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PROCUREMENT FROM DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ORGANISATIONS

The purpose of this circular is to inform councils of NSW Government policy and encourage councils to procure goods and services from disability employment organisations.

Goal 14 of *NSW 2021* is to increase the participation of people with disabilities in employment and further education. The NSW Government has adopted a policy that encourages public sector agencies to procure goods and services from disability employment organisations in order to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Under clause 27 of the Public Sector Employment and Management (Goods and Services) Regulation 2010, a disability employment organisation is a person or body approved by the Minister for Disability Services that conducts a business a principal purpose of which is to provide employment to persons with a disability.

Under the policy, public sector agencies are not required to conduct open competitive tenders where procurement is from disability employment organisations. In addition, Government agencies can purchase goods and services directly from disability employment organisations without the need to purchase from State Contracts or seek approval from the State Contracts Control Board.

This policy does not currently extend to general purpose and county councils. The tendering requirements under section 55 of the *Local Government Act 1993* continue to apply to contracts with a value of over \$150,000.

However, councils are encouraged to procure goods and services from organisations that employ people with disabilities, where possible. Councils may wish to consider developing a procurement policy that gives a weighting towards, or a preference to engaging, disability employment organisations as providers of goods and services.

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