

<b>Policy Name</b>	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
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**Changes Log:**

<b>Change to – page no</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Date</b>
Bringing policy up to date, new format, and new logo.	Sam Palmer, Rob Wardle	April 2023
Some changes made to internal roles and processes	Sam Palmer	March 2024
Updated logo and job titles	Sam Palmer	May 2024
Reviewed, no significant changes	Sam Palmer	May 2025
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## **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy**

### **Statement**

At Respect for All, we take equality, diversity, and inclusion seriously. We know that getting this right is critical for us to live our organisation's name and values.

We recognise our responsibility to continuously seek to improve our ways of working, tackling all forms of discrimination and inequality both in the workplace and with the services we provide.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to promote fair and equal treatment for all employees, volunteers, trainees, students, apprentices, job applicants, clients, suppliers, contractors, and visitors, irrespective of any protected characteristics including sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, gender reassignments/gender identity, pregnancy and maternity and marriage or civil partnership (this list is not exhaustive).

#### **1. Scope**

This policy relates to all aspects of employment, including;

- Individual standards of behaviour
- The advertisement of jobs
- Recruitment and selection
- Training and development
- Supervision and appraisal
- Pay
- Promotion
- Leaving the organisation

The principles apply equally to all dealings with clients, suppliers, and visitors.

#### **2. Statement of Policy**

Respect for All is committed to providing fair and equal treatment for all staff, clients, suppliers, and visitors. All staff are expected to treat everyone with whom they meet dignity and respect, and they should be aware of the importance the organisation attaches to this policy. Breaches of this policy will be classed as a disciplinary offence and dealt with accordingly.

#### **3. Legal Obligations**

In applying this policy, the organisation will take account of current and future equality legislation (and associated codes of practice) including but not limited to the provisions of The Equality Act 2010.

The above legislation protects individuals against direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment (which can include bullying and third-party harassment) and victimisation because of their protected characteristic. Protected characteristics under The Equality Act 2020 include;

- Age
- Disability

- Race
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership status
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

**Direct Discrimination** is treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic (this also applies to discrimination by association or perception).

**Indirect Discrimination** is applying criteria or practice equally to all people, but this has the effect of disadvantaging one group of people.

**Harassment** is unwanted behaviour based on a protected characteristic which affects the dignity of others.

**Victimisation** is treating a person less favourable because they have asserted their rights under their policy or equality legislation (for example has made or assisted with a complaint).

**Bullying** is unwanted behaviour, normally related to an abuse of power, which is intended to hurt or injure the recipient. Bullying is only prohibited by law where it takes place on one of the grounds listed above – in which case it is legally defined as harassment. However, the organisation treats all bullying as a disciplinary issue.

The above legislation also allows an employer to undertake positive action initiatives where they can show the workforce is under-represented by people from certain groups. Such initiatives could include attracting and preparing particular types of candidates for vacancies – but would not extend to offering them the position purely because of their personal characteristics (as this would be positive discrimination, which is unlawful except as a potential reasonable adjustment on the grounds of disability). The organisation commits to positive action initiatives if appropriate.

Other legislation which affects the implementation of this policy and with which we will comply includes:

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended)
- Employment Act 2002
- Flexible Working Regulations 2002 (as amended)

#### **4. Responsibilities**

**All staff** are expected to have read and understood this policy, ensuring they behave in accordance with its principles and immediately report any breaches witnessed.

**All managers** are responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and complied with by staff in their area/team and they are also responsible for dealing with breaches and complaints (whether formally reported or not) seriously, speedily, sensitively, and confidentially.

**CEO** has overall responsibility for this equality policy as the Equality and Diversity Lead.

Any breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary issue. Additionally, if legal requirements are contravened, both the organisation and the employee concerned may be liable to legal proceedings and risk having unlimited damages awarded against them.

## **5. Implementing this Policy**

Below are some examples to illustrate how this policy impacts on all work policies and practices. This list is not exhaustive as each situation must be considered on its merits.

### **5.1 General Standards of Behaviour**

The organisation expects staff to conduct themselves in a professional and considerate manner at all times. The organisation will not tolerate behaviour such as:

- Physical violence
- Shouting or swearing
- Rudeness
- Isolating, ignoring or refusing to work with certain people
- Telling offensive jokes
- Name calling
- The display of offensive material such as pornography or inappropriate cartoons
- Lewd gestures or remarks
- Distribution of offensive material via email/text message

It is no defence for staff to say that they did not intend their behaviour to cause offence, or to blame individuals for being over-sensitive. It is for the recipient of the behaviour to decide what they consider to be offensive. Provided that it is reasonable that the recipient is offended, it is the impact of the behaviour rather than the intent which is important.

### **5.2 Recruitment and Selection**

Individuals involved in the recruitment and selection of staff will ensure that the organisation recruitment and selection policy is adhered to and that:

- A carefully worded and objective job description/person specification is produced for all vacancies, outlining the essential skills, knowledge and experience required.
- Job advertisements are agreed by Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and circulated via VCSE networks to encourage applications from all sections of the community.
- No questions are asked of applicants about disability or health conditions prior to any job offer (except where is permitted by law).
- Shortlisting is based on objective criteria relevant to the job.
- Selection decisions are made by suitable trained staff, purely on the basis of merit, and reasons for decisions are recorded.

### **5.3 Training, Development and Promotion**

The organisation will ensure that irrespective of any personal characteristics:

- The training necessary to implement this equality policy is provided.
- All employees are encouraged to achieve their full potential.
- Selection for all training, career development opportunities and job moves will be purely on the basis of merit.
- Appraisals of performance will be conducted objectively and on time.
- Selection for promotion will be based purely on merit.

#### **5.4 Meeting Individual Needs**

As far as possible the organisation will try to meet the needs of individuals at work. For example:

- Caring and domestic responsibilities – time off may be appropriate to allow staff to undertake caring roles to help them balance their home and work responsibilities.
- Work patterns – wherever possible training courses and meetings should be planned to allow attendance by part time staff.
- Disability – staff with disabilities and service users with disabilities should be consulted about any reasonable adjustments which could be made to allow them to better perform their functions.
- Religious practices – it may be necessary to provide time off for prayer or religious festivals or relax dress standards to meet religious needs.

#### **6. Service Accessibility**

Demographic information of people accessing services will be reviewed with the purpose of establishing trends and gaps. Where gaps are highlighted in accessibility an action plan to improve access will be developed.

#### **7. Complaints**

If staff feel this policy has been breached, they should try to speak with the COO in the first instance, who will ensure all issues are investigated and dealt with appropriately.

Formal complaints about breaches of this policy can be made using the organisation's complaints policy or grievance procedure.

#### **8. Monitoring, Review and Consultation**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the collation of statistics relating to all recruitment and selection/promotion exercises, staff in post, training, and discipline and staff exits broken down by:

- Gender
- Race
- Disability
- Age
- Any other areas where it is perceived problems/issues exist.

The results of this monitoring will be reported to the board.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains current and links appropriately with other policies. Staff and their representatives will be consulted as part of the review process.

The principles of this policy will also be considered when developing other new organisational policies and procedures.

A copy of this policy will be provided to all employees and the contents discussed with them by their line manager.