



Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

1. Policy Statement

Engender (“the Company”) recognises that everyone it works with has a contribution to make to the organisation and that they have the right to equality of opportunity. The Company is committed to actively opposing all forms of discrimination.

Engender wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment and voluntary activity and opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation. The Company believes that it is in our best interests and those of all who work here, to ensure that the human resources, talents and skills available throughout the community are considered when employment and volunteering opportunities arise. To this end, we are committed, whenever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce which broadly reflects the local community in which we operate.

All possible steps will be taken to ensure that all individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment selection, training, promotion and career management are based solely on objective and job-related criteria.

The Company also aims to provide a service that does not discriminate against its clients or service users in the means by which they can access the services and support supplied by the Company. The Company believes that all employees and volunteers (and others engaged with and by the Company including our clients and service users) are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity. Furthermore we will aim to ensure that our services are inclusive and accessible to those who experience disadvantage, using lawful positive action measures where appropriate.

2. Our Aims

The Company aims to promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination and eliminate harassment in line with the Equality Act 2010 by adhering to the following:

- Opposing all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination
- Treating our employees and volunteers and others we engage with fairly and with respect
- Supporting employees in developing their full potential and utilising the talents and resources of individuals to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the Company
- Ensuring that all employees and volunteers and others we engage with are aware of their obligation not to discriminate unfairly against others and to report incidents of discrimination against any individual or group to a Director of the Company.

3. Our Commitment

The Company is committed to:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contribution of all employees and volunteers and others we engage with is recognised and valued
- Promoting the concept that every employee is entitled to be part of an environment and culture that promotes dignity and respect to all. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated
- Making training, development and progression opportunities available to all employees
- Treating breaches of this policy as misconduct that may lead to disciplinary action

4. Definition of Discrimination

Discrimination is unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation; these are known as the 'protected characteristics'. Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and includes discrimination by perception and association.

Discrimination can be Direct – where a person or policy intentionally treats another person less favourably than another on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics, or Indirect – which is the application of a policy, criterion or practice which is applied to everyone but is detrimental to a considerably larger proportion of people than the group that the person it is being applied to, represents; and it cannot be justified and the person suffers a detriment from the application of the policy.

4.1 Harassment

This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

4.2 Victimisation

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings or they have given or intend to give evidence.

5. Responsibility for the Implementation of this Policy

All employees and volunteers and others we engage with are required to act in a way that does not subject any other employee or volunteer or any other person we engage with, to direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of their race, sex, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.

The co-operation of all employees, volunteers and others we engage with is essential for the success of this Policy. Senior employees are expected to follow this Policy and to try to ensure that all employees and other listed do the same.

Employees and others may be held independently and individually liable for their discriminatory acts by the Company and in some circumstances an Employment Tribunal may order them to pay compensation to the person who has suffered as a result of discriminatory acts.

The Company takes responsibility for achieving the objectives of this Policy, and endeavours to ensure compliance with relevant Legislation and Codes of Practice.

6. Acting on Discriminatory Behaviour

In the event that an employee, or volunteer or any other person we engage with is the subject or perpetrator of, or witness to, discriminatory behaviour, please report this to the Executive Director or a Board member .

7. Advice and Support on Discrimination

Employees may contact their trade union where they are members. Other contacts include the Equality and Human Rights Commission at www.equalityhumanrights.com and Citizens Advice at www.citizensadvice.org.uk

8. The Extent of the Policy

- 8.1 The Company seeks to apply this Policy in the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development and promotion of all employees. The Company offers services in a fashion that complies with the spirit of this Policy.
- 8.2 This Policy does not form a part of any employment contract with any employee and its contents are not to be regarded by any person as implied, collateral or express terms to any contract made with the Company.
- 8.3 The Company reserves the right to amend and update this Policy at any time.