

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Statement of intent

Staff Call recognises that many people in our society experience discrimination or lack of opportunity for reasons that are not fair. These include: race, religion, creed, colour, national and ethnic origin, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability (including mental illness), HIV status, marital status, responsibility for dependants, appearance, geographical area, social class or income level.

Staff Call will challenge discrimination and lack of opportunity in its own policy and practice and will help other organisations and individuals to do the same.

Staff Call aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences. *Staff Call* sees these differences as an asset to our work as they improve our ability to meet the needs of the organisations and people we serve.

All employees must declare their support for the objectives of this Equality and diversity policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or ineligibility for employment.

Staff Call will, at all times, select staff for employment based solely on their qualifications and/or ability to carry out the assignment irrespective of their race, religion, creed, colour, national and ethnic origin, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability (including mental illness), HIV status, marital status, responsibility for dependants, appearance, geographical area, social class or income level.

2. What is discrimination?

Staff Call believes that discrimination can take one or more of the forms set out below.

Direct discrimination is treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others solely because they are, for example, a lesbian, a gay man or because they have a disability or illness. Refusing to employ someone who has the required skills because they are deaf or because they are pregnant would constitute such discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where there is a requirement or condition which applies equally to everyone but which, in practice, has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be justified.

For example an unnecessary physical or age requirement can discriminate against women or disabled people. The setting of language tests, where language skills or fluency are not really needed for a job, is another example.

Abuse and/or harassment – Discrimination also covers actions which amount to abuse and/or harassment of people or groups of people because for example they are a member of a national, racial or ethnic minority group, a woman, a lesbian, a gay man or have a disability or illness.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because she/he has pursued or intends to pursue their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.

Institutional racism (Macpherson Report, 1999) - The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen in the processes or attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination, to unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.

Racist incident (Macpherson Report, 1999) - Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. If the victim doesn't want to complain, another person may do so.

Discrimination in any of the forms stated above is unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

3. Staff development

Decisions about learning and development opportunities will be made in accordance with *Staff Call's* operational requirements and all staff will have access to opportunities to enable them to develop in line with *Staff Call* aims and objectives. *Staff Call* has a range of computer based training programmes which will be made available free of charge to registered temporary staff in order to enable them to be better trained and enhance their employment prospects.

4. Service provision

All *Staff Call* services are covered by this policy.

Staff Call will promote equality and diversity in its work with other agencies or individuals.

Staff Call services will be reviewed regularly and changed where needed.

All temporary staff, consultants contracted to work for *Staff Call* will be required to support our Equality and diversity policy.

5. Recruitment advertising and selection

Staff Call believes that no person or group should be treated less favourably in employment because of the reasons given in the Statement of intent.

Staff appointments will be monitored to ensure no discrimination is occurring at the point of selection.

Staff Call will actively seek to advertise vacancies in viable publications/media to attract applicants from minority and ethnic groups.

6. Miscellaneous

Office accommodation

Staff Call will make every effort to ensure that premises used in relation to its work are accessible and inviting for all members of the community.

Purchasing

Staff Call reserves the right not to purchase goods and services from agencies whose activities are contrary to the principles outlined in this policy.

Promotion of policy

Copies of this policy will be freely available to staff and any other interested parties. A laminated copy of the Statement of intent, together with a named contact for more information, will be placed in a prominent position in *Staff Call* offices.

7. Implementation and monitoring

Monitoring of the Equality and diversity policy and its implementation is the responsibility of the management. Profiles of temporary staff supplied will be monitored and reports provided to interested parties as necessary.

The management will review the policy annually.

Induction for new staff will include a briefing on the Equality and diversity policy.

A copy of the Equality and diversity policy will be given to all new temporary staff, new members of *Staff Call* and to any client on request.

8. Staff Call policies and procedures

Other *Staff Call* policies and procedures support our commitment to equality and diversity. These include flexi-time, parental and dependants leave, annual leave, recruitment, discipline, grievance, harassment, the Recruitment and Employment Confederation's Code of Conduct, statement of terms and conditions and induction.