



Fact Sheet:

Gender Equality Act 101

Have you ever thought about how your work impacts people of different genders? Your gender can affect your needs and experiences, and policies, programs and services impact people of different genders in different ways. This can unintentionally reinforce inequalities which is why it is always a good idea to do a gender impact assessment.



What does the Gender Equality Act require?

Victorian public sector organisations with 50 or more employees must report on what they are doing to meaningfully progress gender equality in their workplace. If the act applies to your workplace, you must:

- Begin gender impact assessments from 31 March 2021.
- Ensure you do gender impact assessments of all new policies, programs and services that directly and significantly impact the public, as well as those up for review.
- Report on your gender impact assessments every two years.



Resources

Gender Equality + Workplaces: An Overview of Victoria's Gender Equality Act (PDF) – womenshealthbsw.org.au/gender-equality-act

Gender impact assessments - genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/genderimpact-assessments

What is a gender impact assessment?

Each time you develop a new program, policy or service or review an existing one, you must make sure it works for everyone. The tool used to do this is called a gender impact assessment. An assessment can be applied to any piece of work no matter how small or large, and can be done by:

- Defining the problem or issue your policy, program or service is trying to address and make sure this definition considers how they are shaped by gender.
- Thinking about what information is available and what further evidence is needed to understand how gender shapes the context.
- Developing potential options for your policy, program or service and weighing up the gendered impact of each.
- Making a final recommendation based on the evidence collected and analysis conducted.

What do gender impact assessments need to include?

- The effects policies, programs or services may have on people of different genders.
- An explanation of how they will be changed to better support Victorians of all genders and promote gender equality.
- Where practical, consideration of how gender inequality can be compounded by disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience based on other factors such as age, disability, or ethnicity (intersectionality).



Resources

Although not mandatory, WHWBSW recommends organisations begin by downloading the Commission's gender impact assessment toolkit. It sets out a best-practice process and includes templates to make your job easier. See the *tools and templates* section of this fact sheet.

Tips to consider when doing gender impact assessments

1. Use your organisation's knowledge and understanding to determine which policies, programs and services have or will have a direct and significant impact on the public. While you can do a gender impact assessment on any piece of work, these are the areas where the Act requires you to do an assessment, so it is important you work out what they are.
2. Incorporate gender impact assessments into your normal process for developing policies, programs and services, taking the time to explain and promote gender equality to staff as you do.
3. As a general rule, the greater the likely impact of a policy, program or service, the more time you should spend on a gender impact assessment.
4. Keep a record of your gender impact assessments to make reporting (every two years) easier.

Who can help?

WHWBSW have years of expertise and experience progressing gender equality in the Barwon South West region. Our staff can:

- Provide confidential one-on-one consultations to help answer any questions you have and work through any problems you may encounter.
- Run training sessions for small groups.
- Present to your Board, senior leaders and/or staff.
- Provide evidence-based resources and practical examples of how your workplace can get the most out of the audit while meeting its obligations.

Tools and templates

Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector website genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/genderimpact-assessments

- Gender impact assessment toolkit (PDF)
- Gender impact assessment toolkit (PDF) – Templates and resources
- Gender impact assessment toolkit (PDF) – Template 1
- Gender impact assessment toolkit (PDF) – Template 2
- Gender impact assessment toolkit (PDF) – Template 3
- Gender impact assessment toolkit (PDF) – Template 4

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