



Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Introduction

Mid Ulster Volunteer Centre are an *equal opportunities employer*. This means that we will make good faith efforts to comply with the spirit and letter of the equality laws.

We will promote a good and harmonious working environment in which our employees will be treated with dignity and respect, and we will not discriminate unlawfully against or harass any person on the grounds of:-

- Sex
- Marital or Civil partnership status
- Racial group
- Age
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Religious or similar philosophical belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Political opinion
- Disability

We will also endeavour to ensure that our workplace and our employment policies and practices do not unreasonably exclude or disadvantage those of our job applicants and employees who have disabilities. To this end we will comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments that is imposed on us in relation to such persons. We note that a failure to comply with that duty would be an act of unlawful discrimination.

2. Employees' Rights

Our employees have a right to work in a good and harmonious environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and to complain about such behaviour should it occur.

We have established an internal grievance procedure to deal with such complaints and we would encourage aggrieved employees to use it. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Our internal grievance procedure does not replace the right of aggrieved employees to also pursue complaints to an Industrial Tribunal or the Fair Employment Tribunal. Those who wish to consider that option may obtain advice from the Equality Commission (telephone: 028 90 500 600).

Employees who make complaints of discrimination and harassment, and others who give evidence or information in connection with such complaints, will not be victimised (i.e. they will not be discriminated against or harassed in retaliation for their actions). Victimisation is also discrimination contrary to the equality laws and this policy.

3. Employees' Responsibilities

All our employees must comply with this policy. They must treat each other with dignity and respect. They must not themselves commit any acts of unlawful discrimination or harassment against any other person, such as their co-workers, our job applicants or our customers. Such behaviour will not be permitted or condoned. We will treat it as misconduct which may warrant dismissal from employment.

All our employees should discourage discrimination and harassment by making it clear that they find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting co-workers who suffer such treatment. Any employee who is aware of any incident of discrimination and harassment should alert a manager or supervisor to enable us to deal with it.

4. Employer's responsibilities

We will continually make good faith efforts to implement this policy. This responsibility will be carried out by the Centre Co-Ordinator. We will:-

- provide all employees and managers with a copy of this policy and explain it to them.
- ensure that all complaints of discrimination or harassment are dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially and in accordance with our internal grievance procedure.
- set a good example by treating employees with fairness, dignity and respect.
- be alert to unacceptable behaviour and will take appropriate action to stop it.
- monitor all incidents of discrimination and harassment and review the effectiveness of this policy periodically.