

## **Equal Opportunities**

This policy aims to foster a culture of equality and to recognise the positive contribution that each individual can make to the business irrespective of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment (including all forms of gender identity and expression),
- Marital or civil partner status
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

("the Protected Characteristics" as set out in the Equality Act 2010).

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, home-workers, part-time and fixed-term employees, volunteers, interns, sessional workers and agency staff (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy).

Staff are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity and the organisation will not tolerate any less favourable treatment of any person on the grounds of the Protected Characteristics. It should be noted that staff have a personal responsibility for the implementation of this policy and to ensure that they treat others with the respect and dignity that they expect to be treated with themselves.

## **The Policy in Operation**

This policy applies to the advertisement of jobs, recruitment and appointment, promotion, training and development, terms and conditions of work, performance management, pay, termination of employment, any references issued and to every other aspect of employment. All terms and conditions of employment and related benefits shall be non-discriminatory, other than where there are legal grounds for discriminating such as in the case of gender specific jobs. Applicants for employment will be assessed according to their skills, experience and suitability for the job.

This policy also applies to the treatment of our clients, customers, suppliers and former members of staff.

## **Remedies**

The Leadership Team of Cyrenians (assisted by People Team) will take responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy. However, if any member of staff believes that they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised on any of the grounds referred to above, they may raise the matter informally with their immediate line manager or the People Team. If the member of staff wishes to raise the matter further, they should invoke Cyrenians grievance procedure setting out in detail the basis of their complaint. All such complaints will be taken seriously by Cyrenians. They shall be treated in confidence and investigated fully by an independent member of management. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith, however, will be dealt with under Cyrenians Disciplinary Procedure.

If a member of staff is found to have discriminated against, harassed or victimised another member of staff they will be subject to disciplinary proceedings and depending on the seriousness of the incident, may be dismissed for Gross Misconduct. In exceptionally serious cases the police may also be involved.

## **Types of Unlawful Discrimination**

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

Associative discrimination is where someone is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another person who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Perceptive discrimination is where someone is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.

Third party harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is also unacceptable.

Victimisation is also prohibited under this policy. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has raised or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010 for discrimination or harassment, or because they are suspected of doing so.

## **Disability**

Cyrenians is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for those members of staff who are disabled or become disabled for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 during their employment with the organisation.

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that Cyrenians may support you as appropriate.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you should contact your line manager or the People Team to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help to overcome or minimise the difficulty.

Your line manager or People Team may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. Cyrenians will consider the matter carefully and seek to make reasonable adjustments to the member of staff's role based on that medical advice.

Where the disability is physical, the duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for people to make use of services.

In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

If a member of staff is unable to continue in their current role as a result of a disability, Cyrenians will consider any alternative roles and vacancies they may have as a way of retaining the services of that member of staff.

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