

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

A) STATEMENT OF POLICY

- 1) We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and although equality of opportunity has been a long-standing feature of our employment practices and procedure, we have made the decision to adopt a formal equal opportunities policy. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.
- 1) The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant, employee or worker is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- 3) We will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.
- 4) The policy will be communicated to all private contractors reminding them of their responsibilities towards the equality of opportunity.
- 5) The policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.
- 6) We will maintain a neutral working environment in which no employee or worker feels under threat or intimidated.

B) RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- 1) The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any equal opportunities policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.
- 2) Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.
- 3) Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.
- 4) We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.
- 5) We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.
- 6) All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.
- 7) We are committed to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children/young people and vulnerable adults and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We adhere to a safer recruitment process which requires all candidates to complete a self-disclosure form.
- 8) All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.
- 9) Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible.

- 10) Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.
- 11) We will not disqualify any applicant because he/she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.
- 12) Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

C) TRAINING AND PROMOTION

- 1) Senior staff will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.
- 2) All promotion will be in line with this policy.

D) MONITORING

- 1) We will maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.
- 2) Monitoring may involve: -
 - a) the collection and classification of information regarding the race in terms of ethnic/national origin and sex of all applicants and current employees.
 - b) the examination by ethnic/national origin and sex of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants; and
 - c) recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.
- 3) The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.

E) EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

- 1) We are an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of disability, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.
- 2) We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All employees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended if necessary, to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.
- 3) The Chief Executive Officer has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

- 4) All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Company.
- 5) Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Company as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the Company.

F) OUR COMMITMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

- 1) To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued.
- 2) Every employee, worker or self-employed contractor is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- 3) Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- 4) Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- 5) We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

G) OUR COMMITMENT AS A SERVICE PROVIDER

- 1) We aim to provide services to which all clients are entitled regardless of race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, offending past, caring responsibilities, social class or age.
- 2) We will make sure that our services are delivered equitably and meet the diverse needs of our service users and clients by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of our clients.
- 3) This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with employee representatives
- 4) This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.
- 5) We have clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated.
- 6) A detailed action plan in the full version of this policy sets out how we are implementing these processes.
- 7) Breaches of our equality and diversity policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.