

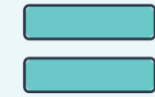


## HUMAN RIGHTS | HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

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**Guide: Governance**  
*The Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*

# QUEENSLAND'S 23 PROTECTED HUMAN RIGHTS



Recognition and equality before the law (section 15)



Right to life (section 16)



Protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment (section 17)



Freedom from forced work (section 18)



Freedom of movement (section 19)



Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief (section 20)



Freedom of expression (section 21)



Peaceful assembly and freedom of association (section 22)



Taking part in public life (section 23)



Property rights (section 24)



Privacy and reputation (section 25)



Protection of families and children (section 26)



Cultural rights - generally (section 27)



Cultural rights (section 28)



Right to liberty and security of person (section 29)



Humane treatment when deprived of liberty (section 30)



Fair hearing (section 31)



Rights in criminal proceedings (section 32)



Children in the criminal process (section 33)



Right not to be tried or punished more than once (section 34)



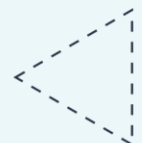
Retrospective criminal laws (section 35)



Right to education (section 36)



Right to health services (section 37)



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This Guide was developed in partnership with the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy. It forms part of a suite of resources developed through the Human Rights, Housing and Homelessness Project to build the capacity of the social housing and homelessness sectors to understand and apply the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)* (HRA) in service delivery. This Guide is written primarily for community sector staff to embed human rights into the governance and operation of community services.

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This Guide was produced on the lands of the Turrbal and Yagera peoples in Meanjin. QCOSS and the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original inhabitants of Australia and recognises these unique cultures as part of the cultural heritage of all Australians. We pay respect to Elders of this land, past and present.

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# GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Where, after all, do universal human rights begin?

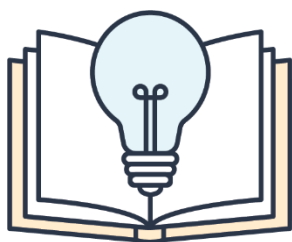
In small places, close to home, so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person: the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works.

Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.”

- Eleanor Roosevelt

The HRA outlines responsibilities for public entities to consider human rights when making service delivery decisions. These responsibilities do not only exist in frontline service delivery, they also apply to management decisions and actions taken by staff who create policies, systems and practices. The ability for frontline workers to respond to a person’s human rights will be determined by the governance structures that are established to support them.

This Guide will help you think about how human rights could be incorporated into various areas of your organisation. This is not an exhaustive document; it merely touches on some aspects you will need to consider as you embark on this journey. It also provides tips and ideas uncovered through work with the HRHH project.



Here is an introductory video about the important role that social services play in the implementation of human rights.

# CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The introduction of the HRA has instigated a change for those delivering social services and government services organisations, particularly those organisations that are a public entity.

A widely used metaphor for understanding human behaviour is the iceberg model (pictured below). It was developed to explain system thinking, <sup>1</sup>Senge (1990) and to understand behaviour and the influence of culture <sup>2</sup>Clampitt and Berk (1996). The iceberg model helps explain behaviour as an outcome of a person's underlying beliefs. When approaching cultural change in your organisation, it is important provide learning opportunities with the understanding that a person's behaviour is strongly influenced by their underlying belief system, which is not always visible and may take longer to adapt should the individual choose to change.

## ICEBERG OF CHANGE

### BEHAVIOURAL

- Strategy and Vision
- Policies and Procedures
- Shared Values
- Actions and Goals

### PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Structures
- Assumptions
- Traditions
- Beliefs
- Norms

### PHILOSOPHICAL

- Values
- Unwritten rules
- Stories
- Feelings

<sup>1</sup> From the work of Peter Senge a systems scientist, author of the Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization. Senge, M., P.(1990). The Leader's New Work: Building Learning Organizations. Sloan Management Review, 32(1).

<sup>2</sup> From the work of Edward Hall's 'ice berg model', Hall, E. T. (1976). Beyond culture. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday and the further work of Clampitt, P.G. and Berk, L.R., 1996. Strategically communicating organisational change. Journal of Communication Management.

Much of a person's workplace belief system stems from an organisation's existing culture. Therefore, as you plan change management activities, it is important to respond to staff behaviour, helping them to gain the knowledge and experience to adapt to change, while respecting and providing space for staff as individuals to adjust their own psychological and philosophical beliefs. These changes can be harder to teach and measure. <sup>1</sup>Change management practitioners suggest that providing information from experts and organisational leaders, together with informal discussion can help people support cultural change.

People will also look to those they respect when examining their own underlying beliefs. This means that long-term staff, leaders and experts are common sources of influence for workplace cultural change.

## What were people's biggest takeaways after learning about the HRA?

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“ There are many things that you are unaware of, but it comes to light after reading into this Act. ”

“ It has made me more aware and encouraged me to be more mindful ”

“ **MORE WORK IS REQUIRED** ”

“ There is so much more we can do, this is a process that will enhance service delivery and outcomes to all. ”

<sup>1</sup>Cultural change management practitioners provide a range of resources including articles, podcasts and other resources, <https://www.leadingteams.net.au/organisational-cultural-change/> and <https://www.leadingteams.net.au/obstacles-to-change-overcome-them/>

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The HRA introduces new responsibilities to public entities as they deliver services to people in Queensland. As a result, many organisational documents and practices will need to be updated to reference human rights. Before launching into policies, procedures and other practical documents, it is helpful to sit back and think broadly about organisational roles and responsibilities.

Here are a few areas to consider.

## Decision-making

Considering human rights when making decisions will occur at all levels of your organisation. This responsibility should be clearly outlined in any delegation and/or decision-making documents. For example, some organisations have peer-review processes to cross-check proper consideration of human rights in situations where decisions will have a significant outcome. Other organisations have incorporated line manager approval or team discussions when a significant decision will likely limit a person's human rights.

The consideration an organisation gives when making a decision will need to be open and transparent. The HRA requires organisations to properly consider human rights and the Act's complaint mechanism allows people and the Commission access to these documents, should a complaint enter conciliation. Your decision-making documentation and associated delegations need to support staff to make necessary decisions and give them confidence in these processes should a complaint arise.

## Monitoring

Under the HRA, decision-makers are required to consider whether or not a decision is 'necessary' and if there are less restrictive alternatives. This requirement challenges the strict practice of adhering to established procedures in favour of a more tailored approach to decision-making. It will therefore be helpful for managers and senior leaders to determine how they plan to monitor their organisation's compliance with human rights.

Managers will not only have to monitor service delivery decisions, they will also need to monitor human rights complaints. It will be necessary to monitor and potentially get involved in complaints that may have a number of different phases; complaints raised to organisations, those unsuccessfully resolved in 45 days, complaints escalated to the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC) and complaints in conciliation.

It is strongly recommended that complaints are not only monitored and managed by senior leaders in an organisation, but that they are also used to inform an organisation's continuous improvement practice. This allows learnings that are gained in monitoring activities to be used to improve service delivery and improve the consistency of human rights consideration across the organisation.

## Documentation

The HRA is overseen by the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC). Should a complaint arise, the Commission may ask for documentation outlining communication, human rights consideration and the justification for any decisions. It is important that this documentation is provided quickly and efficiently, and documents are dated in order to demonstrate that human rights were considered fully and in an appropriate time.

Guidance on how this document should be written and stored will need to be given to staff and it is recommended that organisations discuss the potential audience for these documents. Should a complaint arise or questions are asked it is likely that the individual, the QHRC and senior leaders will view these documents. It is important that staff are fully informed and are given the appropriate opportunity to practice giving and documenting human rights consideration.

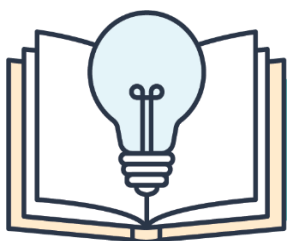
A range of different decisions in your organisation will require documenting human rights consideration. Proper consideration will apply to participants on a case-by-case basis. These documents may be kept in case notes or linked to an individual's file. Other consideration decisions may relate to a procedure or project, such as the allocation of a property or the development of a whole-of-organisation strategy. The human rights consideration for these decisions may need to be stored in process files or project folders. Take the time to consider the types of decisions your organisation makes and provide guidance, so your staff can consistently document and store their decisions.

## What were some of the biggest takeaways for managers after learning about the HRA?

“ The balancing of competing human rights and documenting the considerations of each parties rights especially when responding to complaints. ”

“ Importance of documenting the decision-making processes ”

“ Important to be informed and be engaged. Have the conversation with key stakeholders and document the reasoning behind the decision ”



For more information on documentation read our blog: [Capturing Human Rights considerations in your notes.](#)



# TRAINING

All staff working in public entities should be aware of their responsibilities under the HRA.

At a minimum, staff should have a working knowledge of the 23 protected human rights and know how to properly consider human rights when making a decision or taking an action.

There is always more to learn when learning about human rights. Our understanding of human rights is always evolving - what is considered justifiable and reasonable in 2020 may not be judged the same way in 2030. Human rights training needs be on the agenda in staff orientation and stay on the agenda each year. New scenarios, case law, the news and QHRC reports are all great sources for up-to-date information on the changing nature of human rights.

## Tips from your colleagues when asked

“are there any insights or advice you would like to share with other workers in the sector?”

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“ Make themselves familiar with the Human Rights Act 2019 (QLD) as it is very applicable to our sector. ”

“ As an organisation we need to continually train staff and ensure that it is part of induction. ”

“ ANNUAL TRAINING-REFRESHERS ”

“ Get to know your rights and especially the ones relevant to your line of work. ”

“ I believe that many in middle and higher management need to take up the opportunity for training to gain the knowledge that will see the HRA implemented appropriately. ”

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When developing or planning training for adult learners, it is important to apply adult learning principles. Knowles (1980) developed six key adult learning principles that are helpful to keep in mind when you design staff training.

## <sup>1</sup>Six key adult learning principles:

### Adults...

#### Are self-directed

Adults have busy lives and the capacity to self-organise, so where possible, provide staff with self-directed learning opportunities. With today's access to technology, sharing podcasts or online resources with one another can be a great way for teams to self-direct and share learning material.

#### Bring knowledge and experience

Adults have experience and it is important that this experience and previous knowledge is recognised and welcomed into learning activities. Encouraging adults to share examples of how this learning would apply to their work is a great way for staff to engage their knowledge and experience.

#### Are goal-orientated

Adult learners like training to contribute to their work, whether you have outcomes, a mission or KPIs that motivate staff. Engagement with learning activities will increase when the knowledge provided supports staff to achieve important work goals.

#### Relevant and task-orientated

Adults are busy and do not like to waste time. Learning should be highly relevant and it is important that there is a clear connection between the learning material and the work an adult does. Real workplace scenarios and case studies that address difficult work situations help staff make these connections.

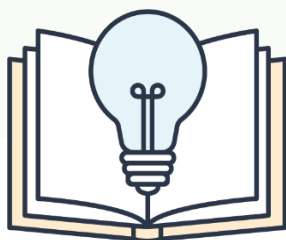
#### Motivated to learn

Motivation is important anytime you want to learn, and it is important not to overlook this with adult learners. This is particularly important when training is used within a broader change management process. Provide staff with learning materials at the right time, so they either want or need to know the content; this will support successful training activities.

#### Be and feel respected

In a work environment, you are often providing training to a diverse range of people, with different styles, personalities, and across multiple generations. Maintaining an awareness of the diversity of people you are training will help you develop learning materials and activities that are appropriate. This can reinforce respect for training participants' autonomy and sense of self.

The HRA is highly relevant to people who work in public entities. Case studies and real-life scenarios can be a great way of engaging staff and making the learning material relevant. Building on their own experiences and work challenges allows them to see how the HRA can influence their work and where it cannot help.



Access our online [workbook](#) to start your human rights journey and introduce you or others to the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*.

<sup>1</sup>Adult learning principles developed from Malcolm Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy* (1980, New York: Cambridge, The Adult Education Co.) and *Andragogy: Adult Learning Theory in Perspective* (1978 *Community College Review*, 5(3), pp. 9–20). doi: 10.1177/009155217800500302. **9**

# POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The HRA has application across a large range of organisations and service sectors. Organisations will find that the HRA needs to be incorporated into a large number of policies and procedures.

Many organisations have introduced an overarching human rights policy that outlines why human rights are important to the organisation and outlines the organisation's commitment to human rights in context to the services they deliver. This overarching policy is helpful in large organisations where there are many people updating various policies and procedures to align with the HRA.

Even with an overarching human rights policy, organisations have seen the benefit of updating other specific policies to provide clear direction on the application of human rights. Human rights feature strongly in a range of service policies including but not limited to; accessibility, complaints and feedback, equality and anti-discrimination, client service charters, debt and behaviour policies, confidentiality and privacy, allocation of service and end of service policies.

It is unlikely to surprise anyone, that many procedures benefit from being updated to align with the HRA. In particular with complaint obligations and the requirement to properly consider human rights, providing guidance for staff through procedural documents will help them identify points in a process where they need to incorporate human rights consideration. While this won't cover every scenario, prompting your staff to properly consider human rights will normalise the process and make it easier for them to identify situations where they should consider a person's human rights before they make a decision or take action.

## Tips from your colleagues

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“ All actions should be considered through the lens of human rights firsthand, and not considered an afterthought or addendum to a document or paper ”

“ Make sure human rights are considered at all stages of service planning and delivery. ”

“ **REGULAR REVIEW  
OF PROCESSES** ”

---

As you look to incorporate the HRA into your policies and procedures, take a moment to refresh your understanding of policy and procedural documents.

## Policy versus procedure

A policy is a statement that guides an organisation's operations and decision-making, as well as a binding document that supports the actions of the organisation and individual workers. Plenty of policies fulfill this definition, but what makes a good policy?

Good policy:

- makes administration easier, is not over-complicated
- enables an organisation's core business to be efficient and effective
- provides a framework for confident and consistent decision-making
- is clearly aligned with the organisation's values, mission and principles.

Procedure is how policy is practically applied. It provides instructions and options to guide staff through common activities they undertake at work.

Good procedure:

- operationalises your policies
- guides staff in their decisions and actions
- improves consistency of service delivery (especially in larger organisations)
- outlines responsibilities and gives staff authority to act.

The table below explains the difference between policies and procedures.

Policy	Procedure
Guiding principles – reflects principles, vision, mission.	Specific way of doing things – practical application or policies.
Why? What?	How? When? Who?
Identify issues and scope	Establish proper steps
Not hard and fast rules	Stricter in nature and follows a specified set of rules

**Policies and procedures are complementary.**

**As you review policies and procedures to align with the HRA, consider four key themes:**

## 1. Language

Individuals are rights bearers. It is essential to reflect this in your language choice. You must also recognise that policy language influences your organisation's language and culture. Your chosen language will set the tone for how staff will implement policies.

Try to use positive narratives to highlight human rights. Incorporating human rights will modify the way staff have always worked, so it is crucial that it isn't a burden and does not seem difficult to do.

## 2. Relevance

It is important to contextualise human rights and make them relevant to the work you are doing. Procedures provide an opportunity to identify common human rights engaged in a decision or action. You can give examples or reference case studies to show how you would like staff to approach a particular situation or work activity.

## 3. Individualism

Human rights apply to individuals.

Procedures that historically dictated an outcome now need to be applied with consideration for a person's individual circumstances. It will help staff if procedures identify common points where proper consideration for human rights is needed prior to decisions being made.

It is also necessary to consider human rights holistically. You need to look further than just the rights relevant to the service you deliver, consider the rights relevant to the person's circumstances more broadly.

It is crucial to guide staff in considering the rights of all people involved. So, when writing your policies and procedures, remind staff to consider everyone relevant to the situation, not just the individual service user.

## 4. Equality

As you review policies and procedures, it is important to remember that the HRA is equal to all other state legislation. Identify the HRA as you would identify other relevant legislation in your policies.

It is also worth remembering that legislation sits above your organisation's policies and procedures, so it is likely staff will challenge or request changes to policies and procedures to respond to the implementation of the HRA.

## What were people's biggest takeaways from learning about the HRA

“  
”  
**THE NEED TO DOCUMENT PROCESSES ACCURATELY**

“  
”  
The importance of human rights and how to apply in our work and in our day to day lives.

“  
”  
Legislation does not go far enough to protect human rights



For more information on policy writing read our blog: [Essential tips for writing human rights based policies.](#)

## How does the HRA work alongside other state legislation?

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Dear QCOSS,

**Our organisation delivers services for people who are homeless, providing outreach support and health services. We interact with a lot with other agencies and we were recently told that existing housing and health legislation overrides the Human Rights Act. Is this true? How will the HRA improve service access for vulnerable people when their rights are overridden?**

**From,  
Puzzled Provider**

---

Dear Puzzled Provider,

We are so glad you sent us this question; we certainly need to talk about the interaction of state legislation! All interacting state legislation needs to be considered alongside the Human Rights Act - there is no defined hierarchy of laws. However, there are some details and exceptions that you should be aware of. Here are three points to remember:

First, the HRA requires decision makers in public entities to consider human rights when making a decision or taking action. This won't apply if the course of action is the only choice available to the decision maker. This situation typically arises when the action is mandated in a statutory provision. For example, in the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act (2008) Qld*, (RTRAA) it states, "If subsection (2) does not apply, the former lessor must store the goods safely for the period prescribed under a regulation (the storage period)". In this circumstance, proper consideration of human rights is not required to determine if goods are to be stored because the law mandates this requirement.

Interestingly, much of our state legislation will allow decision makers to use their discretion. For example, many sections of the RTRAA state that the lessor may apply to a tribunal, for reasons such as to obtain a termination order. In this circumstance, discretion is allowed and the requirement to consider human rights would apply to public entities. Depending on your situation, it might be worth thinking about whether or not a decision or a course of action is mandated by law.

Second, many of the practices used to deliver public services are defined in policies and procedures. It is timely to remember that policies and procedures sit underneath legislation (and therefore have less weight than the HRA). Policies and procedures provide consistency by defining prescribed decisions and actions. For example, your service may have a policy that states, "the cost to repair damage that is not fair wear and tear will be onforwarded to the tenant". The HRA requires these decisions and actions to be implemented with proper consideration given to any human rights engaged. Therefore, depending upon the circumstances and the human rights impact to the tenant of paying the repair bill, housing providers who are public entities may choose to not pass on the costs to the tenant.

Finally, human rights consideration is one (very important) element of a larger decision-making process. The HRA requires public entities to give consideration for human rights, but there are many other factors that often influence the actual decision made. Having a conversation with colleagues to understand the consideration given or the other factors influencing the decision, is a great way to increase everyone's understanding about the impact your service decisions have on people.

I hope this provides some clarity for you and clears the way to continue human rights conversations with allied support services.

**Good luck!**

**QCOSS**

# ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY

An organisation's strategy will sum up the key actions and priorities outlining its plans to achieve long-term goals. With the introduction of the HRA in Queensland, it is appropriate for human rights to feature in the long-term plans of Queensland's public entities. This will ensure you are continuing to develop human rights aware practices and that your progress will be monitored and evaluated. It will ensure human rights receive senior leadership attention as our service systems change and adapt to this new legislation.

There are many ways an organisation can incorporate human rights into strategy documents. Organisations can, but it is not necessary, create a human rights category or stream within existing strategy documents. It may be more likely and more tangible to consider human rights within existing strategy actions and ensure human rights is being discussed when you undertake strategic planning sessions.

## **But how do you discuss human rights strategically?**

As strategic outcomes are developed, discuss if in assessing the impact of this outcome, you could use the four-step proper consideration process. Take time to think about any human rights that may be limited and be open about your justification providing guidance to outline how you will minimise any impacts. It is worth identifying how senior leaders will monitor human rights impact as the strategy is delivered.

## **For example:**

**Growing our portfolio to meet increasing need.** Continue to respond to the growing need for housing by replacing older stock that are high value and costly to maintain, with replacement and additional homes that are modern and easily maintained. *We will work alongside tenants whose homes are being sold to find appropriate replacement dwellings, supporting the financial and personal impacts of moving home and where practical, consider replacement homes in their preferred location. Existing tenants retain their access to secure and affordable housing and the growth of our property portfolio will afford others the same opportunity, to secure safe, sustainable and appropriate housing. Regular check ins with relocating tenants will help us monitor the impact of this strategy. Any related complaints submitted will be addressed by the CEO and a representative of the Board.*

**Supporting people into homes and their chosen sustainable life.** Service those in vulnerable housing situations to access stable, long-term housing options and support them in other sustainable life choices. *We must select those most in need, from an overwhelming number of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Supporting those we service to move out of the cycle of homelessness so they can access their human rights and live with fairness, respect, equality, dignity and autonomy. Our CEO and Board will monitor the allocation of services and the longevity of participants in their homes alongside case studies of the best and worst service outcome.*

As Queensland adapts and adopts the HRA, it is important to keep human rights on our strategic agenda. This will ensure senior leaders and boards position social service organisations to maximise peoples' enjoyment of human rights.

# CULTURE

Organisational culture has been described by the <sup>1</sup>Chartered Management Institute as the “character and personality of an organisation”. It is the context in which staff read and apply policies and procedures. Culture is mirrored in the behaviour and actions taken by staff and heavily influences your organisation’s actions.

When looking to instil a new value into your workplace culture you should always make a long-term plan. Culture is not going to change overnight. Early adopters of the change are likely to be those who already hold this value or those who adapt quickly and easily. Others will adopt the change more slowly, as their knowledge, understanding and experience grows.

As we saw in the iceberg model, workplace culture is an alignment of the behavioural, psychological and philosophical beliefs of those people working in the organisation, particularly those in leadership positions. Those with alternative beliefs will not challenge a seemingly unanimous workplace culture. As you introduce human rights, give staff space and dedicate time to discuss behavioural, psychological and philosophical aspects of the approach so staff can incorporate the change in a holistic way.

Many workers in the social service sector already held human rights respecting beliefs. Workers with this view have been early adopters and we have seen a rapid incorporation of human rights into their work practices and the organisational culture.

Keep in mind a workplace incorporates a diverse range of people and views and it is important for your workplace culture to include everyone. So, as you challenge people with change, give them knowledge, understanding and experience over time to allow them to adapt to it.

## Tips from your colleagues

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**“ROLE-MODEL HR PRACTICE....IT'S NOT HARD TO DO!”**

**“Make sure human rights are considered at all stages of service planning and delivery.”**

**“talk about the rights and discuss decisions together”**

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<sup>1</sup> Chartered Management Institute, <https://www.managers.org.uk/> and article <https://www.managers.org.uk/~media/Files/PDF/Checklists/CHK-232-Understanding-organisational-culture.pdf>



Experience from Victoria and the ACT's human rights journeys teaches us that, although there is no one-sized-fits-all approach, there are three key ingredients to developing a good human rights culture.

### **Senior leadership and vision**

Those in senior leadership positions need to openly and actively promote the importance of human rights. You don't need to have all of the answers but be open to learning alongside your team. Let them see how you are incorporating human rights into the organisation, model your commitment to human rights and to changing how the organisation runs.

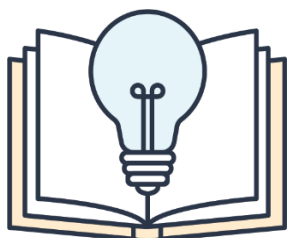
### **Operational capacity**

Along with a structure that robustly embeds human rights in procedures and decision-making, you need a culture that values, talks about and prioritises human rights. Everyday reality needs a safe place in the human rights conversation and human rights needs to be raised through the real-life conversations we have every day.

Openly acknowledge the human rights involved in day-to-day work-related situations, discuss them in meetings and informally with your team. Recognise and reward those who do this openly and honestly. Create an environment where it is safe to talk about rights limitations, rights fulfillment and the balancing of competing priorities.

### **External input and oversight**

A human rights culture, like any culture, will adapt and change over time in response to inputs and experiences, so think about how human rights input can be included. Incorporate lived experience, encourage people to provide feedback, have discussions, use complaints to inform continuous improvement, and look for opportunity to hear from others about their experience working with human rights.



For more information on human rights culture read our blog: [Embedding a culture of human rights - where do we begin?](#)

# ADAPTING PRACTICES AND PROCESSES

**Hear from your social service sector colleagues about how they are adapting their practices and processes to be more human rights-respecting: .**

---

**We incorporated compulsory training for new and existing employees and introduced new processes to comply with Human Rights Act.**

“We have received positive feedback from some service participants and staff. It has enabled a contemporary approach and positive change across most service types.”

**“I am including reference to human rights in my reports to the Board”**

**Discussions and promoting human rights in events and meetings.**

“Being more aware of the rights of people choices”

**We have tried to employ better and more understandable staff.**

**Lots of training and case studies and also informing clients of the Act.**

“We have the language now for the things we already considered”.

**We have changed the way we look at and carry out our work. We have re-written many procedures to reflect the human rights of clients.**

“While it was cumbersome at first, it has now become second nature to apply human rights in all we do.”

**Appointed champions, provided staff training & ongoing scenario discussions and we display posters & material.**

“Improved awareness & ability to challenge practice & perceptions”

**Training sessions and ongoing discussions with staff.**

“Better focus on the customers and more holistic approach on some occasions. Reminds staff that situations aren't black and white”

**Conducted workshops on the HRA and engaged in many training opportunities and encouraged staff to participate.**

“There has been a lot of discussion and opportunities for training but there are challenges in implementing the Act at the coal face due to higher management’s lack of understanding.”

**Renewed our Human Rights Policy and included it in our strategic planning.**

“Made our agencies more aware of how individual human rights has an effect on communities in general.”

**Training for the board and staff in human rights.**

“Our documentation has been strengthened. Respecting human rights has always been embedded in the way we work - coming from a social justice perspective and placing the young person at the centre of their journey, but we have definitely advanced in training and advocacy with young people around their human rights.”

**Made information available at intake for clients to take with them so they understand human rights principles.**

“We are giving clients explicit information rather than just giving a summary and assuming they have knowledge about their human rights”

**Changing our property allocation tools and also thinking about human rights when making decisions about housing**

“This has allowed us to look at decisions in a new light and make big decisions and I feel we are doing it with the right lens.”



# TIPS FROM YOUR COLLEAGUES

## Consider staff

- Think about the training needs of all of your staff, ensure they have the knowledge to undertake their work well.
- Support staff through these changes, think about their change management needs.
- Be authentic! Senior leaders also hold these responsibilities, so use this as an opportunity to talk about how you are adapting to the HRA.

## Use examples in daily practice

- Use examples and scenarios in training, policy and procedure documents.
- Take case studies to team meetings so everyone can openly discuss human rights and how they influence decisions and justifications.
- Keep human rights front-of-mind by reflecting on previous decisions your team has made. .

## Culture is key

- Lead by example. If you would like participants to exercise their rights and speak up about things they don't agree with, show your staff the right way to respond when they raise concerns.
- Training is just one mechanism for learning, link staff to a range of learning activities so they have a holistic view of human rights and how they apply to their work.

## You can't write down everything, so what can you do

- Empower staff to consider human rights by giving them the knowledge and experience, the support and opportunity and the authority to make good decisions.
- Ensure your written documents support your staff to make human rights-based decisions.
- Challenge staff so they build confidence to consider human rights and encourage this consideration to influence the decisions they make.

## Learn and adapt

- Human rights consideration will be different as public standards and expectations change, make sure your staff are keeping up to date.
- Use human rights learnings to improve your service for everyone by linking your complaint mechanism to inform your continuous improvement practices.
- Use human rights understanding as an opportunity to learn about the diverse range of people in society so we can all improve the delivery of our services to them.



**Tip:** Celebrate International Human Rights Day, on 10 December. Show your commitment to human rights by making it a special day all staff can enjoy.