



Introduction

As a charity striving to prevent homelessness, Homemaker recognises that we live in a society where discrimination still operates to the disadvantage of many groups in society

Homemaker believes that all persons should have equal rights to recognition of their human dignity, and to have equal opportunities to be educated, to work, receive services and to participate in society. Homemaker is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities through the way we manage the organisation and provide services to the community. To express this commitment, we develop, promote and maintain policies that will be conducive to the principles of fairness and equality in the workplace.

The Board of Homemaker will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of the policy are met, and promoting its importance. The Directors will also be responsible for promoting the policy amongst staff. The Board will ensure that its members are trained and updated as necessary.

Service Provision

Homemaker staff will work in an open and non-discriminatory way with any client accepted as an appropriate referral. Homemaker will seek to ensure that its services are delivered in such a way that they are accessible to all groups of people without discrimination. When services are being developed, consideration will be given to issues including methods of communication, physical accessibility, support facilities, and other special needs, and appropriate consultation with local organisations will take place.

All clients will be advised of Homemaker's equal opportunity principles at their first meeting with their caseworker. At that time staff will emphasise that they expect all clients to abide by these principles, and that they will not tolerate racist or other discriminatory remarks during their work together. The organisation would expect any such comments subsequently made by a client to their caseworker to be challenged at the time, and reference made again to the organisation's policy. Where staff have ongoing concerns about the language or behaviour of a client, these must be raised with their line manager.

Clients will be contacted following their involvement with Homemaker to ascertain their views of the service.

Employment

Homemaker Southwest is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.

To that end, the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment, and to not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be based on aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, during their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

Our commitment:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Recruitment and Selection

Employment vacancies will be advertised widely. All adverts will comply with legal standards and requirements.

The selection process will be free from bias, and based solely on the Job Description and Person Specification. Applicants' performance in writing, at interview and in any other practical exercises will be judged in accordance with these specifications.

An Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will be attached to each application form, and the responses will be collated.

Training and Development

Homemaker is committed to the training and development of its staff and trustees to allow them to gain skills and knowledge, realise their full potential, and acquire career prospects. The organisation will ensure that all staff have equal access to such opportunities.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

Homemaker will treat seriously any complaints or grievances concerning discrimination by its employees or members, and any proven incidence of misconduct will result in disciplinary action, and if found to amount to gross misconduct, may result in dismissal.

Monitoring and Review

Homemaker will develop systems to evaluate the success of its equal opportunities policy and will regularly review its practices and procedures in the light of these.

Date policy last reviewed and approved: November 2017

Date for next review: November 2018