

Principles for Position Changes and/or Redundancy

Introduction

When examining the impact of reviews in terms of staff and positions, AlburyCity should be applying a principles based approach, which is consistent with the approach taken by the organisation in regard to other key initiatives, such as the Service and Efficiency Review. Such an approach will ensure both consistency and transparency and also align with AlburyCity's Values and Guiding Principles.

From an employee perspective, change within the organisation should be perceived as an opportunity and this most effectively occurs where individuals have the opportunity to make decisions and determine their own direction. From an AlburyCity perspective, part of this means ensuring that when making position related decisions, we should maximise the opportunities for employees rather than limiting what options are available to them.

Having regard to this, ensuring high levels of employee engagement both during and after the change process is a key aspect of any successful program. Employees who feel that they have been "moved" into a new role and/or without other options, are likely to be less engaged than those who have had the chance to fully consider their specific situation and make their own decisions. This will be especially evident if their new role does not result in the outcome they felt it would be or were advised it would be.

Whilst the Award provides clear direction in terms of dealing with employees whose positions are redundant as a result of changes, it is important that clear and consistent guidelines are applied in initially considering position changes and whether or not a position is redundant.

What constitutes a Redundancy?

There may be a range of reasons that contribute to a position becoming redundant, including, but not limited to;

- The work group is being reviewed and/or restructured to improve efficiencies
- New technology or processes have been introduced
- A reduction in the number of same jobs required to deliver a service, including where the service is being reduced
- A function is closed, outsourced or transferred

In terms of redundancy, the focus is on the position becoming redundant, not the employee.

Generally speaking a redundancy occurs, where the organisation no longer requires an employees job to be performed by anyone due to changes in operational requirements. It is critical here to understand that the emphasis is on the job rather than the tasks/duties.

In this regard, one of the critical tests in determining whether a position has become redundant, is not based around whether the duties have “survived”, but rather whether the job previously performed still exists. Accordingly, a genuine redundancy situation is likely to occur, even where the duties of the position still continue, but some/all are being performed by another position/positions.

There is no exact quantum of change to a position that would constitute a redundancy. Instead, each situation must be examined on its merits and a qualitative assessment undertaken considering a range of factors.

When considering the extent of change to a position, an assessment should be undertaken on the extent to which the following key attributes have been altered and/or removed, including;

- Level of responsibility/accountability
- Skills/capacity required for the role
- Scope of the role
- Impact of the role – corporate focus, legal implications, budget
- The nature of the work or duties of the position
- Title, status and seniority of the role
- Reporting lines
- Level of autonomy

It is unlikely that “reasonable changes” undertaken in the ordinary course of normal business operations would result in a position becoming redundant. In this regard, “reasonable changes” would be simple changes within the existing scope of the position and/or those that do not alter the essential position.

In the situation where an operational review results in positions receiving additional tasks, the above principles will also require consideration. In this regard, whilst it is unlikely this will result in the position being considered to be redundant, it is important to consider these elements in the context of any resultant reclassification arrangement.

Conclusion

In making a decision that a position is redundant it is important that the outcome is the result of a fully considered review that has taken account of the key factors, had key principles applied in a consistent manner and been aligned with AlburyCity’s Values and Guiding Principles.

Overall changes to the intent and/or scope of the position and changes that result in the essential position no longer being in existence would constitute the position being redundant.

The key factors and principles identified above need to be considered in determining the extent of change to a position and in turn whether or not it is redundant.