

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Introduction

Geneva Health International is committed to building an organisation that makes full use of the talents, skills, experience and different perspectives available in a multi-ethnic, diverse society, and where people feel they are respected and valued and can achieve their potential regardless of gender, race, national/ethnic origin, disability, marital status, age, sexual orientation, religious/belief, civil partnership and nationality. Geneva Health International is also committed to promoting, human rights, equal pay/opportunities/promotions, part-time working, and maternity/paternity/parental leave.

Statement of Policy

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- All equal opportunity obligations are fully adhered to and that no one receives less favourable treatment, on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, or on the grounds of disability, gender, age, religion/belief or sexuality. In addition, no-one will be disadvantaged by any conditions, requirements, provisions, criteria, procedures or practices that cannot be justified on non-racial grounds, or victimised for taking action against racial or other discrimination or harassment, or instructed or put under pressure to discriminate unlawfully.
- The organisation is free of conduct that violates the dignity of workers or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, offensive or humiliating working environment.
- Opportunities for employment, training and promotion are equally open to candidates from all racial groups, and unaffected by the other diverse characteristics or disabilities.
- Selection for employment, promotion transfer and training and access to benefits, facilities and services, will be fair and equitable, and based solely on merit.

This policy applies to all aspects of employment, from recruitment and selection to termination of employment and former workers' rights.

Implementation and Monitoring of Policy

We will take the following steps to put the policy into practice and ensures it achieves its ends:

1. The policy will be a priority in the business plan and will be referred to in staff handbooks. Staff will be required to retain a copy of this.
2. Jackie Knowles will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the policy and will produce regular reports for the organisation.
3. The Policy will be communicated to all workers and job applicants and is available on the organisation's website.
4. The policy will be communicated to external bodies as appropriate, for example when submitting tenders.
5. All workers will be trained on the policy; on their rights and responsibilities under the policy, and in law; and on how the policy will affect the way they carry out their duties. Staff will be versed to clearly understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable conduct in the workplace.
6. Complaints about discrimination and harassment in the course of employment will be taken seriously. Supervising staff will keep a record of any matter of unacceptable conduct from service users, that is directed towards carers because of their race, age, gender, sexuality or disability; they will send a clear message of the unacceptability of discrimination and harassment, and will make the service manager aware of any such incidents. He/She will monitor, keep a record and take action when necessary. All staff will have a copy of the complaints procedure and will be aware that discrimination and harassment may result in disciplinary sanctions and even dismissal.
7. Managers will be trained on the potentially discriminatory effects of practices, conditions, and criteria on some racial groups, those with a disability, and other diverse personal characteristics. They will be made aware of the importance of being able to justify decisions.

8. Opportunities for employment will be advertised where they can be accessed by all sections of the community. All applicants are welcomed irrespective of their diverse characteristics or race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin.
9. All workers will be encouraged to develop their skills and qualifications and to take advantage of promotion and development opportunities in the workplace.
10. Information on the ethnic and racial background of workers and applicants for employment, promotion and training will be collected and analysed to monitor the workforce and the recruitment process. The information will be held in confidence and will be used to promote equality and prevent unlawful discrimination.
11. If the data shows that people from particular sections of the community are under – represented in particular areas of work then lawful positive action training and encouragement will be considered for workers and others from that group, to increase their chances of applying successfully for vacancies in these areas.
12. The following areas will be monitored for equal opportunity in relation to gender, age, race disability, sexual orientation, equal pay/opportunities/promotion, religion/belief; human rights, part-time working, employment rights: grievances, disciplinary action, performance assessment and terminations of employment (for whatever reason).
13. Requirements, conditions, provisions, criteria or services will be reviewed regularly, and revised if they are found to, or might, discriminate unlawfully on the grounds of race, disability, age gender, or sexuality.
14. Our Service Users are advised of anti-discriminatory practice and behaviour in the company “Service User Guide” however, it is restated here that the principles and good practice that are enshrined in our equal opportunities policy extends to Service Users and all people who enter our company premises.

Notes on the policy: Racial Discrimination

1.1. Purpose of this policy:

The basic purpose of this policy is to ensure that every member of staff working in the company, even those not directly employed by the group, for example Apprentices and those on Vocational Work Experience, are aware of the policy. It is intended to be used as a basis for ensuring good employment practice and accompanies the training and updates given to all staff that has involvement in employing staff within the group. All staff are invited at any time to comment or make suggestions on the policy. All comments should be addressed to Alex Jack who has the overall responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the policy.

1.2 The legal framework:

The supporting legal framework that aims to eradicate unlawful racial discrimination is the 1976 Race Relations Act, together with subsequent amendments: the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which incorporated the EU Race Discrimination Directive into UK legislation.

The Race relations Act gives the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) statutory duties in relation to the Act. The CRE also has statutory powers to issue Codes of Practice in the field of employment. It advises employers on how they may promote equality of opportunity between people from different racial groups and eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and harassment in employment. Geneva Health currently informs its own policy with reference to the new Code of Practice that compliments the Act. The Code is Statutory which means that it has been approved by Parliament. It makes recommendations of good practice that Geneva Health aspires towards achieving. Workers from all racial groups have a right to equality of opportunity in employment and using the Code helps achieve this. Copies of the Code are available from the organisation upon request.