



GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL Mature Age Workforce Policy

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Glen Innes Severn Council is committed to promoting a productive workplace where the abilities and experience of mature-aged staff are acknowledged, valued and utilised.

Aims

The aims of the Mature Age Workforce Policy are to:

- provide strategies to optimise continued employment and career development opportunities for mature aged workers;
- provide support for mature age workers during the transitional phase from career to retirement;
- optimise the retention of valuable corporate knowledge and expertise;
- reduce staff turnover and increase productivity through improved job satisfaction and fewer absences from work; and
- provide role models for younger workers by building on the experience, positive work ethic and greater reliability of older workers.

Strategies for Managing a Mature Age Workforce

1. Succession Planning and Knowledge Retention

Council will identify key roles and skills and how these will be resourced into the future when current employees reach retirement age. Transfer of knowledge and skills will be considered and planned so that essential knowledge is not lost when an employee retires.

2. Mentoring

Council will introduce mentoring and coaching to facilitate skills and knowledge transfer between younger and older workers, allowing participants to build on past experiences and acquire new knowledge in a supportive environment.

3. Flexible Work Practices

Council will develop a range of flexible employment opportunities for older workers especially those in high skilled occupations or those with carer responsibilities, assisting with a gradual reduction in workers' responsibilities and providing a phased transition to retirement.

4. Staff Education and Training Programs

Council will introduce a training program to raise awareness of the benefits of mature age employment and to assist managers and supervisors to overcome their preconceptions and to effectively manage work teams of differing age groups.

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5. Conflict Management

Council will provide additional strategies and training for managers and supervisors to assist them to resolve differences of opinion or conflicts that may arise as a consequence of employees operating in a more diverse work environment.

6. Preparation for the Transition to Retirement

Council will provide 'preparing for retirement' awareness sessions, incorporating financial and lifestyle planning to assist employees to consider all the factors surrounding retirement such as the loss of social connections or financial implications. These sessions will support workers to understand the challenges ahead so they can be more prepared.

7. Financial Counselling

Council will equip itself with the knowledge and resources, either internally and / or through external providers, to enable it to assist employees to prepare for the shift in personal financial circumstances brought about by retirement.

8. Recognition of Physical and Cognitive Changes

Council will raise awareness of the physical and cognitive changes brought about by ageing and equip its workforce to recognise and effectively respond to the impact of such changes, ensuring the continued employment of mature age workers. This may involve appropriate health and wellbeing programs, changes to roles, responsibilities or work design, and / or assisting workers to take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing.

Mature Age Workforce Program

To address the eight strategies set out above, Council will adopt and implement a three year **Mature Age Workforce Program**, attached as **Annexure One** to this Policy, which condenses and refines the strategies set out above into the following three key objectives:

1. Facilitate the transfer and retention of knowledge and skills.
2. Provide enhanced flexibility and phased retirement options for prospective retirees.
3. Foster improved health and wellbeing within an ageing workforce.

The Mature Age Workforce Program will be linked to Council's Community Strategic Plan and Workforce Plan 2017-2021.

Responsibilities

The **General Manager** is responsible for:

- ensuring the implementation of the Mature Age Workforce Program;
- ensuring Council offers equal access to recruitment, promotion, transfer and career development opportunities for all people, regardless of age;
- developing and sustaining an employment culture that values the expertise of older employees; ensuring that all personnel policies are age-neutral;

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- developing new policies (such as flexible work practices and phased retirement policies) to encourage older workers to remain in and contribute to the workforce;
- taking a leadership role in demonstrating a commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and anti-discrimination; and
- ensuring Council complies with relevant anti-discrimination laws to guarantee the absence of unlawful discrimination.

Directors, managers and other supervisors are responsible for:

- educating all employees about age discrimination and non-compulsory retirement legislation within their respective areas of responsibility;
- encouraging respect for the skills and experience of mature age employees, including current employees and applicants for vacant positions;
- ensuring that personnel decisions are made on the basis of work-related criteria only and that the application of all personnel policies is age neutral;
- addressing incorrect age stereotyping or assumptions in relation to training and career development;
- basing training programs on formal assessment of all employees' skills and Council's needs; and
- providing opportunities for all employees to maximise their potential, irrespective of age.

Employees are responsible for:

- participating in Council's Mature Age Workforce Program and giving it their full support;
- ensuring that they do not contribute to the devaluing of or discrimination against other employees based on their age or other characteristics; and
- participating positively in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, programs and services which affect them.

Relevant Legislation and Policies

- Glen Innes Severn Council (GISC) Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027;
- GISC Workforce Plan 2017-2021;
- GISC EEO Management Plan;
- *NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*;
- *NSW Industrial Relations Act 1996*;
- *NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011*;
- *NSW Local Government Act 1993*;
- GISC Workplace Discrimination and Bullying / Harassment Policy;
- GISC Grievance Resolution Policy;
- Policies on recruitment, flexible work practices and performance management (GISC Human Resources Policy Statement Register).

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Reporting

Key objectives and actions from the Mature Age Workforce Program will be included for implementation in Council's annual Operational Plans. Progress on the achievement of objectives will be reported to Manex and Council by the Manager of Administration and Human Resources as part of the Operational Plan six monthly reports.

Definitions and Applicability

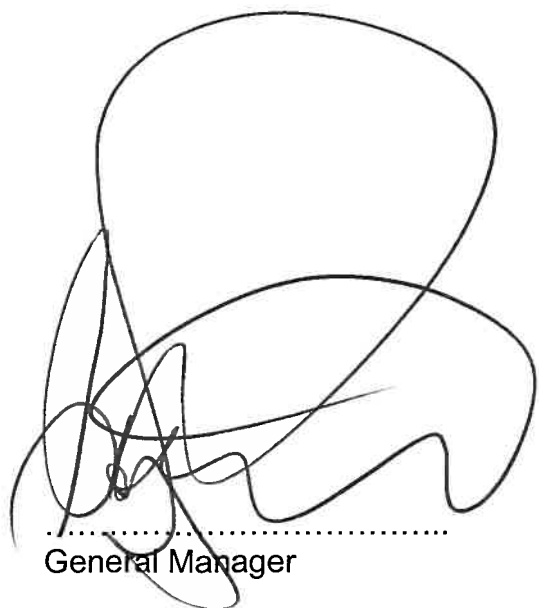
The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines mature age workers as being employed people aged 45 - 65+ years, although this definition may need revision to take into account longer life expectancies and planned increases in the eligible age for the age pension, set to increase to 67 by 2023. For the purposes of this Policy and the Mature Age Workforce Program, eligible workers are defined as those employees within Council's workforce who are over 50 years of age.

Implementation and Communication

This Policy will be communicated to all new employees who are affected by it as part of their induction. Revised versions of the Policy that contain significant changes will be communicated to all affected staff by Human Resources staff. New versions that only contain minor or inconsequential changes will be distributed to managers for highlighting at team meetings.

Variation and Review

This policy shall be reviewed every three years, or earlier if required. Council reserves the right to vary or revoke this policy at its discretion.



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General Manager

23/6/20
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Date

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