

Comas

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Statement of policy

1.1 The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the trustees, Director and associates to the promotion of equality of opportunity in Comas.

1.2 It is our policy to provide employment and other opportunity equality to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being a Traveller)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age.

1.3 We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, associates and others who work for us, as paid workers or volunteers, will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds.

1.4 Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

1.5 We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice, it also makes sound business sense. Our equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

2. Commitments

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment where everyone is treated with respect
- Preventing unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

3. Implementation

3.1 The Director of Comas has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Each associate also has responsibilities and we expect all our staff, paid and unpaid, to abide by the policy and help create a positive equality environment.

3.2 In order to implement this policy we will:

- Communicate the policy to all stakeholders
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate

- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment are trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques
- Obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our workforce

4. Monitoring and review

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy. The effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly, at least annually, and action taken to address any concerns.

5. Complaints

5.1 Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures outlined in the Associate Terms and Conditions.

5.2 All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. In addition to our internal procedures, associates and volunteers have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an industrial tribunal in relation to the Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986; the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999; the Race Relations Act 1976 and all of its amendments and extensions; the Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003; Employment Equality Act (Age) Regulations 2006; Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003; Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and 2007 and any other relevant legislation.

5.3 However, associates or volunteers wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedures first. Every effort will be made to ensure that associates or volunteers who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

Comas

April 2008