

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

Statement of Intent

_____ seeks to provide services on a fair and equitable basis. No person employed or requiring services from _____ will be treated less favourably than any other person on the grounds of race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, health, gender, disability, sexual orientation, educational status or religion or because someone is living with HIV/AIDS. _____ will actively encourage accessibility and inclusive practice, not just in the physical layout of venues, buildings and facilities but in the planning, development and delivery of services.

What is discrimination?

_____ believes that discrimination can take one or more of the forms set out below.

Direct discrimination is treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others solely because they are, for example, a lesbian, a gay man or because they have a disability or illness. Refusing to employ someone who has the required skills because they are deaf or because they are pregnant would constitute such discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where there is a requirement or condition which applies equally to everyone but which, in practice, has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be justified.

For example an unnecessary physical or age requirement can discriminate against women or disabled people. The setting of language tests, where language skills or fluency are not really needed for a job, is another example.

Abuse and/or harassment – Discrimination also covers actions which amount to abuse and/or harassment of people or groups of people because for example they are a member of a national, racial or ethnic minority group, a woman, a lesbian, a gay man or have a disability or illness.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because she/he has pursued or intends to pursue their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.

Institutional racism (Macpherson Report, 1999)

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen in the processes or attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination, to unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.

Racist incident (Macpherson Report, 1999)

Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. If the victim doesn't want to complain, another person may do so.

Discrimination in any of the forms stated above is unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

Recruitment & Selection

_____ will seek to employ staff representing all sections of the community it seeks to serve. _____ will treat no person or group less favourably on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, belief or health status in all areas of employment, from recruitment through to selection. Staff and volunteer appointments will be monitored to ensure no discrimination occurs at the point of selection.

As part of its recruitment procedure:

- _____ will seek, consider and use the most effective ways of bringing job vacancies to the attention of persons who may otherwise be disadvantaged.
- All job applicants and employees will be asked to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form. _____ undertakes that this form will not be made available to anyone involved in recruitment and selection of staff and is for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of its equal opportunities policy only.
- _____ will always welcome appropriate individuals from minority groups among its Trustees, employees and voluntary workers.

Employment

_____ is aware of its responsibilities as an employer according to anti-discrimination legislation i.e.

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Equal Pay (Amendment Act) Act 1983
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Children's Act 1989
- The Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts 1944 & 1958
- Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation Regulations) 2003

_____ also recognises the importance of adhering to its values, aims and objectives when considering Diversity and Employment.

Service Provision

It is the intention of _____ that no individual or organisation connected with its activities shall hinder the positive implementation of this policy. Any employee may use the grievance procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. If the matter relates to sexual or racial discrimination or discrimination on the basis of disability then the grievance may be raised directly with the Trustee nominated to ensure equal opportunities. No individual will be penalised for raising such a grievance unless it is proved to be untrue and made in bad faith. Any complaints will be fully investigated in accordance with the procedures as laid out in the grievance procedure. Any discrimination or harassment proven to have taken place will be regarded as gross misconduct for the purposes of disciplinary procedures.

_____ will seek a commitment to equal opportunities on the part of any other agencies, both statutory and voluntary, with which _____ works in partnership.

Implementation & Monitoring

Implementation of this policy is the duty and responsibility of all _____ Trustees, employees and volunteers. A copy of the policy will be made available to each employee. All applicants for paid or voluntary work will receive a copy of the _____ Equal Opportunities Policy and will be expected to demonstrate their understanding in an interview situation. To facilitate this, where needed, all policies will be made available translated into languages other than English and the services of interpreters provided.

_____ expects individuals:

- To co-operate with measures to ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and non discrimination
- Not to harass, abuse or intimidate any other employee or participant on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities
- To feel sufficiently confident to inform management if they suspect discrimination is taking place.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by _____ Trustees.