

Lifeline Australia Diversity Policy

Authorised:	Lifeline Australia Board
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 Lifeline Australia recognises that to achieve its purpose, it must be a leader in relation to workplace diversity and flexibility.
- 1.2 This Policy sets out Lifeline Australia's objectives for achieving workplace diversity and flexibility, how it will achieve those objectives and how it will measure those achievements.
- 1.3 Workplace diversity involves recognising the value of individual differences and managing them in the workplace. Diversity in this context covers gender, age, ethnicity, cultural background, sexual orientation and religious belief. Diversity also encompasses the ways people differ in terms of education, life experience, job function, work experience, personality, location, marital status and carer responsibilities.
- 1.4 The purpose of this policy is to publicly outline Lifeline Australia's commitment to fostering a corporate culture that embraces diversity. This policy also provides a process for the Board to determine measurable objectives and procedures which Lifeline Australia will implement and report against to achieve its diversity goals.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 9 September 2011, the Board of Lifeline Australia resolved to 'adopt and apply as appropriate the principles and recommendations of *Australian Standard AS8000-2003 Good Governance Principles* and the *ASX Corporate Governance Principles & Recommendations 2010* as the basis for Lifeline Australia's approach to corporate governance" and document any exceptions considered appropriate'.
- 2.2 The Board's commitment included the development of Lifeline Australia's first Diversity Policy, and the public disclosure in the Annual Report of the following:
 - (a) measurable objectives for achieving gender diversity set by the Board in accordance with the diversity policy and progress towards achieving them; and
 - (b) the proportion of women employees in the organisation, women in senior management and women on the Board.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 Lifeline Australia aims to actively promote a corporate culture that supports diversity in the composition of its Board and senior management, in the workplace and amongst its Members.
- 3.2 A corporate culture that embraces diversity, seeks to encourage and facilitate opportunities for the employment of women and people from different backgrounds, provide skills and career development initiatives, increase workforce participation and create an inclusive environment where directors, employees and the clients who use our services feel they are

valued. In building a corporate culture where diversity is encouraged, Lifeline Australia also recognises that employees at all levels have responsibilities outside of the workplace.

3.3 Lifeline Australia acknowledges the benefits that flow from Board and employee diversity, in particular gender diversity, including identification and rectification of gaps in skills and experience, attraction and retention of highly skilled employees and Board members, greater innovation and maximisation of available talent, and enhanced corporate reputation.

3.4 Lifeline Australia also acknowledges the benefits that flow from workplace flexibility involves developing people management strategies that accommodate differences in the background, perspectives and family responsibilities of employees.

4. Application of policy

4.1 This Policy applies to the Board and its committees; management; employees (including job applicants, where relevant); and stakeholders (especially our clients who use Lifeline's services).

5. Commitment/Objectives

5.1 The Board and Management of Lifeline Australia are committed to ensuring that Lifeline:

- (a) has a Board and workforce profile that supports sustainability and provides a deep understanding of client needs;
- (b) has a truly inclusive workplace where individuals can fulfil their potential;
- (c) is committed to access and equity for everyone who seeks to utilise our services regardless of mental health, age, culture, gender, marital status, race, religion, sexual orientation or social background.

6. Implementation

6.1 To achieve Lifeline's diversity objectives, the Board will:

- (a) make this policy available to the public through the Lifeline website (www.lifeline.org.au);
- (b) disclose in the Annual Report the proportion of women employees in the whole organisation, women in senior executive positions and women on the Board;
- (c) disclose in the Annual Report the diversity profile of our clients who use Lifeline's services (at a minimum, this is to include gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, ethnicity and language)
- (d) encourage and support the application of workplace flexibility policy into practice across the organisation; and
- (e) actively encourage Lifeline Australia's Members to develop their own diversity policies.

7. Board Diversity commitments

7.1 In order to foster a corporate environment where employee and Board diversity are achievable and maintainable, the Board will:

- (a) review and determine strategies, programs and initiatives that will foster diversity and meet the particular needs of Lifeline Australia, including identifying the skill and experience requirements for the Board;

- (b) set measurable objectives to assist in meeting Lifeline’s diversity goals, including:
 - i. procedural and structural objectives – for example, implementing internal review and reporting procedures or ensuring that candidates are interviewed by a diverse selection/interview panel;
 - ii. diversity targets – setting targets for the number of women throughout Lifeline Australia or to increase the proportion of women within senior management positions and implementing timeframes for this to occur by; and
 - iii. initiatives and programs – for example, identifying appropriate initiatives and programs and determining how the initiative will operate, who will be responsible for implementing it and setting a timetable for its introduction.
- (c) annually review its own diversity profile and identify any gaps;
- (d) seek external advice and assistance from different stakeholders (e.g. Indigenous, LGBTI, consumer advocates)
- (e) ensure that the selection process for the three (3) Board-appointed directors includes formal consideration of the Board’s desired diversity profile;
- (f) encourage Lifeline Australia’s Members to nominate candidates for the Board’s eight (8) Member-elected director positions that meet Lifeline Australia’s diversity requirements
- (g) ensure that diversity is considered in the selection and appointment of the CEO and Leadership Team;
- (h) consider the extent to which the achievement of these measurable objectives should be tied to key performance indicators for the Board, the CEO and other senior management; and
- (i) encourage Lifeline Australia’s Members to commit to and undertake 7.1(a) – (h) within their own organisations.

7.2 The Governance Committee will be responsible for implementing Lifeline Australia’s diversity policy and for ensuring compliance with this policy. The Governance Committee will report to the Board as necessary to facilitate compliance.

8. Management Diversity commitments

8.1 The CEO will seek to identify and consider programs and initiatives that:

- (a) design services that meet the diversity needs of the clients who currently, or may in future, use Lifeline services;
- (b) assist in the development of a broader pool of skilled and experienced employees, in particular women, including initiatives focused on skills development, such as executive mentoring programs or more targeted practices relating to career advancement including those that develop skills and experience that prepare employees for senior management;
- (c) assist with enhancing employee retention, in particular that of women from middle management, including programs that foster career development and personal skills and, where possible, initiatives that address competing demands between work and other obligations;

- (d) assist with minimising career disruption when employees take time out of the workplace to meet other obligations and attempt to re-enter the workforce, and, where reasonable, possible and in line with the needs and objectives identified by the diversity profile, facilitate or permit employees to access such programs or initiatives;

9. Annual Reporting

9.1 Wherever possible, Lifeline Australia will aim to formulate and disclose objectives for achieving diversity across the organisation and will report on its progress against those objectives.

9.2 At a minimum, Lifeline Australia's disclosure on diversity in its Annual Report should also include information about:

- (a) the proportion of women employees in Lifeline Australia;
- (b) the number of women on the Board; and
- (c) the number of women in senior management positions.