

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

### **OUR COMMITMENT**

Tayside Contracts is an inclusive organisation fully committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, promoting equality of opportunity and encouraging good community relations both in employment and in the delivery of our services.

We recognise that our most important asset is our people and we respect our employees for the unique differences that they bring to the organisation.

The communities we deliver services to are increasingly diverse and we believe that a diverse workforce reflective of our local communities will result in real business benefits. A diverse range of people from different backgrounds can bring a range of skills, knowledge and ideas. At Tayside Contracts our culture is one of encouragement, and we want our employees to contribute by making suggestions and explaining their point of view.

When selecting applicants for employment, promotion, training or any benefit we will base our decision solely on merit, potential and competence. All employees are actively encouraged to develop and reach their maximum potential which will in turn add value to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation.

### **THE LEGAL POSITION**

Numerous pieces of legislation are in place to protect individuals from discrimination. Legislation includes but is not limited to:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970 as amended
- Equality Act 2006
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Race Relations Act 1996
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- The Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 (Amendment) Regulations 2002
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998

No person including applicants, employees, service users or customers will be treated less favourably because of their gender, sex, marital status, pregnancy, gender reassignment, race,

colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, civil partnership, religion or belief, age, trade union affiliation, political beliefs, irrelevant criminal conviction, responsibility for dependants or employment status. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

Tayside Contracts as a local authority has a statutory duty to produce Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes every three years. This involves producing an action plan setting out what action we will take to meet the associated general and specific duties.

## **WHO'S RESPONSIBILITY?**

Everyone working for or on behalf of Tayside Contracts has a responsibility to comply with and support Tayside Contracts' Equality and Diversity Policy. This includes:

- All Employees
- Trade Union Representatives
- Partners, Contractors and Suppliers

Tayside Contracts will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying towards applicants, colleagues, contractors, suppliers and customers. This includes behaviour or displaying material that is offensive, frightening or which causes an individual distress.

Any breach of our Equality and Diversity Policy by employees will be treated as misconduct and invoke our disciplinary procedures. Ignorance or "no offence was intended" does not constitute a defence.

As a Tayside Contracts employee you are an ambassador for the organisation and should treat everyone with dignity and respect. As an employee we would like you to challenge prejudice, stereotyping and disrespectful behaviour.

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION**

If you or any of your colleagues are experiencing any form of discrimination or harassment in the workplace you should follow the grievance procedure immediately.

Any allegations will be taken seriously and investigated, if proven disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with our disciplinary procedures. Individuals who harass or victimise others may be ordered to pay compensation to the victims of their harassment.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

The Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed annually.

**Should you have any queries or require further clarification regarding any aspects of this policy please contact Suzanne Keay, Personnel Officer (Equalities & Personnel Projects), on 01382 834165.**