

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

Positive Help is committed to promoting diversity and providing equality of job opportunity and fair treatment for all its staff, volunteers, clients and applicants regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

All our services will be provided to clients in a way that respects the individual and does not discriminate based on any of the above mentioned characteristics.

All staff will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All staff will be helped and encouraged to develop and maximise their full potential.

2. Aims of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Comply with current and future legislation relating to equal opportunities in employment;
- Encourage diversity within the organisation and promote equality opportunities of employment;
- Ensure fair employment procedures and practices are followed;
- Ensure all our services are accessed and delivered in a non-discriminatory manner;

3. Application of the policy

3.1. Positive help will:

- Create and promote a working environment in which individual differences and contributions are valued.
- Offer training to all staff, volunteers and trustees on the importance of diversity, equal opportunities and non-discriminatory working practice.
- Make staff/volunteers/ trustees aware of the policy and their own responsibilities for the implementation of this policy.
- Monitor the diversity of staff, volunteers and applicants through the equal opportunities monitoring forms they complete.
- Use the information available on the diversity of our staff and volunteers to target under-represented groups.
- Encourage continuous improvement suggestions on the policy and its application.
- Ensure that any allegations of discrimination, harassment or bullying at work are fully investigated and appropriate action is taken against those who do not comply with the policy.
- Review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

3.1 Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to comply with this policy by:

- Finding positive and cooperative ways of working with others.
- Understanding that all people have different ways of communicating and working.
- Listening to others' experiences and viewpoints without judging.
- Making sure that your behaviour, actions and words reflect this policy
- Ensuring that you do not discriminate unfairly against any person involved with Positive Help.
- Challenging unfair practices and discrimination by raising issues professionally and through appropriate channels.

4. Complaints

Any member of staff or volunteer who believes that any form of discrimination has occurred should immediately bring the problem to the attention of the manager or volunteer coordinator. The matter will be fully investigated and the issues will be handled sensitively and in strict confidence unless the complainer agrees otherwise. The board must be notified of any allegations of discrimination or harassment.

Where appropriate the board will take the lead in investigating allegations of discrimination or harassment, if for instance the allegation is against the manager and/or volunteer coordinator.

All staff should be aware that failure to comply with this Policy will be treated seriously and may result in disciplinary action being taken, including the possibility of dismissal. Equally volunteers must comply with this Policy and failure to do so may result in the volunteer being asked to leave Positive Help.

5. Monitoring

In order to monitor the effectiveness of our equal opportunity policy, we will request all applicants to provide information on gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin and age. This information will be used for monitoring purposes only and is strictly confidential. It will be kept separate from the application form.