

ALTEREGO CONSULTANCY – EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY 2016

We aim to be an organisation that values, recognises and responds to the diverse needs of our customers, communities and individuals and recognise the need to ensure that our staff are equipped with the skills and understanding to achieve our corporate objectives. Our commitment to equality is underpinned by responsibilities that exist under a variety of legislation.

Objectives of Policy

- We will not discriminate against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility or dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.
- We will develop our services taking account of equality and diversity, recognising people's rights to their distinctive and diverse identity, their needs and aspirations
- Our Board of Management and workers will generally reflect the population of the communities we work in.
- We understand how valuing diversity can help us improve our services.
- We will actively consult with our customers to ensure that we deliver our corporate aims and that these reflect diversity of need.
- Wherever we can we will endeavour to support our partners in helping them to achieve equality and diversity.
- We will provide Board Members and employees with training and development to enable them to achieve corporate goals and reach their full potential.
- We will listen to our customers and workers and endeavour to involve them in the development of services.
- We will seek to ensure that external consultants and contractors understand and adhere to our equality and diversity principles.
- We will endeavour to produce publications that promote positive images that reflect the diversity of our communities.
- We will make our publications available if requested in languages used by our minority groups and provide a translation.
- When requested we will provide information using Braille, large print format.
- We will review, in consultation with resident groups, and progress this policy to ensure cohesion of diversity and that it is in line with existing and forthcoming legislation so that it reflects the true diversity of our communities.
- We will monitor the impact of our operational policies on the minority groups within our neighbourhoods.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of every Board Member and worker of Alterego Consultancy to uphold, respect, and act in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Strategy.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Employment – Aim

We aspire to employ a diverse range of employees and provide them with training to develop skills that will equip them to provide a quality service, sensitive to the needs of our communities. We will treat workers fairly and without unlawful discrimination and ensure that dignity and respect is embedded in our culture. Our working culture will not tolerate harassment but will engender confidence that complaints can be made without fear of prejudice and reprisal.

We will:

- Provide full and fair consideration to all job applications.
- Ensure that all our employees receive relevant recruitment and selection training.
- Maintain recruitment, training and employment records and monitor these to identify areas of inequality.
- Regularly review employment procedures to ensure fairness and reflection of current best practice.
- Enable all employees to properly discharge their work responsibilities and to reach their potential by providing sufficient training and support and affirmative action.
- Wherever possible reduce barriers experienced by members of minority or disadvantaged groups seeking and during employment.
- Not discriminate against applicants or members of staff on the grounds of appearance or class.
- Deal appropriately with workers found to be in breach of their responsibility under our Equality & Diversity Strategy, the policies and priorities.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Race and Ethnic Origin – Aim

We strive to achieve racial and cultural equality in service provision and employment and will not accept any form of race, cultural discrimination or harassment. We will promote equality for individuals from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities both in the workplace and our communities and work towards diversity and access to all services.

We will:

- Respect cultural and social identities and needs within the services we provide and the employment we offer.
- Make our services easily accessible and available to all BME groups.
- Endeavour to employ workers that are representative of our communities and so are sensitive to the needs of our communities.
- Strive to create an environment which is free from racial harassment and racist behaviour.
- Work with partners and other organisations to promote racial equality and actively eliminate racial disadvantage and discrimination.
- Set targets for the employment of BME employees
- Set BME targets on the services that we provide
- Prevent discrimination (direct and indirect) in the allocation of housing and services operating within a framework which recognises diversity and difference.
- Manage our homes and related services in a way that is sensitive to the specific needs of BME communities and take action to eliminate harassment and anti-social behaviour.
- We recognise and accept the problem of unintentional racism and in partnership with our communities we will ensure that we act fairly and professionally.

Religion – Aim

We will tackle any harassment on grounds of religion and belief and will strive to engender good relations between people of different religions and beliefs.

We will:

- Endeavour to create an environment which recognises and respects religion and belief and drives out unlawful discrimination and harassment.
- Ensure that employment practices and services recognise and respect religion and belief.
- Raise awareness and understanding of religion and belief amongst employees so that they are sensitive to the needs of colleagues, individual customers and our neighbourhoods.
- Where practicable accommodate the religious needs of our workers.

Gender and Sexuality – Aim

We will endeavour to ensure gender equality in the services we provide and for the staff we employ. We will not discriminate in our employment or in the services we provide on the basis of sexuality.

We will:

- Strive to create an environment that is free from sexual harassment, language and behaviour, promotes gender equality and eliminates disadvantage.
- Ensure that our policy, procedures and practices do not discriminate against either gender in employment in areas where they are under-represented.
- Ensure where possible a gender mix at Board and senior level.
- Create a flexible-working environment where work/life balance is recognised and positively supported.
- Where required provide support and counselling for transgender employees.
- Endeavour to provide services and documentation that is relevant and accessible to all men and women's needs.
- Strive to raise awareness of gender equality with our contractors and ensure their understanding of our commitment to gender equality.

Disability – Aim

We recognise that people with a disability can be disadvantaged by the environment and social attitude and strive therefore to achieve equality through elimination of unlawful discrimination and practice.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

We will:

- Where practicable provide services relevant to the needs of people with a disability.
- Ensure that our services and documentation is accessible to all people with a disability and monitor this.
- Adapt facilities and modify procedures, where possible, to make full use of peoples abilities.
- Meet legal requirements through regular audits on services, properties and processes.
- Provide training to employees to raise awareness and confidence for providing support to people with a disability.
- Wherever practicable, continue to employ and retrain staff who have become disabled during their employment.
- Guarantee people with a disability an interview for employment given that they meet the minimum essential criteria.
- Consult our customers on the needs and aspiration of services for people with disability.
- Raise awareness with our contractors and our commitment to disability equality.

Age – Aim

We will value people of all ages and engender an environment that encourages and enables access to our services and employment by people of any age without discrimination, recognising talent, skills and experience.

We will:

- Ensure that our employment practices do not include age-related criteria (subject to present retirement ages).
- Ensure that services we provide do not restrict or inhibit access by older people.
- Regularly review the services we provide taking account of the needs and aspirations of difference age groups.
- Recruit, promote and provide training and development to employees on the basis of need regardless of age.
- Work with partners and other agencies to develop, provide and promote services for people of all the difference age groups.
- Raise awareness with our contractors on our commitment to the elimination of age discrimination.

HIV & AIDS – Aim

We aim to ensure that people with HIV & AIDS do not experience discrimination either through the services we provide or in our employment.

We will:

- Guarantee that no employee or applicant will be required to take the HIV and AIDS antibody test as a condition of employment.
- Not oblige any employee to tell us if they have HIV.
- Not deny anyone a service for which they meet the eligibility criteria solely because they have HIV or AIDS.
- Not require customers to disclose their HIV status in order to obtain a service for which they are eligible.
- Sensitively manage any information relating to HIV or AIDS, whether a customer or member of staff, regardless of how it is acquired.
- Only share, record, store or use information with the consent of the person.
- Ensure that our employees cannot refuse to work with or provide a service to people with HIV or AIDS.
- Develop, produce and publicise rational and logical information to help staff and customers overcome any fears and prejudices.

Harassment – Aim

We will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying of or by our workers, customers or representatives and we will strive to ensure that workers and customers are all treated without injustice.

We will, as an employer endeavour to:

- Ensure that all employees treat each other with dignity and respect.
- Accept the right of everyone to be different.
- Value what diversity brings to our organisation both internally and externally.

We will, as a service provider strive to:

- Ensure that all customers are all treated with respect and dignity and allowed to live in a safe environment.
- Develop a working environment and customer service where harassment is known to be unacceptable and where individuals can feel confident enough to bring complaints without fear of prejudice and reprisal.

- Treat all complaints of harassment and bullying seriously and support employees and customers through our harassment procedures.
- Ensure that workers and customers are treated fairly and justly and that account is not taken of incidents that are unrelated to the workplace or tenancy/agreements that we have in place.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

GLOSSARY

Word / Term Definition

Employee

Someone who is directly employed by the organisation, i.e. they have a current employment contract which is full-time, part time or for a fixed-term.

Worker

Someone who is currently “working” for the organisation but does not have to be employed by it; this includes employees, temporary workers employed via a recruitment agency, contractors and consultants.

Customer A person or organisation that CLC provides a service to, or whom CLC has a working relationship with.

Harassment

Definition of ASB from ASB Policy:

“Acting in a way that causes or could cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not the same household”.

Definition from Bully & Harassment Procedure:

“Subjecting a person to unwanted conduct on the grounds of their sex, marital status, race, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation with the purpose or effect of violating their dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.”

Discrimination

Direct Discrimination – Treating someone less favourably than another in any aspect of services, recruitment, employment, promotion, re-deployment, redundancy, appraisal, job analysis, terms and conditions, allocations or contracts of any kind.

Indirect Discrimination – Applying a requirement or condition which, whether intentionally or not, adversely affects any person, or member of a particular group, considerably more than others and cannot be justified.

Institutional Discrimination – The collective failure of an organisation to provide appropriate services to people because of their colour, sex, disability, etc. It can be seen in the processes, attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping which disadvantage certain people.

Victimisation – Victimising an individual who makes a complaint in good faith under the Race Relations, Sex

Discrimination or Disability Discrimination Act, or who gives evidence in connection with proceedings brought under those Acts.

Institutional Racism – is the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin.

Positive Action – The Sex Discrimination and the Race Relations Acts, allows employers to encourage under-represented communities to both apply and use the services available. Current legislation can permit employers to introduce a range of measures known as “positive action” to further encourage underrepresented groups to access employment and services.

Affirmative Action – A person (or group) working, training or living in an environment where he or she is in a minority may need special support, for example by additional training or mentor support.

Other Working Arrangements – Where possible, consideration shall be given to alternative working arrangements, for example to assist in certain domestic circumstances or for cultural, religious or beliefs.

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION

Our commitment to equalities is underpinned by responsibilities that exist under a variety of legislation. Whilst several pieces of legislation exist to bring formal prosecutions, this policy has been written paying specific regard to the Race Relations Act 2001, the Race Directive 2003, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Employment Rights Act 1996, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1997.

Signed:



Date: 4 April 2016

Derek A Bolton (Managing Director)