

## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

The Company is committed to working towards equal opportunities in employment and service delivery.

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

The aim of our policy is to ensure that no job applicant, worker/employee or client receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, transgender status, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion or belief, nationality, national or ethnic origin, age, (or is disadvantaged by provisions, practices or criteria which cannot be shown to be justified) or on grounds of disability.

The Company values a diverse customer base and the individuality and creativity that every worker potentially brings to the workforce.

The Company will comply with the following legislation:

1. The Equality Act 2010
2. The Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002
3. The Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000

and the associated Codes of Practice.

Personnel policies and procedures are kept under review to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated in their general employment on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

### **3. Scope of Policy**

This policy relates to employment and service matters affecting individuals and groups whether they are actual or potential worker/employees or clients of the Company. It covers all workers/employees.

It is the Company's policy to support the employment and retention of people with disabilities. This is the case irrespective of whether the individual's impairment is physical or mental. The Company is committed to taking all reasonable steps towards accommodating the needs of disabled workers and job applicants to enable them to be employed, and to continue in employment so long as they are able to do so and wish to do so.

## 4. Responsibilities

All employees/workers and Management share the responsibility to ensure that the Company's equal opportunities policy operates fairly and effectively. However, the major responsibilities are as follows:

(a) **Managing Director**

The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring that a consistent equal opportunities policy is adopted within the Company.

(b) **Managers**

Line managers are responsible for the operation of the policy in their own departments.

The Office Manager is responsible for securing consistent application of the policy and for advice on implementation, monitoring and further development of the policy.

(c) **Workers/Employees**

All workers/employees are expected to act within the spirit and intention of the policy and law relating to equal opportunities and discrimination at all times. The Company will view any breach of the policy or any type of discriminatory action against another worker/employee or client very seriously.

Any worker/employee who breaches the principles of equal opportunity enshrined in this policy will be liable to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

## 5. Implementation of Policy

The Company will actively promote personnel practices which help to eradicate the assumptions and stereotypes which are often at the root of unfair discrimination. The action taken will include the following areas:

(a) **Recruitment, advertising and selection**

The recruitment process will be conducted in such a way as to result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in terms of relevant experience, abilities and qualifications. The Company is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy statement at all stages of recruitment and selection.

When advertising job vacancies, in order to attract applications from all sections of the community, the Company will, as far as reasonably practicable:

1. Ensure advertisements are not confined to those publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants of a particular gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or racial group.

2. Avoid prescribing any unnecessary requirements which would exclude a higher proportion of a particular gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or racial group or which would exclude disabled job applicants.
3. Avoid prescribing any requirements as to marital or civil partnership status.
4. Where vacancies may be filled by promotion or transfer, they will be published to all eligible employees in such a way that they do not restrict applications from employees of any particular gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or racial group or from employees with a disability.

The selection process will be carried out appropriately for level of the job. All applications for a job will be processed in the same way. The staff responsible for short-listing, interviewing and selecting candidates will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and of the need for their consistent application. Person specifications and job descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. All questions asked of the applicants will relate to the requirements of the job. The selection of new staff will be based on the job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do, or to train for, the job in question.

With disabled job applicants, the Company will have regard to its duty to make reasonable adjustments to work provisions, criteria and practices or to work premises in order to ensure that the disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

Reviews of all procedures covering sources of recruitment, advertising material, job descriptions, the application procedure and selection methods to eliminate unfair discrimination (direct or indirect) and ensure that decisions are based on job related criteria.

(b) Training

The provision of appropriate training in equal opportunities for all groups of workers/employees. Remedial measures may include positive action to improve the position of disadvantaged groups.

Training and development will be available to all employees and will not exclude any categories of staff.

- training will be available to staff from recruitment and throughout their career within the organisation
- employees will be selected for training on the basis of objective training needs analysis
- all training and development will be reviewed regularly to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination or stereotyping

- internal and external trainers will be made aware of the Company's equal opportunities policy and its objectives
- different methods of training will be provided to accommodate different needs and abilities of employees.

(c) Conditions of Employment

Review of all relevant policies on terms and conditions of employment, leave of absence, working environment and working time to ensure fair application to all employees.

(d) Equality Schemes

As a provider of services to the public sector, the Company recognises its responsibilities under the Race Equality, Disability Equality and Gender Equality duties to pay due regard to the promotion of equality for these groups and to consider what their different needs might be when planning employment and services and to ensure that its employment and services are fair and open to everyone in the communities it serves. The Company will train employees on equal opportunity issues. Where available the Company will develop an action plan to support the published equality schemes for the public bodies with which it has contracts.

## 6. Monitoring of Policy

The effectiveness of the policy will be assessed by obtaining information on how it operates in practice by monitoring the numbers and composition (in terms of gender, sexual orientation, religion, racial group, age and disability) of :-

- Successful and unsuccessful job applicants
- Staff who receive training
- Staff who are promoted
- Staff who benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessments
- Staff who raise grievances
- Staff who are the subject of disciplinary action □ Staff who leave.

Monitoring systems will be used which are manageable and also acceptable to all employees.

An annual report containing the result of the monitoring will be prepared.

In addition, the policy will be kept under review in consultation with staff and relevant outside organisations such as the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission and their successor, the Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

## 7. Handling of Complaints

The Company will not tolerate contraventions of its equal opportunities policy by any of its employees. It will investigate any incidents of discrimination or bullying or harassment.

Any employee who feels uncomfortable or distressed by the conduct of another person at work may raise the issue informally in the first instance with their Manager or invoke the Company's Anti- Bullying & Harassment Complaints Procedure.

No employee will be penalised in any way for raising a genuine complaint about bullying and harassment, and all complaints will be taken seriously.

Action against employees who contravene the policy will be taken in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary procedure.

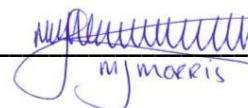
Individuals who are not employees of the Company and who have a complaint relating to employment or service matters should write to the Managing Director.

## 8. Publication of Policy

The Company will ensure this policy is brought to the attention of all employees, potential employees, clients, customers and the general community.

Policy Reviewed On: 15.01.2025

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



Print: Martyn Morris