



**Tomorrow Today Foundation  
Policy Documentation**

<b>Policy:</b>	Diversity and Inclusion Policy	<b>Last updated:</b>	New
<b>Category:</b>	Occupational Health & Safety	<b>Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Purpose:</b>	To ensure everyone, regardless of who they are or how they are connected with Tomorrow Today, feels respected, involved and supported.	<b>Approved by:</b>	Board
		<b>Endorsement Date:</b>	15.7.22
<b>Definitions:</b>	Diversity and inclusion promotes representation and participation of different groups of individuals, including people of different ages, races and ethnicities, abilities and disabilities, genders, religions, cultures and sexual orientations.	<b>Review Date:</b>	July 2024

**Background**

Tomorrow Today is committed to diversity and inclusion, both in the services it provides the Benalla and district community and how the diversity of our community is reflected and supported in the workplace. This is consistent with the Tomorrow Today Vision:

*A generous community, able to deliver a stronger tomorrow by challenging itself today.*

and Purpose:

*To enable the people of Benalla district to create a stronger, more resilient and prosperous rural community.*

**Policy Objective**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Tomorrow Today provides an environment grounded in respect which fosters inclusion, promotes diversity and embraces the unique skills and qualities of all employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants and visitors.

**Responsibilities**

Tomorrow Today will:

- Provide a workplace that promotes diversity and inclusivity
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to employees and volunteers where appropriate
- Provide support and assistance to employees and volunteers
- Investigate complaints promptly and confidentially

## Policy Scope

The policy takes its lead from various State and Commonwealth Legislation and specifically applies to:

- Aboriginal Inclusion
- Cultural Diversity
- Disability
- Gender Equality
- Generational Diversity
- LGBTIQ+

## Building a diverse and inclusive environment

Tomorrow Today seeks to operate in an environment which promotes diversity and inclusion. It is important for our employees, contractors, and volunteers to be aware how their personal views may impact on the success and reputation of Tomorrow Today. Conversely, it is the responsibility of Tomorrow Today to support its representatives who in the course of their regular duties, may be impacted by the views or comments of other individuals.

### Unconscious bias

Unconscious bias occurs when a person's attitude or beliefs about others surface without the person being aware of it. These subconscious feelings do not necessarily align with a person's conscious or publicly declared beliefs.

Examples of unconscious bias<sup>1</sup>:

- *Ageism*. Age discrimination is based on the belief that older workers/volunteers are not as competent or capable as a younger employee/volunteer. This idea could be based on a person's belief that a person's age is related to their work abilities, knowledge or skill.
- *Conformity Bias*. Much like peer pressure, this bias appears when a group's opinion affects the decision making of an individual.
- *Weight Bias*. This is the judgement of a person because they are heavier or lighter than average weight.
- *Affinity Bias*. This occurs when people are naturally drawn to people who are similar to themselves. These similarities can be based on age, race or gender.
- *Confirmation Bias*. This happens when a person wants to confirm information or ideas that they made prior to a situation. They are simply looking to feel they are right, even if it means ignoring the truth or good idea.
- *Beauty Bias*. This occurs when based on their perceived physical appearance, a person can receive better treatment in the form of hiring, getting promotions, or other work perks without involving harassment.
- *Attribution Bias*. When a person tries to evaluate or try to understand why another person behaves the way that they do. This means that a person will try to make attributions or

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.easylama.com/blog/unconscious-bias-in-the-workplace>

assumptions about certain people based on their actions.

- *Name Bias.* When a person forms pre-judgements about another person based solely on their name. A person's name can give unconscious hints to another about their race or gender.
- *Height Bias:* Where a person judges others who are significantly shorter or taller than average height. Like weight and beauty biases, this focuses entirely on the appearance rather than someone's actual capacity.

### **Recognising First Nations People**

Tomorrow Today seeks to provide a culturally safe place for First Nations employees, prospective employees, activity participants, volunteers, visitors, community partners and families.

In line with wider State Government policy<sup>2</sup> Tomorrow Today will ensure First Nations people, without fear of retribution or questioning, can proudly identify as Aboriginal and feel safe to be themselves, valued and respected for their expertise. Tomorrow Today is committed to First Nations self-determination and fostering a relationship with the First Nations community based on mutual respect and joint decision-making.

#### Welcome to Country and Acknowledging Traditional Custodians

A Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians recognises the continuing connection of First Nations Traditional Custodians to their Country and continues the process of reconciliation and healing. Anyone can acknowledge traditional custodians however only recognised traditional custodians can perform a Welcome to Country

An Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians can be done by anyone. It is a way of showing awareness of, and respect for, the First Nations Traditional Custodians of the land where a meeting or event is held. If the Victorian Government has formally recognised the Traditional Custodians for the area where your event is taking place, you should specifically acknowledge those Traditional Custodians.

A sample Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians<sup>3</sup> at an event:

*'Our meeting/conference/workshop is being held on the lands of the Yorta Yorta, Taungurung and Bangerang people and I wish to acknowledge them as Traditional Custodians.*

*I would also like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders of other communities who may be here today.'*

A sample Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians in an email signature:

*Tomorrow Today acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.*

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<sup>2</sup> Derived from Vic Gov's *Wirralung Ganai - Aboriginal Inclusion Plan*.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/acknowledgement-traditional-owners>

Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians application guide:

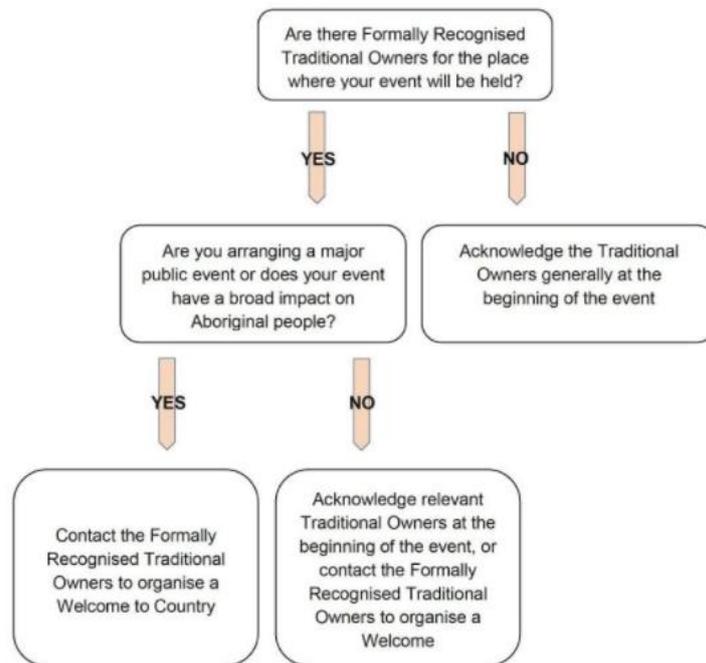
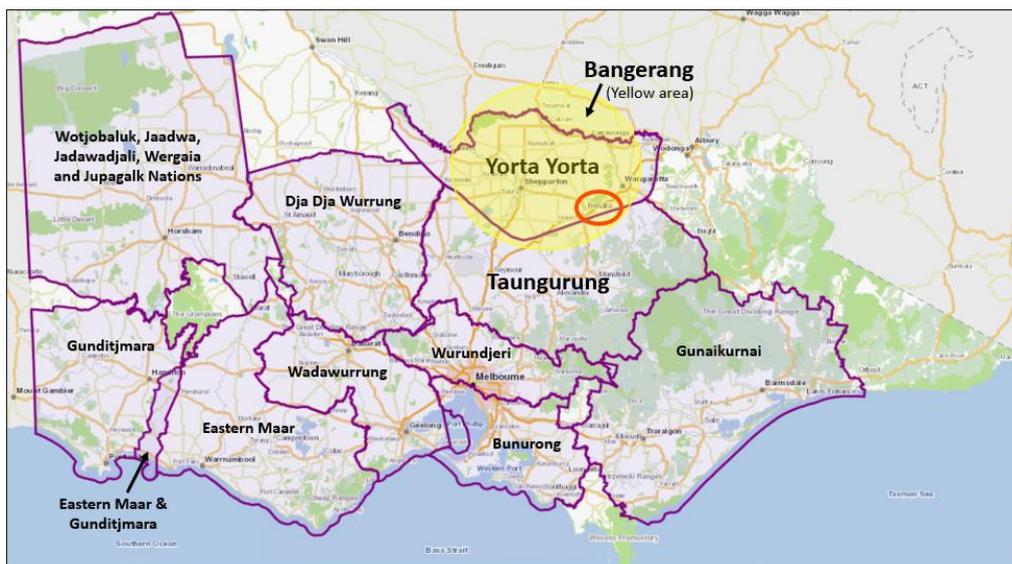


Figure 1. Source - <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/welcome-country-and-acknowledgement-traditional-owners>

### Local Traditional Custodians

Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) are traditional custodian organisations that hold decision-making responsibilities under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* relating to Aboriginal cultural heritage in a specified geographical area.

The map below identifies recognised custodians in Victoria according to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System (ACHRIS). Benalla is circled red and sits on the boundary of Yorta Yorta and Taungurung Peoples. While not listed with ACHRIS, it is important to note the local Aboriginal community recognises the Bangerang mob also occupy Benalla country (shaded yellow).



Source - <https://achris.vic.gov.au/weave/wca.html>

## Cultural Safety

Cultural safety is about creating an environment that is safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This means there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity and experience. Cultural safety is a fundamental human right which ensures:

- Shared respect, shared meaning and shared knowledge
- The experience of learning together with dignity and truly listening
- Ensuring our personal and organisational cultural values do not negatively impact on Aboriginal peoples, including addressing the potential for unconscious bias, racism and discrimination
- Ensuring self-determination for Aboriginal people. This includes sharing power (decision-making and governance) and resources with Aboriginal communities. It is especially relevant for the design, delivery and evaluation of services for Aboriginal people.

A cultural safety framework has been created for the Victorian Government. The principles of this framework are:

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	Organisations provide meaningful leadership opportunities to design, deliver and evaluate culturally safe policies, programs, initiatives and services. Organisations have leadership at all levels that understand and champion the organisation's role in cultural safety.
<b>Self-determination</b>	Aboriginal staff, people and communities have meaningful leadership and decision-making roles, and are involved in designing, delivering and evaluating Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety policies, programs and initiatives.
<b>Human rights approach</b>	The rights-based approach that drives this framework is an essential part of Victorian Aboriginal service delivery and sector development. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognises both the principle of self-determination (Article 3) and the right to culture (Articles 11 and 31). The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 also recognises culture as a right.
<b>Support and sustainability</b>	Staff at all organisational levels are supported to undertake ongoing cultural safety professional and personal development. Workplaces have processes to build individual and organisational capacity, provide mentoring opportunities and establish culturally safe spaces for Aboriginal staff and clients.
<b>Culturally safe systems</b>	Embed culturally safe practice into recruitment and retention processes, as well as into existing policies, programs, procedures, procurement and services.
<b>Ongoing learning</b>	A continuous process of reflection and quality improvement to identify and reflect on individual and organisational practice, and implement the actions required for ongoing learning and self-reflection at all levels of the organisation.

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Accountability and transparency</b>	Individuals reflect on their own level of competency in cultural safety and identify required improvements. Organisations reflect on their current policies, practices and procedures and reflect on their organisational competency. Organisations demonstrate accountability by implementing key performance indicators.
<b>Respect and trust</b>	Individuals and organisations establish a relationship of trust and respect with Aboriginal staff, clients and local Aboriginal communities.

Source: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-strategies/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-cultural-safety>

### **National and Victorian Child Safety Standards**

Both standards have been revised with changes effective July 1, 2022. A key change to the Victorian standards surrounds providing cultural safety for Aboriginal children. These new standards are reflected in our risk management register and policies on which refer to child safety, privacy and recruitment.

Cultural safety for Aboriginal children is defined in the Standards as ‘the child being provided with a safe, nurturing and positive environment where they are comfortable with being themselves, expressing their culture... their spiritual and belief systems, and they are supported by the carer... (who) respects their Aboriginality and therefore encourages their sense of self and identity’.

Identifying as Aboriginal is one part of a child’s identity. Like everyone, Aboriginal people have different life experiences and characteristics. Tomorrow Today must provide supportive environments for Aboriginal children that recognise each person is unique, with their own characteristics, strengths and challenges.

This environment is provided by:

- Ensuring an inclusive and welcoming physical and online environment for Aboriginal children and their families by acknowledging and respecting Aboriginal peoples, communities, cultures and values
- Providing all children with information about cultural rights and we take active steps to encourage Aboriginal children to express their culture. When children express their culture, staff and volunteers give them support.
- We take steps to empower children and provide them with opportunities to participate in a way that is culturally safe for Aboriginal children.
- We provide culturally safe opportunities for Aboriginal families to participate in our programs.
- Providing our staff, board, volunteers and program participants with:
  - information on cultural rights, the strengths of Aboriginal cultures and the importance of culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children
  - information on the connection between cultural safety and the prevention of child abuse and harm for Aboriginal children
  - opportunities to learn and express appreciation of Aboriginal cultures and histories.

- Policies and procedures relating to child safety and wellbeing, including the Child Safe Policy and Procedure, describe our commitment to respecting and valuing Aboriginal children. This includes that:
  - Staff and volunteers must encourage and support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights
  - Staff and volunteers must actively support and facilitate participation and inclusion by Aboriginal children and their families
  - Racism will not be tolerated within the organisation and how we will respond, including potential consequences
  - the organisation's leadership has a responsibility to help everyone involved with the organisation to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children.
- The Code of Conduct and position descriptions outline expectations of staff and volunteer behaviour including:
  - zero tolerance of racism and expectations that staff and volunteers will act on incidents of racism
  - that children will be supported to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.

**Procedure:**

To make Aboriginal children and their families feel respected and welcome, Tomorrow Today will seek to:

- design events and meetings involving families to be inclusive for everyone and acknowledge Traditional Custodians as part of proceedings
- discuss Aboriginal role models and share stories about the contribution Aboriginal people have made and celebrate culture in a positive, empowering way
- display positive Aboriginal symbols in your physical space:
  - display plaques or posters acknowledging the Traditional Custodians and include acknowledgments in our email signatures
  - display the Aboriginal flag
  - purchase and display Aboriginal artworks
  - provide a gathering space that honours Aboriginal people and culture
- reflect diversity in the way you communicate information by using inclusive images and language
- have conversations with children and their families about aspects of their cultural identity
- respect the right of Aboriginal children and/or their families to choose if they do not want to share their cultural identity.

To build on relationships with family and community, Tomorrow Today will seek to:

- find positive ways to encourage family participation
- involve family and other significant people in your services and activities

- develop a relationship with an Aboriginal organisation that can provide peer support to improve cultural safety and support our engagement with family and community – it is good practice to recognise this contribution by paying for this support and assistance
- ask Aboriginal children and their families engaged with your organisation what works for them, because they should define what feels culturally safe

## **Cultural Diversity**

Tomorrow Today seeks to create an environment where people of all cultural backgrounds prosper and flourish. All employees, contractors and volunteers have a responsibility to value others, and accept and celebrate their differences.

It is important that the value of religious, racial and linguistic diversity is respected and celebrated. Tomorrow Today encourages its employees, contractors, program participants and volunteers to freely participate in cultural activities and practices.

Racism, race-based discrimination or bullying, racism or religious vilification will not be tolerated by Tomorrow Today. All employees are required to follow the principles of the Multicultural Victoria Act 2011 (Vic)<sup>4</sup> which states:

- All Victorians are entitled to mutual respect and understanding regardless of their cultural, religious, racial and linguistic backgrounds.
- All individuals and institutions in Victoria should promote and preserve diversity and cultural heritage within the context of shared laws, values, aspirations and responsibilities.
- All individuals in Victoria (regardless of background) should work together to build a positive and progressive future and this co-operation is to be encouraged so as to enhance Victoria as a great place in which to live, work, invest and raise a family.
- All individuals in Victoria are equally entitled to access opportunities and participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, economic and political life of this State.
- All Victorians have a responsibility to abide by the State's laws and respect the democratic processes under which those laws are made.

## **Disability**

Tomorrow Today will not tolerate any form of disability discrimination, whether it is expressed direct or indirectly. Discrimination based on disability is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth). Under this Act, disability is broadly defined as:

- total or partial loss of a bodily function, or part of the body
- the presence in the body of organisms that may cause disease such as HIV or Hepatitis
- malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the body
- a mental or psychological disease or disorder, or other condition that may result in a

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/inclusive-workplaces/policy-and-guidelines/cultural-diversity>

- person learning more slowly
- past disability or impairment which may include childhood illnesses, having had a broken leg or a period of psychiatric illness

### **Gender Equality**

Tomorrow Today seeks to provide a workplace where regardless of gender, everyone is eligible for the same rewards, resources, and opportunities.<sup>5</sup>

Tomorrow Today is committed to ensuring gender equality by:

- challenging conscious and unconscious bias
- removal of barriers to the full and equal participation of all genders in the workforce
- access to all occupations including leadership roles, regardless of gender
- elimination of discrimination on the basis of gender, particularly in relation to family and caring responsibilities
- flexible working and leave arrangements for employees experiencing or caring for someone experiencing family violence

### **Generational Diversity**

Under the Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth), age-based discrimination in the workplace is prohibited. Discrimination based on age can be subtle or overt and could include situations where a person, because of their age has been:

- refused employment or dismissed
- not offered or denied a promotion, transfer or other employment-related benefits
- given less favourable terms or conditions of employment
- denied equal access to training opportunities
- selected for redundancy
- scaled back work hours against employee's wishes
- questions about retirement or an expectation that the employee will retire
- harassed
- allocated menial tasks
- age-based bullying or harassment

To avoid generational bias Tomorrow Today will:

- Ensure all employees regardless of age are entitled to opportunities for professional development.
- Aim to include a mix of ages when forming groups like work teams or interview panels to ensure a variety of views and experience.
- Ensure everyone is treated equally regardless of their life stage.
- Show empathy

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/inclusive-workplaces/policy-and-guidelines/gender-equality>

- Take advantage of skills

## **LGBTIQIA+**

Tomorrow Today aims to provide a culture of respect and dignity for all employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants and visitors who identify anywhere on the spectrum of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual or allies' gender fluidity and sexual identities.

LGBTIQIA+ employees, contractors, volunteers are entitled to fully participate in Tomorrow Today without being subjected to behaviour that is offensive, harassing, bullying or discriminatory.

In line with the Sex Discrimination Act 1984(Cth) Tomorrow Today will not tolerate unfair treatment based on a person's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status. This includes:

- harassment of LGBTIQIA+ employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants and visitors through name-calling, jokes, bullying or teasing about their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status
- treating partners of LGBTIQIA+ employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants and visitors differently to partners of their non- LGBTIQIA+ counterparts
- showing disrespect towards the lives and relationships of LGBTIQIA+employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants and visitors
- excluding employees, contractors, volunteers from, or making it more difficult for them to participate in meetings, social events or career advancement opportunities such as professional development or higher duties assignments
- not respecting the gender identity of employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants or visitors by repeatedly using the incorrect pronoun or former name, or denying access to toilets and other facilities that are appropriate to the their affirmed gender
- otherwise making LGBTIQIA+ employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants or visitors feel that they cannot be open about their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status

## Disclosure

Tomorrow Today respects the rights of all employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants and visitors to reasonably share -- *or keep private*, information about their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and intersex status.

## Toilet Access

Tomorrow Today supports any employee, contractor, volunteer, program participant or visitor to use toilets and other facilities that are appropriate to their affirmed gender.

## **Gender Pronouns**

The use of gender pronouns in correspondence demonstrates how an individual would like to be referred to in the third person. The most common example of this practice is the use of email

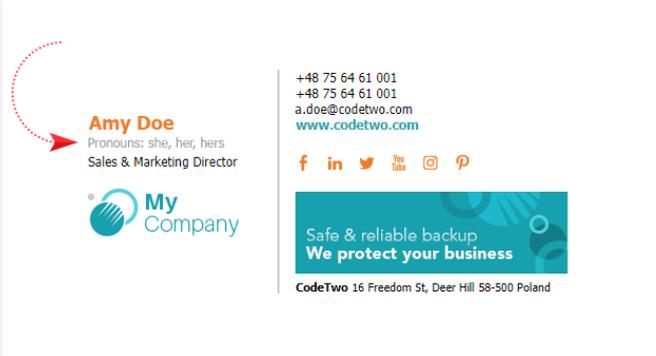
signatures.

### Use of Gender Pronouns

Pronouns are personal because they refer to a unique individual. Sometimes there is a layer of gender identity that their pronouns aim to highlight and other times there is not.

Tomorrow Today acknowledges gender diversity and inclusivity demonstrated by using gender pronouns in written/printed correspondence, including email signatures. It also respects the choice of its all employees, contractors, volunteers, program participants and visitors should they choose to not use gender pronouns.

#### Sample signature 1



Amy Doe  
Pronouns: she, her, hers  
Sales & Marketing Director

+48 75 64 61 001  
+48 75 64 61 001  
a.doe@codetwo.com  
www.codetwo.com

f in t The Tube i p

**My Company**

Safe & reliable backup  
**We protect your business**

CodeTwo 16 Freedom St, Deer Hill 58-500 Poland

#### Sample signature 2



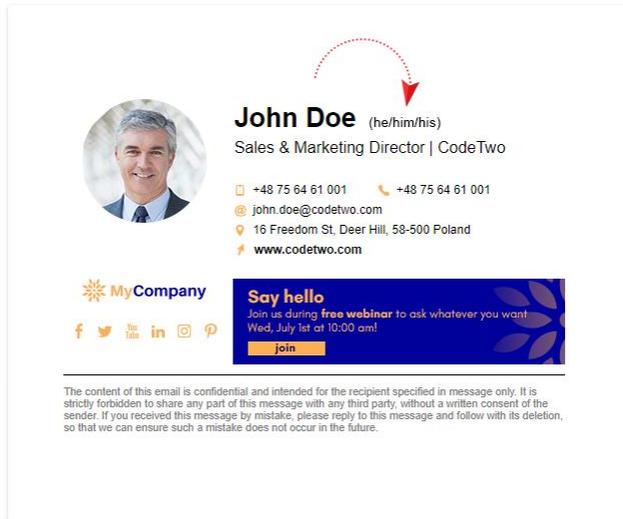
John Doe (they · them · theirs)  
Sales & Marketing Director | CodeTwo

+48 75 64 61 001 +48 75 64 61 001  
@ john.doe@codetwo.com  
16 Freedom St. Deer Hill, 58-500, Poland  
www.codetwo.com

**MyCompany** i t e m @ p

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### Sample signature 3



Source: <https://www.codetwo.com/blog/using-gender-pronouns-in-email-signatures/#:~:text=in%20your%20organization,-,The%20importance%20of%20gender%20pronouns,everyone%20and%20acknowledges%20gender%20diversity.>

### Related Policies

- Prevention of Discrimination
- Leave policy

### Relevant Legislation

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)
- Multicultural Victoria Act 2011 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)