POLICY 2.2 ACCESS AND ELIGIBILITY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and criteria for the access of the premises and services provided by The Community Place (TCP)

POLICY STATEMENT

TCP is committed to maximising access to the Organisation's services for everyone within the community and to ensuring equity of access for all eligible service users. TCP will work within its available resources while endeavouring to optimise access for people to services and activities.

TCP welcomes differences and values the individuality and uniqueness of every person wishing to access its programs and activities. The Organisation actively supports access to all its services by the community without discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, disability, religion or sexuality.

The principles underlying the Charter, which have been taken into account in the formation of this Access and Equity Policy are:

- Access – As a service provider, The Community Place will make services available to everyone who is entitled to them, free of any form of discrimination on the basis of a person's country of birth, language, culture, race or religion.

- Equity – As a service provider, The Community Place will develop and deliver services on the basis of fair treatment of all those clients who are eligible to receive them.

- Communication – As a service provider, The Community Place will use all necessary strategies to inform eligible clients of the services available, their entitlements, and how they can obtain them. Providers shall also consult with their clients regularly about the adequacy, design and standard of services.

- Responsiveness – As a service provider, The Community Place will be sensitive to the needs and requirements of clients from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and be responsive as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals.

- Effectiveness – As a service provider, [Name of Organisation] will be focused on meeting the needs of clients from all backgrounds.

- Efficiency – As a service provider, The Community Place will optimise the use of available public resources through a user-responsive approach to service delivery that meets the needs of clients.

- Accountability – As a service provider, The Community Place will have a reporting mechanism in place which ensures it is accountable for implementing access and equity objectives for its clients.

- Environment – As a service provider, The Community Place will ensure that our community centres have safe environments – ensuring that regular checks of risks and safety take place throughout the year.

- Safety and Security – all community members, volunteers and staff have the right to a safe and secure environment at The Community Place. We will endeavour to ensure this happens to the highest standard following all recommendations and regulations. We will also ensure that the building is designed and operated with the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles.

- Access – The Community Place will ensure that there are no physical barriers to access in our Community Centres.

PROCEDURES

TCP will operate with clear criteria for eligibility and priority for all areas of service delivery and apply these criteria in a fair, equitable, ethical and transparent manner (refer to Policies 2.2.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.3).

Eligibility criteria will be inclusive of the widest possible group of people who may need to access the service and will comply with Queensland and Commonwealth Anti-Discrimination legislation requirements.

 TCP will:

- Identify and address barriers to access for people in the community.
- Use service planning to maximise accessibility, ensuring that all services, activities, facilities and premises are designed to maximise physical and cultural accessibility for service users
- Use proactive information strategies for potential service user groups to increase knowledge of and understanding about the Organisation and the services offered
- Regularly review how accessible services are and use this information to improve access wherever possible.

Identifying barriers to access

TCP provides services to meet the needs of the local community particularly disadvantaged and marginalised members. TCP recognises there can be a number of barriers to accessing services such as language, disability and previous experiences.

Ensuring physical and cultural access

TCP will ensure the following:

- Its premises are located in close proximity to public transport.

- Its premises and facilities are physically accessible to people with limited mobility or disability.
- Its opening hours provide access to the full range of service users.
- Opening hours are advertised in accessible locations – website, Facebook, promotional materials.
- Services are provided in as flexible manner as possible to meet the needs of individuals.
- It maintains effective messaging systems for service users to contact the Organisation.
- Our community centres will be kept clean, comfortable and welcoming.
- The cultural and language needs of people within the target group/s are identified and accommodated.
- Interpreters can be organised for any person requiring this assistance, this will be coordinated by the staff of The Community Place.

Promotion of service

TCP will be responsible for developing and reviewing a service promotion and information strategy.

TCP will produce information about its services and activities in a range of formats suitable for the full range of people who may need to access them.

This will include brochures, local advertising and website. General information about the Organisation and its services and activities will be made available in the local community newspaper, website and Facebook page.

Monitoring access strategies

The Manager and staff will be responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of physical and cultural access strategies.

- The Community Place shall where necessary provide for the special needs of clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds by English or other language assistance through the use of interpreters or facilitators.
- The Community Place shall where necessary and feasible provide for the special needs of clients in remote areas through developing outreach and community liaison arrangements.
- The Community Place shall incorporate cultural diversity issues in any training programs it provides.
- The Community Place staff shall where necessary receive ongoing cultural diversity training so that they develop knowledge and skills to work effectively from a cultural framework.
- The Community Place shall where necessary provide information in languages other than English, and through print, electronic media, and disability-appropriate methods of communication.
- The Community Place shall engage the assistance of interpreters where required. We might also be able to use technology such as Google Translate or other resources to assist with immediate issues or enquiries.
- The Community Place shall where appropriate consult with other providers and government agencies to ensure co-ordination of services appropriate to clients' needs.
- The Community Place shall promote diversity in the membership of its boards, committees and working groups.

- The Community Place shall in its client data collection record, where appropriate, such data as birthplace; whether a person's first language spoken was English; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background; Australian South Sea Islander background; date of birth; year of arrival in Australia; birthplace of parents; sex; and religion (the collection of data will not always include all these items, as the relevance of these data items will vary depending on the service delivery context).
- The Community Place shall protect the privacy of individual clients when collecting this data. Consideration will be given to:
- collecting only data essential to the particular service delivery or evaluation purpose;
- guaranteeing anonymity; and
- ensuring that all data collection proposals are non-intrusive.
- The Community Place shall, where appropriate, keep records on the proportional take-up rates of clients categorised by their country of birth or their cultural or linguistic background compared with their percentage composition of the total population in the service target group or catchment area.
- The Community Place shall maintain client satisfaction data.

It is the responsibility of all staff members, committee members and volunteers of The Community Place to ensure that the requirements of these procedures are complied with.

Documents related to this policy

Related policies	1.6 Organisational Review and Planning
	1.15 Media and Public Relations
	2.1 Client Rights and Responsibilities
	2.2 Access and Eligibility
	2.5 Feedback and Evaluation
Forms or other organisational documents	Brochure
	Customer Feedback Form
	Strategic Plan

Revision record

Version	Approval Date	Authorised by	Effective Date	Review Cycle	Next Review Date
1.0	1.7.19	Mgt Committee	1.7.19	Annual	30.6.26