

Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Peoples (Policy)

Version 3.0

This policy has been adopted by:

Name of Company	Adoption Date
Community Housing Ltd (CHL)20	20 March 2025
Community Housing (Vic.) Ltd (CHVL)20	20 March 2025
Community Housing (TAS) Ltd (CHTL)	20 March 2025
Community Housing (QLD) Ltd (CHQL)	20 March 2025
Community Housing (Subi East) Limited	20 March 2025
Community Housing (Homes for Regions) Limited	20 March 2025

And any other entities within CHL which adopt this policy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Community Housing Limited Group of Companies (CHL) is a leading provider of social and affordable housing solutions and services in Australia. It is committed to being a culturally competent and sensitive organisation and ensuring respect for and inclusivity of its culturally and linguistically diverse employees, contractors, customers and visitors as they interact with our services, and all those who may be affected by our operations.

CHL is committed to providing an environment that is safe and respectful of culturally and linguistically diverse peoples and to working together in partnership, with mutual respect and on an equal footing.

2. AIM

The aim of this policy is to ensure the ongoing cultural awareness of CHL and developing and maintaining a culturally inviting environment for all employees, contractors, customers and visitors in our organisation.

The following principles will be of assistance in maintaining the standards of awareness throughout our operations across Australia as CHL adopts a leading practice approach to culturally competent service delivery that ensures safe, flexible and respectful environments for our employees, contractors, customers and visitors.

3. PRINCIPLES OF CHL’S WORKING WITH CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE PEOPLES POLICY

These principles guide the overall mechanisms that CHL employs to create and maintain a leading practice approach to working with culturally and linguistically diverse peoples. These standards enable the organisation to be confident it is providing a nationally consistent approach regarding the ways in which CHL works with culturally and linguistically diverse peoples whilst providing an environment that is safe, flexible, respectful and free of all forms of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

In addition, CHL ensures that its organisation is compliant with National, State and Territory based regulations, industry standards, contractual obligations, legislation and organisational policies and procedures in relation to acknowledging respect, equality and equity as it pertains to all who access our organisation.

Principles of Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Peoples include but are not limited to:

- Access to translators, support workers and/or advocates
- Appropriate communication tools and resources list
- Cultural awareness training including strategies capturing local cultural resources and forward planning into operational practice
- The importance of increased knowledge of other cultures and diverse identities
- Engagement and participation
- Inclusive systems and policies

3.1. Access to translators, support workers and/or advocates

CHL understands that there are many occasions when culturally and linguistically diverse peoples may prefer and/or request to work or speak with a member of their community. CHL will ensure that every operation across its business is able to provide access to a translation service, support worker and/or advocate.

CHL state operations are required to develop and maintain a local database of advocacy services that would be able to assist people in any of these areas and will assist in the referral process if required.

CHL will work supportively with advocates in any such circumstances to ensure its employees, customers contractors or visitors are able to engage with us and that this requirement is never an obstacle to culturally and linguistically diverse peoples working with CHL.

3.2. Appropriate communication

CHL acknowledges that English is a second language for many culturally and linguistically diverse peoples across Australia and that English literacy rates vary for peoples with diverse backgrounds. CHL acknowledges that due to this, culturally and linguistically diverse peoples may be hindered in their attempts to develop some of the functional skills required to participate in some communication activities.

CHL will always use clear and simple language in its communication with its customers, employees, contractors and visitors. CHL understands that communication is a "two-way street"; if something isn't clear, CHL will let people know they have the right to ask questions, and our staff will keep explaining until everything makes sense.

CHL will always respond in a timely manner to all enquiries to ensure feedback and information is provided in line with operational practices.

CHL staff will always be able to arrange in-person and/or phone meetings with interpreters, if needed. This approach acknowledges that while written communication is important for confirmation and evidence, it may not always effectively convey the necessary information and message.

3.3. Cultural awareness training

CHL is aware that many people do not necessarily come to the organisation with a developed knowledge of culturally and linguistically diverse peoples, their histories, their beliefs and their cultures. It is a mandate of CHL that all employees that work with or on behalf of CHL undertake a form of Cultural Awareness Training.

CHL makes available for all its employees a chosen Cultural Competence learning program that can be completed on induction to the organisation.

Permanent employees of CHL can refresh this training throughout their tenure via the CHL learning system.

3.4. The importance of increased knowledge of other cultures and diverse identities

CHL acknowledges that Australia is home to many people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. CHL acknowledges the importance of increased knowledge and awareness within the areas it works across Australia and values the connections it makes with people, corporations and organisations. CHL actively works to further develop these relationships to ensure its operations are well informed and relevant to the local community.

CHL works with all its service delivery teams to ensure they develop and maintain a database of strong networks with local multicultural, diverse, and ethnic groups, organisations and peoples to deliver a leading practice service.

3.5. Intersectional approach

Intersectionality is a term used to describe an approach where the various identities held by an individual intersect, rather than just looking at one part of their identity. CHL work using an intersectional approach to ensure inclusion, by the consideration of things like a person's gender, sexuality, ethnicity and/or cultural background, religion, linguistics and/or ability, all together rather than separately, when engaging with them and assessing their needs.

3.6. Engagement and participation

Our broader communities are shared by people from a range of backgrounds, and CHL believes that everyone is welcome and accepted by our organisation. CHL will always seek and encourage the engagement and participation of culturally and linguistically diverse peoples in its operations and development of its service deliveries, in all areas of the organisation.

CHL is committed to ensuring the organisation is culturally competent and it understands that the voice of culturally and linguistically diverse peoples is essential to this.

CHL values culturally and linguistically diverse staff in a wide variety of roles across the company. With the assistance of the human resources department, we support anti-discrimination measures to ensure that the best applicants are appointed. Managers proactively identify recruitment opportunities and develop retention and promotion strategies to attract and retain talented individuals and create a positive, safe environment for all.

3.7. Inclusive systems and policies

CHL is committed to consistently working towards leading practice as it pertains to being a culturally competent organisation for culturally and linguistically diverse peoples. CHL is aware that to be both a competent and culturally safe organisation, its systems and policies must seek to be inclusive of all peoples and respectful of their beliefs and customs.

CHL believes these approaches support our staff to better understand differences in people's culture, customs, and beliefs, and ultimately provide a service that is respectful and relevant.

4. RELATED RESOURCES

4.1. CHL Group References

CHL Customer Promise
Child Safety Policy
Customer Participation Policy
Customer Information Management Policy
Hardship Policy
Privacy Policy
Sustaining Tenancies Policy
Working with Communities Policy
Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
CHL Group Codes of Conduct

4.2. External References

Equal Opportunities Act
Australian Human Rights Commission Act
Sex Discrimination Act 1984
Disability Discrimination Act 1992
Age Discrimination Act 2004
Australian Institute of Families Studies (AIFS)

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is maintained and managed by the CHL Group's Chief Operations Officer.

This document should be reviewed and revised periodically and/or as required. The period between reviews must not exceed three years. This document remains valid until such time that a new version is published.

Review History

Document reference	Date Approved	Version	Reason for review	Review frequency	Owner	Approver(s)
POLHOUAUSNATCLD202503	20 March 2025	3.0	Scheduled review	Every three years	Chief Operations Officer	CEO, CGO, COO, CPO, CFO, CIO, CDO, CSO
POLABUAUSNATCLD202402	March 2024	2.2	Reformat	Existing	Chief Operations Officer	Executive
POLABUAUSNATCLD202302	June 2023	2.1	NT Inclusion	Existing	National Manager Operations	Managing Director
POLABUAUSNATCLD202302	May 2023	2.0	Scheduled	Every two years	National Manager Operations	Managing Director
POLABUAUSNATCLD202001	October 2020	1.0	New document	Every two years	National Manager Operations	Managing Director