access and Inclusion (Disability) Policy*

*(see Appendix 1 for definition)

Statements of commitment to priority groups

Council acknowledges that despite its aspirations, it has limited capacity and cannot address all social issues at once. The limited scope of Council's role and resources requires that prioritisation is essential. As such, this policy gives precedence to specific groups which are recognised as being at greatest risk of exclusion from social, economic and political life because of access barriers and discrimination. Statements of commitment to identified priority groups are set out below. These aim to sustain Council's existing commitments and enable consistent internal and external communication around Council's ongoing resolve to overcome disadvantage and reduce discrimination for individuals from all ages and life stages across the priority groups.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities

Moreland City Council's vision for reconciliation is where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are recognised as the traditional custodians of the land, whose dispossession is addressed through respectful partnerships between Indigenous and non Indigenous people. Council is committed to reconciliation with Indigenous Australians, particularly the Wurundjeri people as traditional owners of the land we now call Moreland.

Migrant and Refugee Communities

Council is strongly committed to respecting the cultural, religious and linguistic diversity of our municipality. We highlight and celebrate the enormous benefits migrant and refugee communities bring to Moreland. Through this policy, Council will progress a whole of organisation approach to designing and implementing strategies. This will address unique barriers experienced by these communities, to build unity and social cohesion within our municipality.

People with Disability

Council will work to systematically reduce barriers created by attitudes, practices and structures that limit opportunities for people with disability to fully participate in the life of the community. Council will work to ensure a culture within its own organisation that recognises everyone has a responsibility and an important role to play in addressing the discrimination experienced by people with disability.

Women

Council commits to equal opportunities for women and girls to fully participate at all levels of decision-making in the community. Council will foster an environment which advances participation and reduces discrimination for women and girls in political, economic, cultural, educational and personal spheres.

GLBTIQ Communities

Council commits to ensuring that Moreland is a safe and welcoming city for Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender, Intersex and Queer (GLBTIQ) people and will strive to ensure that its services are accessible to and appropriate to the needs of our GLBTIQ residents and visitors.

New or Emerging Issues

Importantly the policy also provides the flexibility for Council to consider future needs of newly emerging priority areas, groups and issues not yet identified or covered by existing Council policies or portfolio areas.

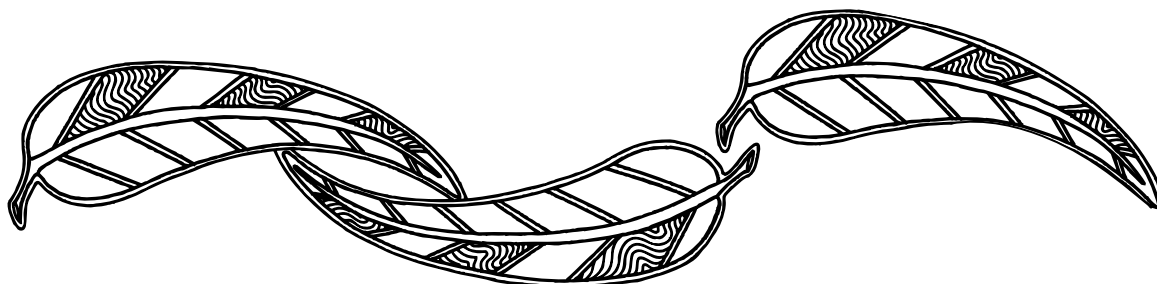
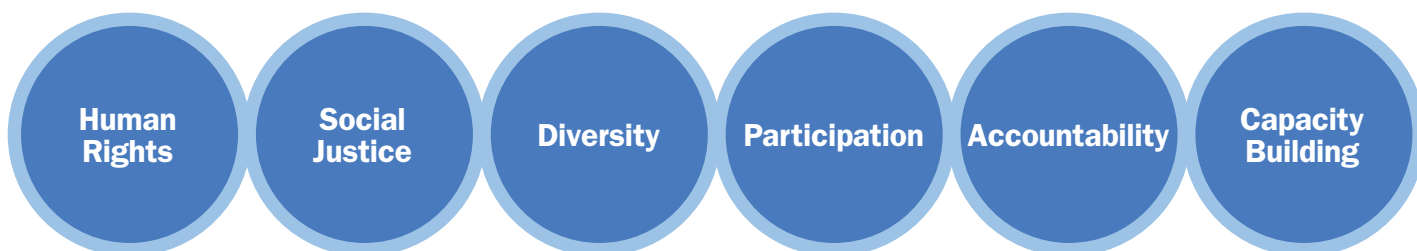
Policy Goals

The policy will protect and promote human rights by aiming for three goals:



Guiding Principles

The policy is framed across all aspects of Council's role; organisational capability, service provision and civic participation. The following six principles were determined through consultation with stakeholders and guide the way we work in implementing the policy*.



*(see definitions in Appendix 2)

Humans of Moreland

Tahnee

‘What do you want to do now that you’ve finished school?’

‘See I’m not sure, I want to ideally open up an after school program for disadvantaged kids or community meal centre like lentils. Something that helps others.’

‘Why do you want to help others?’

‘Because I want to be helped’

Themes and Outcomes

Key issues are addressed holistically under four themes which provide direction for shared strategies, to achieve common outcomes for the identified priority groups:

1

Empowerment and Participation

Facilitate civic participation and inclusive engagement of all forms to ensure that people can exercise their rights as equal citizens. Empowerment and participation enables people from within the identified groups to participate meaningfully in shaping their own futures.

Outcomes

- Priority groups have increased participation in Council decision-making processes;
- Priority groups have increased success when applying for grants and accessing council facilities;
- Priority groups have increased participation in employment and skill development programs in Moreland;
- Increased numbers of suppliers from priority groups provide services and products to Moreland Council.

2

Equitable and Accessible Services

It is a legal obligation of Council to ensure that all citizens be provided with dignified and equitable access to services. This contributes to the wellbeing and prosperity of our community. Some individuals and groups require additional assistance and targeted programs to enjoy full, equitable access to Council services and programs.

Outcomes

- Increased proportion of Council's communications output and methods are inclusive, accessible and respond to a variety of communication needs;
- Moreland's community has better understanding of Council communications;
- Increased proportion of Council services is inclusive, accessible and respond to a variety of diverse needs;
- More people from priority groups access Councils services, programs and events.



3

Accessible Places and Spaces

Buildings, public places and open spaces must be accessible to all. Council will maximise the accessibility of all new infrastructure and have a program for progressive improvement to the accessibility of existing Council owned buildings and infrastructure. This is achieved within a framework of inclusive policies, local priorities and financial capacity.

Outcomes

- Increased use of public places and spaces in Moreland by people from priority groups through improved physical accessibility, safety and cultural appropriateness;
- People from priority groups experience less barriers when accessing places and spaces in Moreland through improved Council work practices;
- An increased proportion of residents feel welcome and safe in Council owned and managed places and spaces.

4

Advocacy and Leadership

In collaboration with people from identified priority groups, Council will advocate to other spheres of government, business, partner organisations and the community to promote human rights and address issues of discrimination and marginalisation at the local, regional, national and international level.

Outcomes

- Increased proportion of Council's workforce demonstrates ability to apply human rights policy principles in their work;
- Increased proportion of Council's workforce reflects the diversity of the community it serves;
- Advocacy and leadership initiatives promote human rights and address discrimination.



Humans of Moreland

Monirah

'I've been in Coburg for four years. You can find people from everywhere here. I love how in Australia people accept others.

When I think of my home city, Jeddah (in Saudi Arabia), the thing I miss most is the nightlife. But I'm happy to be here.'

Implementation

This policy will inform practice across Council for all of our community, with a specific focus on identified priority groups. Council will convene the Human Rights Advisory Committee to provide advice on implementation of the policy, and monitor the bi-annual shared action plans within the Community Development and Social Policy Team.

The resources required to implement this policy will be detailed in the bi-annual action plan. Responsible units across Council will develop and cost actions within their annual planning and budgeting cycle. If additional resourcing is required, it will be sourced through grants, sponsorships, partnerships or a budget bid by the appropriate area of Council.

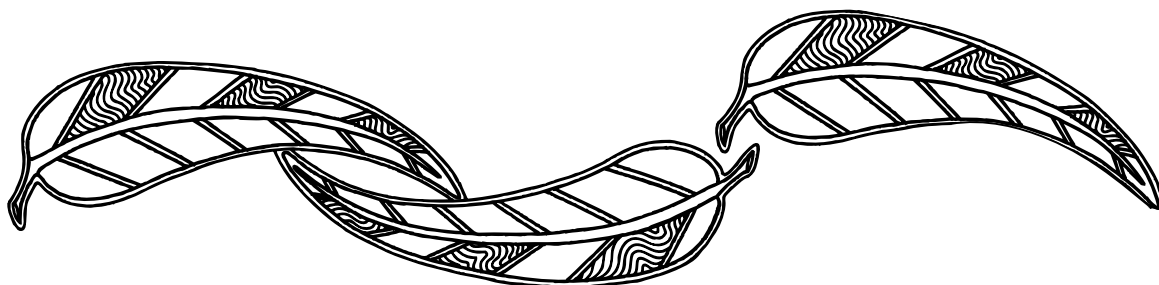
The purpose of this policy is not to increase costs to Council but to enable people to work smarter by considering human rights.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Council is committed to the ongoing evaluation and review of our whole of organisation approach to human rights and inclusion. Learning through ongoing monitoring will inform future iterations of this policy and will serve to continuously enhance the vital role Council plays in protecting the human rights of all members of Moreland's community.

Strategies

- Convene the Human Rights Advisory Committee which provides advice to Council to guide the future planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policy;
- Establish organisational accountability processes for implementing this policy;
- Publicly report on policy progress and impacts of the shared action plans on an annual basis.



Appendix 1

Key Policy Definitions

Intersectional Approach

Individuals are complex and are shaped by interactions between different personal attributes such as ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, disability, migration status and religion. These interactions occur within a context of connected systems and power structures such as policies, governments, and the media.

An intersectional approach enables us to understand the connections between structures that shape diverse populations. It also enables a more effective and efficient response than a 'one-size fits all' approach for solving social inequities.

People can experience both privilege and oppression, depending on what specific situation or context they are in. Individuals are also members of different groups at once that often overlap, and may face exclusion on the basis of one or more characteristic or identity. By adopting an intersectional approach we can respond more appropriately to these experiences.

Human Rights²

Human rights are universal and affirm the inherent right of all people to be treated with respect, equality and dignity. Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that people are entitled to simply because they are human beings.

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)* recognises that 'the inherent dignity of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world'. It declares that human rights are universal – to be enjoyed by all people, no matter who they are or where they live. The Universal Declaration includes civil and political rights, like the right to life, liberty, free speech and privacy. It also includes economic, social and cultural rights (including religion), like the right to social security, health and education. Within the local government context, human rights uphold the idea that all people should have equitable access to goods, services and life opportunities as a result of good governance and democracy.

Inclusion³

An inclusive society is based on fundamental values of equity, equality, social justice, human rights and freedom, as well as on the principles of tolerance and embracing diversity. An individual who experiences inclusion has access to resources, opportunities and capabilities to learn, work (including paid, voluntary or family/carer responsibilities), engage and have a voice in decisions that affect them.

Social Justice

Social justice is about making sure that every member of the community has choices about how they live and the means to make those choices. A socially just Moreland is one in which there is:

- a fair distribution of resources
- equal access to services
- equal rights in civil affairs

² What are human rights?, United Nations Human Rights – Office of the High Commissioner <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Pages/WhatAreHumanRights.aspx>

³ UNESCO. Consultations of the Director-General with Member States. Social Inclusion, Social Transformations, Social Innovation: What role for UNESCO in 2014-2021, 23 November 2012.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the variety of differences between people. Harnessing the potential of our diversity requires acceptance and respect. It is based on an understanding that each individual is unique, and recognition of our individual differences.

Participation

Participation is about meaningful engagement with the Moreland community to enable people from the identified priority groups to genuinely participate in shaping their own futures. Community participation relies on Council having a good knowledge of people living in the municipality, communicating effectively and responding appropriately to individuals and communities.

Capacity Building

Capacity building is about Council's contribution in supporting groups and individuals to harness community knowledge and experience, address exclusion and strengthen capacity for active citizenship.

Accountability

Accountability is about transparent decision-making, open governance and accessible information and communication across all areas of Council's work.

Accessibility

Accessibility means that Council services, programs and facilities should be made accessible to all people in our diverse community. It also refers specifically to the design of services, products or environments for people with disabilities. Accessibility is strongly related to the concept of Universal Design which is the process of creating products or environments that are usable by people with the widest possible range of abilities, operating in the widest possible range of situations.

Equality⁴

Equality affirms that all human beings are born free and equal, having the same rights and are entitled to the same level of respect.

Equity⁵

Equity means that Council services and programs should deliver outcomes for diverse communities on par with those that other members of our community can expect to receive.

⁴ Adapted from the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women, CEDAW 1979

⁵ Multicultural Access and Equity Policy Toolkit, Australian Government 2012

Appendix 2

Associated Council Documents and Legislative Policy Context

Background information, including key stakeholders and engagement process informing the development of this policy, can be found in:

Moreland City Council Human Rights Policy 2016–2026 - Context and Background Information

The Human Rights Policy adopts a whole of Council approach and particularly informs practice across key Council policy, action plan and commitment areas, including:

- *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2016–2020*
- *Statement of Commitment to Women*
- *GLBTI activities*
- *Moreland Council Plan 2013–2017*
- *Moreland Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013–2017*
- *Moreland Early Years Strategy 2016–2020*
- *Moreland Open Space Strategy 2012–2022*
- *Arts and Culture Strategy 2011–2016*
- *Naming Moreland Places Policy 2013–2023*
- *Affordable Housing Strategy 2014–2018*
- *HACC Inclusion Plan 2015–2016*
- *Friends of Aileu Strategy Plan, Action Plan 2015–2020 and Friendship Agreement*

International context

Australia is signatory to a number of United Nations declarations and treaties relevant to this policy, including seven major human rights treaties. These include:

- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948*
- *Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1959*
- *Declaration of the Rights of Disabled Persons 1975*
- *Declaration of the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief 1981*
- *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2008*
- *International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008*
- *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1976*
- *International Covenant on economic, social and cultural rights 1976*
- *Covenant on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women 1979*
- *Millennium Development Goals 2000–2015*

Commonwealth Legislative Context

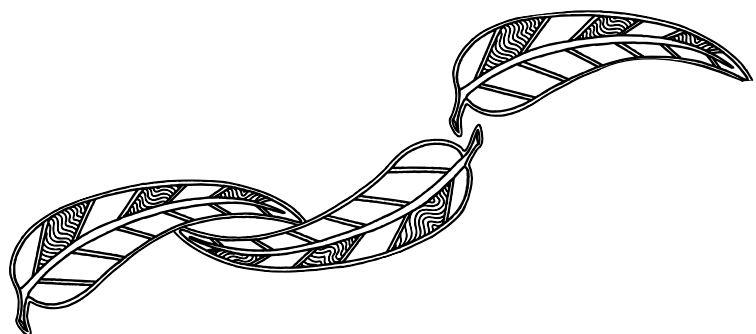
A range of Commonwealth legislation protects the rights of people of diverse circumstances or characteristics. These laws seek to deter or redress unfavourable discrimination or vilification around attributes such as gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or identity, race, or ethnic identity. Commonwealth legislation includes:

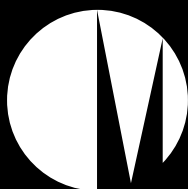
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*
- *Human Rights Commission Act 1986*
- *Human Rights (Sexual Conduct) Act 1994*
- *National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Act 2013*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Racial Hatred Act 1995*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Carers Recognition Act 2010*
- *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*

Victorian Legislative Context

Victorian legislation which seeks to promote respect for diversity and prevent discrimination on the basis of personal attributes and circumstances includes:

- *Equal Opportunity Act 2011*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001*
- *Multicultural Victoria Act 2011*
- *Disability Act 2006*
- *Carers Recognition Act (Vic) 2012*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*





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Moreland Language Link

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All other languages

including 阿拉伯语, Croatian,
Tagalog, Indonesia, Polski,
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اردو 9280 1919

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