

The Greens (WA) policy

Social Justice Core Policy

Preamble

Social justice requires ecological and economic sustainability, real democracy, peace and nonviolence and a respect for the earth. The Greens (WA) believe that Australia should pursue these principles worldwide as well as nationally.

Everyone is entitled to equal access to opportunity, justice and democracy in a society that recognises nature's limits. Human rights and responsibilities apply to all people regardless of culture, class, race, age, gender, sexuality or nationality and we will work to include everyone in all processes of Australian society.

Equal opportunity for individuals is a prime concern of The Greens (WA). However, such rights must be balanced by the responsibilities of individuals and corporations to their communities - local, national and global. Our legal system needs to re-define corporations as accountable social organisations rather than as equivalents to human beings.

Society should be based on community, cooperation and respect, and we reject consumerism and greed. Population growth is increasing environmental and social stresses everywhere. Consequently, new social justice issues are emerging which require a reassessment of values and new solutions.

The Greens (WA) support affirmative action to overcome inequalities. Social diversity should be respected and encouraged. A caring and participatory approach to economic and social restructuring is essential for constructive and efficient change.

Principles

- The Greens (WA) are committed to redressing discrimination and inequality across all aspects of Australian society.
- We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples as the original occupants and custodians of this country. We are committed to indigenous land rights, the acknowledgment and redress of past and present injustices, and support for Aboriginal culture.
- We celebrate ethnic diversity and the many cultural backgrounds in Australia and we will work to remove inequalities and to campaign against racism.
- Seniors should receive the care they need regardless of their financial situation and should be given consideration, respect and power over their lives.
- Young people are entitled to a fair wage system, education and training with the opportunity to be heard and to express their creativity.
- The Greens (WA) seek to redress gender imbalances in a society where patriarchal attitudes and privileges still inhibit and distort human potential. We encourage greater participation of men and women in non-traditional roles.
- We seek greater representation for women at all levels of decision making. We support women's reproductive rights including the right to choose safe, legal abortion.
- As part of our philosophy of nonviolence and social justice, everyone must be protected from exploitation, sexual harassment, poverty and violence. Special emphasis must be put on the protection of women and children and older people.
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people must have the same rights as other citizens and be freed from all harassment and discrimination.

- A comprehensive health system is a community right and should be available to everyone, regardless of ability to pay. Priority must be given to public health, including mental health, and to health promotion and initiatives that focus on the environmental and social causes of ill-health.
- People with disabilities should have access to public and social amenities, support services, opportunities for meaningful work and freedom from discrimination.
- The regulation of drugs should be moved outside the criminal framework and be based upon known health effects.
- The Greens (WA) support community-based crime prevention programs that address the roots of crime by creating opportunities for all, while recognising the needs of the victims of crime and protecting the safety and peace of the community.
- All people should have a right to education appropriate to their needs, abilities and aspirations, and to adequate financial support while undertaking formal educational programmes.
- Available paid work must be shared more fairly within the community. The workplace should provide safe, socially useful and productive work, with the opportunity for employee feedback. Full employee participation in management is recognised as a desirable management practice.
- The Greens (WA) will work towards shorter standard working hours and full payment for hours worked. Industrial relations should acknowledge the need of employees to act collectively to protect pay and conditions.
- All work, paid or unpaid, has social, political and economic value and should receive due recognition. Pay should reflect the value of a person's service to the community.
- Legal systems must be reformed so that corporations accept their social and environmental responsibilities.
- While ecological constraints must limit consumption, all people have a right to an equitable share of the world's resources. The present inequities should be addressed at both local and global levels.
- Everyone has a right to a satisfactory standard of living. The social security system must be reformed and simplified to ensure this.
- Everyone has a right to adequate housing.
- Regional and rural areas must be enabled to provide better opportunities for rural youth and increase social amenities. Primary producers should receive support during periods of hardship beyond their control.
- The sustainable level of the human population of the earth must be based on a balance between all the life-forms which share this planet. Australia has one of the highest per capita consumption patterns in the world, and a low population carrying capacity. We must recognise our global obligations to reduce our own consumption and provide for the needs of others.
- We have a moral and legal obligation to accept refugees and our immigration policy must be non-discriminatory.
- Australia has a fundamental responsibility to provide foreign aid which must be increased to meet international treaties and obligations. It must be re-directed to community based schemes, raising the status of women, family planning, educational programs and environmentally sustainable development.