

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

We are an equal opportunities employer. This means that we will make good faith efforts to comply with the spirit and letter of the equality laws.

We will promote a good and harmonious working environment in which our employees will be treated with dignity and respect, and we will not discriminate unlawfully against or harass any person on the grounds of -

- Sex, including gender reassignment
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Pregnancy / maternity leave
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We will endeavour to ensure that our workplace and our employment policies and practices do not unreasonably exclude or disadvantage those of our job applicants and employees who have disabilities. To this end we will comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments that is imposed on us in relation to such persons. We note that a failure to comply with that duty would be an act of unlawful discrimination.

We will endeavour to ensure that employees who are experiencing symptoms of the menopause are supported, recognising that a failure to do so may amount to discrimination on the grounds of one or more the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment and sex. We aim to create an environment where employees feel confident enough to raise issues about their symptoms and, where appropriate, to request workplace adjustments. A risk assessment will be carried out where appropriate. Please raise any issues with your line manager or if you feel uncomfortable doing so talk instead to Lynsey Rainey, HR/Office Manager.

### *Employees' Rights*

Our employees have a right to work in a good and harmonious environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and to complain about such behaviour should it occur.

Employees who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are encouraged to raise the matter through the grievance procedure. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially and, if substantiated, will render the alleged harasser liable to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Employees who make complaints of discrimination and harassment, and others who give evidence or information in connection with such complaints, will not be victimised (i.e. they will not be discriminated or harassed in retaliation for their actions). Victimisation is also discrimination contrary to the equality laws and this policy.

### *Employees' Responsibilities*

All our employees must comply with this policy. You must treat others with dignity and respect. You must not commit any acts of unlawful discrimination or harassment against any other person, such as your co-workers, our job applicants or anyone else they may come into contact with during the course of their work. Such behaviour will not be permitted or condoned. We will treat it as misconduct which may warrant dismissal from employment.

All our employees should discourage discrimination and harassment by making it clear that they find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting co-workers who suffer such treatment. Any employee who is aware of any incident of discrimination and harassment should alert management to enable us to deal with it.

### *Employer's Responsibilities*

We are committed to continually make good faith efforts to implement this policy. This responsibility will be carried out by the HR Manager.

We will:

- fulfil our legal obligations and comply with our own Equal Opportunities Policy.
- communicate the policy directly to all employees, applicants and relevant others.
- provide training and guidance as appropriate.
- ensure that all complaints of discrimination and harassment are dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially and in accordance with our internal grievance procedure.
- set a good example by treating employees with fairness, dignity and respect.
- be alert to unacceptable behaviour and take appropriate action, including disciplinary action where needed, to stop it.
- Monitor all incidents of discrimination and harassment and review the effectiveness of this policy periodically and where issues arise.
- Obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as sub-contractors that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our business

### *Monitoring and Review*

We are registered with the Equality Commission for the purposes of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. As such we are obliged to monitor the Community Background and sex of our job applicants and workforce. We are also obliged to review the composition of our workforce and our employment policies and practices every three years and, where appropriate, to consider taking affirmative action to promote fair participation between members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities. We are committed to complying with these duties and will set up suitable arrangements to ensure that we do so.