



Charity number 1197599

Equal Opportunities and Discrimination Policy

This is the policy of the CIO in respect of discrimination around the 9 protected characteristics:

- Sex Equality
- Religion & Religious Beliefs
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Age
- Disability
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Marriage & Civil Partnership.

We are committed to working towards equality of opportunity for every member of the team. This policy is one important way of achieving this objective.

Please read it carefully. If there is anything you do not understand, please ask your line manager for an explanation.

The policy

The CIO recognises that discrimination of the 9 protected characteristics above, is harmful and in many cases, may be illegal. Through this policy, through training and by example, we wish to demonstrate that we do not tolerate discrimination by anyone working at the CIO.

This policy replicates a Code of Conduct of how it is expected that everyone – partners, associates, and employees – are to behave. It applies to our dealings with each other, with candidates for job vacancies, with suppliers, with associates and with our customers.

We will not tolerate any form of behaviour from employees that discriminates against other employees or causes unwanted behaviour of harassment/bullying towards any other employee. Disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the CIO disciplinary procedure against any employee who breaches this policy. If the allegation involves a self-employed contractor or the CIO/Partner in the CIO, an external independent professional may be employed to adjudicate and deal with the matter.

Definitions

'Discrimination' is any form of unfavourable treatment.

Sex Discrimination

Includes any form of treatment which is unfavourable, and which is related to gender or marital status. Discrimination according to sex, is illegal under the terms of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The Act applies equally to both men and women.

- Direct Sex Discrimination is when one person is treated less favourably on the grounds of his or her sex than a person of the other sex is or would be treated in similar circumstances. This can occur when a person is refused a position or promotion because of his or her sex or because of a factor which is sex linked, such



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as the ability to bear children. For example, it is illegal to refuse to employ a woman because she is of childbearing age and 'judged' likely to have children. A candidate should be treated on merit, irrespective of sex.

- Indirect Sex Discrimination is a requirement or condition, which cannot be justified on job related criteria on grounds other than sex, which is applied to men and women equally but has the effect of disadvantaging a considerably higher proportion of one sex than the other. For example, requiring employees to be of a minimum height, which cannot be justified in terms of the task they have to perform.

The Right to Equal Pay provides equality in the terms of an employee's contract where she/he is employed to perform work which is rated equivalent to that performed by a member of the opposite sex or work of equal value to that of a member of the opposite sex.

Sexual Orientation

Is any form of treatment which is unfavourable relating to an individual's sexuality which may be heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, demisexual or pansexual (the list is not exhaustive).

Gender Reassignment

Is any form of treatment which is unfavourable relating to the process that an individual may be going through or has been through to change their gender – sometimes referred to as Transgender.

Marriage or Civil Partnership Discrimination

- Direct Marriage Discrimination can occur when a married person is treated less favourably in employment, because he/she is married, than a single person of the same sex is or would be treated in similar circumstances.
- Indirect Marriage Discrimination occurs when a requirement or condition of employment, which cannot be justified on job related criteria on grounds other than marital status, is applied equally to married or single persons (of either sex) but has the effect in the CIO of disadvantaging a considerably higher proportion of married than single people (of the same sex).

Race Discrimination

Is any form of treatment which is unfavourable, and which is related to colour, race, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origin. Discrimination according to race is illegal under the terms of the Race Relations Act 1976. As with sex discrimination, race discrimination can be direct or indirect.

- An example of direct discrimination might be offensive remarks about black people or about a religion or faith where most believers are black.
- Indirect discrimination is when there's a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect on some people than others.



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Religion and Religious Beliefs Discrimination

Is where a person is treated less favourably because of his or her religious beliefs; for example, promoting a less able person to work rather than a Jewish person using the reason that the Jewish person would not work on Saturdays. The Fair Employment (NI) Act 1989 enables employees who feel that they have been discriminated against on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion to act against the CIO.

Age Discrimination

Is any form of treatment which is unfavourable, and which is related to a person's age. Discrimination according to age is illegal under the terms of The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

- Direct Age Discrimination is treating a person less favourably on the grounds of their age.
- Indirect Age Discrimination is applying a provision, criterion or the C IO equally to all, but which would put a person of that age group at a greater disadvantage when compared with others.

Disability Discrimination

Is where a person is treated less favourably because of disability. Occasionally a disability can limit a person's capability for some forms of employment. Discrimination occurs when the treatment of the individual is unfavourable considering the disability; for example, making it a condition of employment that the employee can drive an unmodified car when the job can be performed adequately without driving.

Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination

Is where someone is treated less favourably because they are pregnant or on maternity leave. The CIO recognises that discrimination is not only unacceptable, but also unlawful. The CIO's aim is to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against, directly or indirectly, on any unlawful grounds.

By including this policy in the Employee Handbook, all employees are made aware that the C IO will act in accordance with all statutory requirements and take into account any relevant codes of practice.

- All job applicants will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.
- Interview questions will not be of a discriminatory nature.
- All promotions will be made on merit in line with the principles of the policy.
- Employees who have a disability will receive the necessary help, within reason, to enable them to carry out their normal duties effectively.