

Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy

Charity Registration Number: 1108999

Date of Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy: March 2018

1. Overview

- 1.1 The Mulberry Centre ("the Centre") is committed to providing an environment where all staff, Clients and volunteers enjoy equality of opportunity.
- 1.2 The Centre works to eliminate all forms of discrimination and recognise that this requires not only a commitment to remove discrimination but also action through positive policies to redress inequalities.
- 1.3 Providing equality of opportunity means understanding and appreciating the diversity of our staff, Clients and volunteers and ensuring a supportive environment free from harassment.
- 1.4 The Centre will meet all statutory obligations under relevant legislation and, where appropriate, anticipate future legal requirements. In addition, this will be informed by the Codes of Practice or Guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and other relevant bodies.
- 1.5 The Centre aims to ensure that no-one using its services, its employees, consultants and volunteers are discriminated against due to (but not exclusive to) age, gender, religion, cultural or ethnic origin, race, disability, HIV status, sexual orientation or marital status.
- 1.6 The Centre is committed to a continuing programme of action to make this policy effective and to bring it to the attention of all employees, consultants, volunteers and clients.

2. Employment and Employees

- 2.1 This policy forms part of the contract of employment and may be amended and updated from time to time and notified to staff.

3. Conditions of Service

- 3.1 Terms and conditions of service for employees will comply with anti-discrimination legislation. The provision of benefits such as working hours, maternity and other leave arrangements, performance appraisal systems, dress code and any other conditions of employment will not discriminate against any employee on the grounds of their gender, marital status, race, racial group, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or unreasonably on the grounds of their disability.
- 3.2 Where practicable, the Centre will endeavour to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service which take into account the specific needs of employees which arise from their ethnic or cultural background, gender, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

4. Service Provision and Clients

- 4.1 We ensure that no person to whom we provide services will receive less favourable treatment on irrelevant, inappropriate or illegal grounds, particularly including (but not exclusive to) age, gender, religion, cultural or ethnic origin, race, disability, HIV status, sexual orientation or marital status.
- 4.2 There are written criteria regarding eligibility for accessing the services that we provide. Needs assessments are reviewed to ensure that a service is offered purely on the basis of a client's relevant needs and circumstances.
- 4.3 All those who use our services will be entitled to equality of opportunity.

- 4.4 Anyone who feels they have been denied equality of opportunity or experienced discrimination whilst in receipt of services offered by us will be encouraged to give us feedback and if this is not acted upon, to use the Complaints Procedure so that concerns can be investigated and responded to.
- 4.5 Staff will make clients of the Centre aware of their rights and obligations with regard to equal opportunities and discrimination and will ask them to sign a registration form confirming this.
- 4.6 Where appropriate, statements of understanding will outline boundaries of acceptable behaviour and The Centre reserves the right to withdraw services to any client if that person behaves in a discriminatory, disruptive, threatening, abusive or illegal manner to any employee, consultant, volunteer, or other client.

5. Volunteers

- 5.1 The Centre promotes and encourages positive attitudes to difference, an awareness of the multi-cultural and diverse nature of our society and has zero tolerance for discrimination.
- 5.2 To support this, the Centre applies objective criteria to assess an individual's suitability for volunteering.
- 5.3 Selection criteria and procedures are reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected and treated entirely on a basis of their relevant skills and experience.
- 5.4 The Centre includes awareness of its Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy as part of the induction process for all volunteers.

6. Anti-Discrimination

- 6.1 The Centre is committed to ensuring that anti-discrimination is promoted throughout the organisation. The organisation aims to develop employees, consultants and volunteers to enable them to become fully sensitive to the culture, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and social background of others.
- 6.2 The Centre works actively with employees, consultants, volunteers and clients to promote and encourage a positive attitude, recognition, understanding and acceptance of diversity, uniqueness and difference.
- 6.3 The Centre aims to empower employees, consultants and volunteers to recognise and challenge any discriminatory or oppressive language and behaviour and to be pro-active in presenting positive images of the diversity of people that make up our society.

7. Recruitment and Selection

- 7.1 The Centre recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce.
- 7.2 The Centre will take steps to ensure that:
 - a. it endeavours to recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates possible;
 - b. employment opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities, their skills and experience;
 - c. where appropriate, positive action is taken to attract applications from all sections of society and especially from those groups which are under-represented in the workforce;
 - d. selection criteria and processes do not discriminate unjustifiably on the grounds of disability, gender, marital status, race, racial group, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, religion or belief, or sexual orientation;
 - e. wherever appropriate and necessary, lawful exemptions (genuine occupational requirements) will be used to recruit suitable staff to meet the special needs of particular groups;
 - f. All recruitment agencies acting for the Centre are aware of its requirement not to discriminate and to act accordingly.

8. Promotion and Career Development

- 8.1 Promotion within the Centre will be made based solely on merit.
- 8.2 The selection criteria and processes for recruitment and promotion will be kept under review to ensure that there is no unjustifiably discriminatory impact on any particular group.
- 8.3 All employees will have equal access to training and other career development opportunities appropriate to their experience and abilities.

9. Promoting Equality and Diversity

- 9.1 Employees, consultants and volunteers will be informed of this Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy and will be provided with equality and diversity training if appropriate to their needs and responsibilities.
- 9.2 All those who act on the Centre's behalf will be informed of this Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy and will be expected to pay due regard to it when conducting business on the Centre's behalf.
- 9.3 In all its dealings, including those with suppliers, contractors and recruitment agencies, the Centre will seek to promote the principles of equality and diversity.
- 9.4 The Centre will make every effort to reflect its commitment to equality and diversity in its marketing and communication activities.

10. Responsibility for Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination

- 10.1 Ultimate responsibility for implementing the policy rests with the Trustees of the Centre. The Centre has appointed the Centre's Chief Executive, to be responsible for the operation of the policy.
- 10.2 All employees, consultants and volunteers of the Centre are expected to pay due regard to the provisions of its Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy and are responsible for ensuring compliance with it when undertaking their jobs or representing The Centre.
- 10.3 Acts of discrimination or harassment by employees, consultants or volunteers of the Centre will result in disciplinary action. Failure to comply with this policy will be treated in a similar fashion.
- 10.4 Acts of discrimination or harassment by those acting on behalf of the Centre will lead to appropriate action including the termination of services where appropriate.

11. Complaints of Discrimination

- 11.1 The Centre will treat seriously all complaints of discrimination or harassment made by employees, consultants, volunteers, clients or other third parties.
- 11.2 All complaints will be investigated in accordance with either the Centre's Complaints Policy or Grievance Policy as appropriate. Action will be taken as appropriate and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

Chair's Signature:



Date:

7/3/2018