

Fair Access Policy

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CONTENTS

1. TITLE.....	3
2. OBJECTIVE.....	3
3. BACKGROUND.....	3
4. SCOPE.....	3
5. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	4
6. POLICY.....	4
7. HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER COMPATIBILITY.....	5
8. ASSOCIATED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS.....	5
9. EXTERNAL REFERENCES/RESOURCES.....	6

1. TITLE

Fair Access Policy

2. OBJECTIVE

This Policy seeks to address known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community sports infrastructure.

The Policy aims to progressively build the capacity and capabilities of Glen Eira City Council (Council) in identifying and eliminating systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services in relation to community sports infrastructure.

Council will support sports clubs to remove barriers for women and girls to participate in sport and active recreation and undertake the necessary and proportionate steps towards implementing this, Policy.

3. BACKGROUND

Sport is a highly visible and valued feature of Glen Eira's culture and identity. Council is strongly committed to providing opportunities for community participation in a diverse range of sporting and recreation activities by providing sports and active recreation infrastructure.

Council manages the usage of 45 sports grounds, 26 pavilions and associated infrastructure such as sports ground lighting and cricket training nets, a range of active recreation infrastructure including multi-purpose courts and outdoor fitness facilities in addition to sports and aquatic facilities and the delivery of associated programs. These facilities seek to cater to the broad range of community sports and active recreation that people wish to participate in and provide opportunities for underrepresented demographic groups.

The sport and active recreation sector provide opportunities for enriching our communities through the promotion of respect and fair mindedness for all people, while also supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of all Victorians. Council is well positioned to design and implement place-based, integrated action plans that progress gender equality in community sports.

The Victorian Government is committed to developing an environment for all Victorians to live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources, and opportunities, and be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. A reform agenda has been developed to address the traditional structures, how community and recreation organisations operate, and to change the systems that have enabled gender inequality. It involves the implementation of all nine recommendations from the 2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation.

In response, the Victorian Government, led by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, requires all Local Government Authorities to have a Fair Access Policy and Action Plan to help ensure a future where there is a level playing field for women and girls in sport and active recreation. To adhere to State legislation all Victorian Council's are required to have a Policy and Action Plan in place by 1 October 2024.

4. SCOPE

The scope of the Policy is to support Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community sports infrastructure. This complies with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* and aligns with Council's Licensed Sports Club Allocation and Charging Policy the Glen Eira Community Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and the Gender Equality Action Plan.

The Policy applies to:

- all policies, programs, and services related to community sports infrastructure.
- community sports facilities managed by Council.
- sports clubs, which use facilities, grounds and courts managed by Council.

5. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Meaning
Community sports infrastructure	Publicly owned local, rural , regional, or state level sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community sport activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, and pavilions.
Gender	How you understand who you are and how you interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being a man or woman. Some people understand their gender as a mix of these or neither. A person's gender and their expression of their gender can be shown in different ways, such as through behaviour or physical appearance.
Gender diverse	An umbrella term for a range of genders expressed in different ways. Gender diverse people use many terms to describe themselves. Language in this area is dynamic, particularly among young people, who are more likely to describe themselves as non-binary.
Gender equality	The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men and trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men and trans and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.
Gender equity	The provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities based on gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances.
Gender Impact Assessment, or GIA	A requirement under the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> to be carried out on policies, programs and services which have a direct and significant impact on the public. The assessment must evaluate the effects that a policy, program or service may have on people of different genders.
Transgender, or trans	Someone whose gender does not only align with the one assigned at birth. Not all trans people will use this term to describe themselves.
Women and girls	When we use the term women and girls in this Policy, we refer to anyone who identifies as being a woman or girl.

6. POLICY

6.1 Policy Framework

The policy is guided by the Fair Access Principles developed by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, Sport and Recreation Victoria. The Fair Access Principles are presented below.

1. Community sports infrastructure and environments are welcoming, safe and inclusive.
2. Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sports and active recreation, including as players, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers and spectators.
3. Women and girls will have equitable access to and use of community sport infrastructure:
 - a. of the highest quality available and most convenient
 - b. at the best and most popular competition and training times and locations
 - c. to support existing and new participation opportunities and a variety of sports
4. Women and girls should be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.
5. All user groups who access and use community sport infrastructure understand, adopt and implement gender equitable access and use practices.
6. Prioritise access, use and support to all user groups demonstrating an ongoing commitment to gender equitable access and use of allocated community sports infrastructure.

The Policy is designed to comply with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and the wider Victorian Government gender equality strategy.

Council acknowledges:

- the disadvantaged position some individuals have had in the sport and recreation sector because of their gender; and
- that achieving gender equality will require diverse approaches for women, men, trans and gender diverse people to achieve similar outcomes for people of all genders.

Council will:

- engage fairly and equitably with all staff, governance working groups, state sporting organisations, local sporting associations and members of our sport and recreation community, regardless of their gender, in a positive, respectful, and constructive manner; and
- complete gender impact assessments on relevant policies, programs and services to assess the implications for women, men, trans and gender diverse people. This is a strategy for considering all voices, concerns and experiences, in the design, implementation, monitoring of policies and programs and services.

6.2 Policy Principles

The Fair Access Policy aims to

1. Promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture and community.
2. Promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls in sport and active recreation.
3. Guide the development or review of sport and recreation policies or strategies to consider fair access, including the undertaking of gender impact assessments.
4. Support and educate sports clubs to consider gender equity within their club.
5. Support Council's advocacy for investment into improved outcomes for sporting infrastructure and clubs.
6. Guide the development of community sports infrastructure upgrades and developments.
7. Guide our allocation of sports grounds and facilities.

The policy aims are supported through the implementation of the Fair Access Action Plan, which specifically addresses the Fair Access Principles, to progress gender equitable access in community sports.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER COMPATIBILITY

This Policy has been assessed as being compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic).

1. ASSOCIATED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS

Licensed Sports Club Allocation and Charging Policy

Provision of Sports Ground Lighting Policy

Get Active – The Future of Sport and Active Recreation

Pavilion Redevelopment Strategy

Glen Eira Council Plan

Glen Eira Community Wellbeing Plan

Gender Equality Action Plan

Council Leasing and Licensing Policy

Planning for Play – A Guide to creating quality playgrounds in Glen Eira City Council

Active Recreation Action Plan

2. EXTERNAL REFERENCES/RESOURCES

Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Recreation