

## **JOB APPLICANTS GUIDE**

### **COMMON SELECTION CRITERIA**

#### **INFORMATION GUIDE ON EEO, EAPS AND OH&S**

##### **ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR NSW GOVERNMENT JOB APPLICANTS**

People who work for the NSW Government are not just doing a job — they are representing the Government. They are expected to behave fairly and correctly when carrying out their duties and in dealing with the public and fellow employees.

For this reason, job applicants need to have a knowledge and understanding of the common selection criteria:

- equal employment opportunity (EEO)
- ethical practice
- ethnic affairs priorities statements (EAPS)
- occupational health and safety (OH&S).

The following information is designed to help you gain an understanding of these areas. Studying this information will be enough to enable most job applicants to write their application and prepare for the questions they will be asked at interview.

All job applicants should read each topic carefully. If you are applying for a job as a manager, you should think about how you would make sure these principles are effectively applied in the work area.

A few specialised jobs require a deeper level of understanding. For these jobs, you need to do further research. For example, an EEO Co-ordinator needs to know a lot about EEO; a building work supervisor needs to know all about safety in building work.

##### **1. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)**

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is about:

- making sure that workplaces are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, and
- providing programs to assist members of EEO groups.

EEO groups are people affected by past or continuing disadvantage or discrimination in employment. These groups are:

- women
- Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders
- members of racial, ethnic, and ethno-religious minority groups
- people with a disability.

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or harassing them because they belong to a particular group. Under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, it is against the law in NSW for any employer, including the Government, to discriminate against an employee or job applicant because of their: age; sex; pregnancy; disability (includes past, present or possible future disability); race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or nationality; marital status; carer's responsibilities; homosexuality; transgender.

Both direct and indirect discrimination is against the law. Direct discrimination means treatment that is obviously unfair or unequal.

Indirect discrimination means having a requirement that is the same for everyone but has an effect or result that is unfair to particular groups.

Employees have the right to:

- a workplace that is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment
- equal access to benefits and conditions
- fair processes to deal with work-related complaints and grievances.

Employees have the responsibility to:

- act to prevent harassment and discrimination against others in the workplace
- respect differences among colleagues and customers such as cultural and social diversity
- treat people fairly (don't discriminate against or harass them).

Managers & supervisors have the responsibility to:

- take steps to ensure that all work practices and behaviours are fair and free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment
- provide employees with equal opportunity to apply for available jobs, training and development, higher duties and flexible working hours
- ensure selection processes are based on merit, transparent and the methods used are consistent.

This page is from Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment, Phone 02 9248 3555, [www.eeo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au).

## **2. Ethical Practice**

People who work for the NSW Government must always work ethically and act in good faith in the public interest. This is their public duty.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption has developed these principles to help Government employees make better decisions and resolve ethical dilemmas that they face at work:

### **Serving public above private interests**

Government employees must make decisions and take actions which best serve the public interest. When making decisions, employees should not consider their private or personal interests.

### **Integrity**

Government employees should ensure that any decision made, or action taken, has these qualities:

#### Openness

- Giving reasons for decisions
- Revealing all avenues available to the client or business
- When authorised, offering all information
- Communicating clearly

#### Honesty

- Obeying the law
- Following the letter and spirit of policies and procedures
- Observing codes of conduct
- Fully disclosing any possible conflicts between the public interest and your personal interest

#### Accountability

- Recording reasons for decisions
- Submitting to scrutiny
- Keeping proper accessible records
- Establishing audit trails

## Objectivity

- Fairness to all
- Impartial assessment
- Merit selection in recruitment and in purchase and sale of government resources
- Considering only relevant matters

## Courage

- Giving advice fearlessly and frankly where required
- Doing the right thing even in the face of adversity
- Reporting and dealing with suspected wrongdoing
- Acting in the public interest above loyalty to colleagues or supervisors.

## Leadership

Demonstrating, by your own ethical behaviour, the value of these principles in serving the public interest. Promoting public duty to colleagues and others in an agency and outside.

For more information, you can ask any Government agency for a copy of their Code of Conduct for employees.

This page is from Independent Commission Against Corruption, Phone 02 8281 5999, [www.icac.nsw.gov.au](http://www.icac.nsw.gov.au).

### **3. Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statements (EAPS)**

The NSW Government recognises and values the different linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds of all the people of NSW.

The Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000 sets out four principles of multiculturalism. These are:

- All individuals in NSW should have the greatest possible opportunity to contribute to, and participate in, all aspects of public life in which they may legally participate.
- All individuals and institutions should respect and make provision for the culture, language and religion of others within an Australian legal and institutional framework where English is the common language.

- All individuals should have the greatest possible opportunity to make use of and participate in relevant activities and programs provided or administered by the Government of NSW.
- All institutions of NSW should recognise the linguistic and cultural assets in the population of NSW as a valuable resource and promote this resource to maximise the development of the State.

All NSW Government agencies must include an Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) in their annual report to Parliament. These contain the agency's strategies and plans for future action to meet the principles of multiculturalism.

Strategies include:

- offering programs and services which reflect the needs of the entire community
- developing and implementing policies which are sensitive to the needs of all staff and clients
- providing information in ways that will reach all staff and clients
- providing language services for all clients
- ensuring that boards and committees reflect the multiculturalism of the community
- training staff on multiculturalism issues and how these apply in their jobs
- using flexible, inclusive consultation processes.

A number of NSW agencies have been identified as key agencies on the basis of:

- a high degree of client contact, especially in the areas of welfare, justice, education and employment, and/or
- responsibility for developing and implementing Government policy in these areas.

These key agencies are also required to work closely with the Community Relations Commission in the preparation of their EAPS and to lodge their EAPS with the Commission.

This page is from Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW, Phone 02 9716 2232, [www.crc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au).

#### **4. Occupational Health And Safety (OH&S)**

What everyone needs to know

The NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of people at work by laying down general requirements which must be met at every place of work in NSW.

The Act covers employees as well as employers and self-employed people.

Employees must:

- take reasonable care of the health and safety of others
- co-operate with employers in their efforts to comply with occupational health and safety requirements.

Employers must:

- act to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees
- provide and maintain safe places of work, equipment and systems of work under the Act.

All persons must not:

- interfere with or misuse things provided for the health, safety or welfare of persons at work
- obstruct attempts to give aid or attempts to prevent a serious risk to the health and safety of a person at work
- refuse a reasonable request to assist in giving aid or preventing a risk to health and safety.

### **What managers need to know**

Employers must act to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. They must:

- provide or maintain equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health
- make arrangements for ensuring the safe use, handling, storage and transport of equipment and substances
- provide the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of employees
- maintain places of work under their control in a safe condition and provide and maintain safe entrances and exits
- make available adequate information about research and relevant tests of substances used at the place of work.

Note: This page is intended solely for the use of job applicants. Managers and employees should seek more information once they enter the workplace. Nothing in this page shall be construed to waive or modify any obligations imposed by the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 or the associated legislation, or any regulations made under it.