

1. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

This policy covers how we treat everyone: colleagues, customers and other stakeholders.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 North East Forum on Ageing is committed to providing equal opportunities in all it does and avoiding unlawful discrimination.

2.2 This policy is intended to assist North East Forum on Ageing to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy will ensure that employees and or volunteers do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

2.3 Striving to ensure that the working environment is free from harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in all, North East Forum on Ageing has a Grievance Policy which deals with these issues.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITES IN EMPLOYMENT

3.1 North East Forum on Ageing will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including, recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

3.2 Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

3.3 North East Forum on Ageing has a number of guidance documents that support this commitment – see further information.

4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITES FOR OTHR GROUPS

4.1 North East Forum on Ageing will not discriminate unlawfully against customers using or seeking to use goods, facilities or services provided by the organisation.

4.2 Employees must report any bullying or harassment by customers, suppliers, visitors or others to their manager who will take appropriate action.

5. TRAINING

- 5.1 North East Forum on Ageing will provide training on equal opportunities to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.
- 5.2 North East Forum on Ageing will provide training to all existing and new employees and others engaged to work with North East Forum on Ageing to help them understand their responsibilities and rights under the Grievance policy and what they can do to create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. North East Forum on Ageing will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

6. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Every employee and volunteer is required to assist North East Forum on Ageing to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in everything it does and avoid unlawful discrimination.
- 6.2 People can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, of North East Forum on Ageing for any act of unlawful discrimination. Anyone who commits serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.
- 6.3 Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under North East Forum on Ageing Disciplinary Policy. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct.

7. GRIEVANCES

- 7.1 Where anyone considers that they have been unlawfully discriminated against, or if the complaint involves alleged bullying or harassment, they may use North East Forum on Ageing Grievance Policy to make a complaint.
- 7.2 North East Forum on Ageing will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. People will not normally be penalised for raising a grievance even if the grievance is not upheld, unless the complaint is made in bad faith or for some other malicious or inappropriate reason.
- 7.3 Use of North East Forum on Ageing grievance policy does not affect rights to make a complaint to an employment tribunal. Complaints to an employment tribunal must normally be made within three months beginning with an act of discrimination complained of.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.
- 8.2 Any information provided for monitoring purposes will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant GDPR legislation.

9. EQUALIT ACT 2019

9.1 The Equality Act 2010 harmonised and replaced equality legislation (such as the Race Relations Act 1976; Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003; Equality Act 2016 and the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003).

9.2 The Act covers the same groups that were protected under pervious equality legislation and makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or Belief
- Sex (formally Gender)
- Sexual Orientation

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