



POSITIVE FUTURES

ACHIEVING DREAMS. TRANSFORMING LIVES.

Name of Policy:	Equal Opportunities Policy
Lead Person:	HR Director
Next Review Date:	21.02.23

Change Record

Issue Date	Nature of Change	Ratified by	Date ratified
1995	Policy created		
01.12.08	Reviewed in line with the equality proofing of all HR Policies and the Principles and Procedure for Policy Development		
12.01.11	Format amended in line with the Policy on Policy Development; wearing of sports tops no longer permitted to promote a good and harmonious working environment; review of Policy amended to 2 yearly	SMT	16.11.10
14.05.14	Access to services removed from Policy as covered by statement of purpose; policy reformatted and reviewed; responsibilities added; review of policy amended to every year in line with Equality Commission best practice guidelines.	SLT	15.05.14
22.07.15	Policy reviewed – no changes	SLT	
16.05.16	Reviewed and minor changes in line with relevant legislation and statutory requirements i.e. Equality Commission, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and Labour Relations Agency	Directors	16.05.16
08.08.18	Reviewed and updated in line with Equality Commission sample policy	Directors	06.08.18
02.12.20	Reviewed and updated to reflect current RoI legislation; adapted to become an all-Ireland policy	Directors	10.11.20
21.02.22	Reviewed; no changes	Directors	21.02.22

Signed: Emma Hogg, Executive Assistant

Date: 21.02.22

Equal Opportunities Policy

Aim

Positive Futures is committed to providing equality of opportunity. The aim of this policy is to communicate our commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment and volunteering.

Our Equal Opportunities Statement is as follows:

“We are an Equal Opportunities Employer.”

Context

Positive Futures recognises that the promotion of equality of opportunity in the workplace is not only good management practice; but also that diversity will benefit and improve the services we provide. Equality is a core value of our organisation and underpins everything we do.

We will promote a harmonious working environment in which all our staff and volunteers will be treated with dignity and respect, and we will not discriminate unlawfully against, or harass, any person on the grounds of:

- gender, including gender reassignment
- marital or civil partnership status
- having or not having dependants
- religious belief or political opinion
- race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, or being an Irish Traveller)
- disability
- sexual orientation
- age.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, volunteers, staff and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

Policy Statement

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all
- Promoting a positive and harmonious working environment in which everyone is treated with respect
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct or indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Obtaining commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our workforce
- Ensuring that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of this policy.

The Equal Opportunities Policy applies to the following groups:

- Job applicants and potential applicants
- Current or former staff
- Current or former agency workers
- Current or former volunteers
- Trainee workers and students on work experience or placements
- Contractors or potential / former contractors.

We will establish and update appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective maintenance of our Equal Opportunities Policy. The effectiveness of our Equal Opportunities Policy will be reviewed regularly, and action taken as necessary to ensure its robustness. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to seek to address that imbalance.

In addition to Positive Futures' internal procedures, staff have the right to pursue complaints relating to employment or discrimination to an industrial / employment tribunal under anti-discrimination legislation.

Individuals who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation should raise the matter with any Positive Futures' manager. Depending upon your role with the organisation, these matters will be considered through the Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure, the Grievance Policy and Procedure or through the Complaints Policy.

All concerns of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Staff have the right to pursue complaints relating to employment or discrimination to an industrial / employment tribunal as outlined in Appendix 1. However, staff wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal are required to raise their concerns under our internal Grievance or Dignity at Work policies and procedures in the first instance.

Related Documents

None

How has this policy been informed by staff, volunteers and the people we support?

This policy was informed by consultation with HR and Directors.

Appendix 1

Relevant legislation and organisations in relation to equal opportunities (NI and RoI)

NI

- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976, as amended
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, as amended
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006
- Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, as amended
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
- Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, as amended
- Section 75, Northern Ireland Act 1998

The [Equality Commission for Northern Ireland](#) is a non-departmental public body established by the Northern Ireland Act 1998. You can find the booklet, [Know your rights at work](#) on www.equalityni.org.

[Industrial and Fair Employment Tribunals](#) are independent judicial bodies that hear and determine employment and discrimination claims respectively.

RoI

- Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 (covering equal treatment in relation to gender, sexual orientation, marital and family status, religion, age, disability, race and community background including members of the traveller community)

The [Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission](#) is a statutory body set up to provide information to the public on human rights and equality legislation. It can, at its discretion, provide legal assistance to people who wish to bring claims to the Equality Tribunal. You can find the booklet, [Your Employment Equality Rights Explained](#) on ihrec.ie

The [Workplace Relations Commission](#) is the place to bring a [discrimination claim under the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015](#).