

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY



Policy Statement

disAbility Cornwall & IoS believes that our Equality and Diversity Policy will benefit every individual and organisation with whom we work. We aim to create conditions where every individual is treated with respect and dignity at all times. Equality and diversity are at the core of all our working practices and this is reflected through our mission statement and our strategic aims:

Mission Statement

“To facilitate a fully inclusive society in Cornwall through empowering disabled people to achieve independence, choice and control.”

Strategic Aims

- 1. To increase opportunities within the social, education, training and employment environments;*
- 2. To challenge discrimination and inequalities*
- 3. To promote examples of good practice.*

The Board of Directors, managers, all staff members and volunteers are committed to treating everyone fairly, challenging inequalities and promoting opportunities for all through ensuring that equality of opportunity is integral to all of our policies and practices.

disAbility Cornwall & IoS recognises that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal treatment. We aim to ensure that no job applicant, staff member, volunteer or organisation/individual to which we provide services and/or work with in any capacity, will be discriminated against by us on any grounds including: Physical or Mental Disability or Mental Ill Health, Race, Colour, Creed, Nationality, Ethnic or National Origin, Sex, Marital or Parental Status, Gender Re-assignment, Sexual Orientation, Age (other than any statutory retirement age), Religion or Belief, Political Belief, Class, Caring Responsibility, Employment Status, Trade Union Membership or Unrelated Criminal Conviction.

We adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which replaces:

- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Race Relations Amendment Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Work and Families Act 2006

We also recognise that the Equality Act 2010 includes additional duties for 'public authorities' replacing:

- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- The Disability Equality Duty 2006
- The Gender Equality Duty 2007

This legislation has a significant impact for us (in particular when working with public authorities) and we will ensure that we adhere to all requirements in all areas of our work as a result of the above legislation.

disAbility Cornwall & IoS is fully committed to the view that discrimination is unacceptable on any grounds, whether covered by the above Acts or not, and will positively seek to ensure that it does not occur.

disAbility Cornwall & IoS recognises that diversity among users of services and staff brings positive benefits to the organisation's work and is committed to challenging all forms of discrimination and unfair disadvantage in every aspect of its work and working practices.

Policy Scope

Every member of the Board of Directors, managers, employees and volunteers has responsibility for the implementation of this Policy.

This Policy applies to all aspects of employment and service delivery including the workforce, existing and potential service users and anyone providing goods, services and facilities to disAbility Cornwall & IoS.

Equality Commitments

disAbility Cornwall & IoS will work hard to ensure that:

- We fulfill all our legal obligations under equality legislation and linked codes of practice
- Our services are accessible, of a high quality and offered on a fair and equitable basis
- The different needs and expectations of employees, service users and volunteers are met
- We recruit and retain the best staff possible by implementing good employment practices
- We promote and value Equality and Diversity in all that we do
- We take appropriate action against any instances of bullying and harassment.

Our commitment to Equality and Diversity will be reflected in all our practices, including those relating to:

- Service delivery
- Employment
- Governance
- Partnership

■ Service Delivery

We aim to ensure our services are accessible to all users; we will tailor our services to meet the needs of the diverse groups that we work with. We will encourage the participation of users of our services, representative of the communities within which we work and will positively endeavor to take a full range of needs into account in the development of new services.

Where service users face harassment or discrimination in their community or from another service provider, disAbility Cornwall & IoS will support them and represent them where appropriate, in any action they may wish to take.

Through its Equality Impact Assessment procedure disAbility Cornwall & IoS will monitor and review all systems and procedures used in the provision of services to ensure equality of opportunity, responsiveness, sensitivity and accessibility.

■ Employment

disAbility Cornwall & IoS aims to be an equal opportunities employer and ensure that we implement good employment practices in every stage of the employment relationship. disAbility Cornwall & IoS will scrutinize its recruitment and selection processes in order to proactively identify any discriminatory practices. We will assess the current composition of our workforce and establish targets to take positive steps to achieve a workforce that reflects the communities in which we work.

All new staff are required to attend an induction programme. This includes gaining an understanding of our policies and procedures which includes the this Equality and Diversity Policy, as well as disability awareness and equality training. All disAbility Cornwall & IoS activities are informed and guided by and aim to adhere to the Social Model of Disability.

disAbility Cornwall & IoS values its staff and will provide them with the skills and training to do their job well and the opportunities to progress in the organisation. It will ensure that all staff receive fair access to training and development opportunities appropriate to their job role.

We will do everything we can to work towards a workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment and will act promptly on any complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimization, as set out in our Bullying and Harassment Policy.

■ **Governance**

disAbility Cornwall & IoS will develop a governance structure that reflects the communities in which we work and ensure that the commitment to equality and diversity is reflected in the induction and training of trustees and members.

Trustees will actively demonstrate their understanding, belief and support of this policy through their communications and actions on behalf of the organisation.

■ **Partnership**

disAbility Cornwall & IoS will work with partners to develop good practice on issues of access.

Companies, individual consultants or contractors entering into contracts with disAbility Cornwall & IoS will be expected to comply with disAbility Cornwall & IoS's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Implementation

Managers are responsible for the communication, promotion, implementation, and monitoring of the Equality and Diversity Policy in their service areas, including in the wider community where appropriate. They will communicate the policy to staff, ensure that staff understand their responsibilities, ensure that no discrimination takes place and deal appropriately with any breaches. Managers must ensure that there is no scope for discriminatory practice.

Mandatory training and guidance to all employees will be provided to ensure that the commitment to equal opportunities is known and understood

Disability Discrimination Act Statement

disAbility Cornwall & IoS aims to provide a 'best quality' free, confidential and friendly service throughout its organisation for:

- Individual disabled people
- Families and carers of disabled people
- All agencies working within the disability sector

disAbility Cornwall & IoS actively encourages and supports people with disabilities and acts to comply with all aspects of the Disability Discrimination Act. Our aim is to provide a free, confidential and friendly advice service specifically for disabled people and their carers.

Discrimination, illuminated by the way that society is organised, can lead to inequality, injustice, intolerance and unfair treatment of people simply because of race, colour, sex, marital status, learning difficulties, physical difficulties, mental health or even criminal convictions.

disAbility Cornwall & IoS recognises that discrimination affects all aspects of life, and our primary aim is to challenge it and ultimately to eliminate it.

In fighting discrimination disAbility Cornwall & IoS will:

- Challenge and seek to eliminate all discretionary practices in our own organisation and the community, and strive to create conditions where discrimination cannot possibly operate.
- At all times examine and criticise structures that perpetuate discrimination with disAbility Cornwall & IoS and ultimately to take action against anyone within disAbility Cornwall & IoS or member associations who make discriminatory remarks, statements or engage in discriminatory practices of any nature.

Disability Awareness Review

All staff members and volunteers, upon induction to disAbility Cornwall & IoS, will be informed of the issues and regulations regarding disability awareness.

We will ensure that all disAbility Cornwall & IoS staff members and volunteers are updated on 'disability awareness' issues and changes whenever these occur.

We will advise staff/volunteers of any new available training on as need basis.

Monitoring and Review

The Board of Directors will monitor the overall success of the policy by assessing its impact on the organisation's efforts to improve service delivery and employment practice.


The Senior Management Team will review progress in implementation every six months, through monitoring the performance of operational services against targets across all areas.

The policy will be reviewed and updated annually by the Board of Directors, and changes will be communicated to all employees and service users as appropriate.

Complaints

All employees have a responsibility to support colleagues in relation to the policy by raising concerns through the appropriate channels. If any member of staff/volunteer feels they have been treated unfairly they can contact their manager, or the next tier manager, who is expected to take the grievances seriously, to treat information confidentially, investigate fully and ensure that no victimisation takes place.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Signed by Chief Executive	
Date of review conducted	May 2018
Date of next formal review	May 2019
Responsibility for reviewing and updating	Chief Executive