



Lincolnshire YMCA Ltd

Policy Document

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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1. INTRODUCTION

YMCA Lincolnshire is committed to creating a diverse environment. Our customers come from all walks of life and so do we. We aim to recruit and retain great people from a wide variety of backgrounds, not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it makes us stronger.

We are committed to ensuring a welcome to all, and we will do all we can to ensure an inclusive environment to work that ensures everyone can fulfil their potential and achieve great things, regardless of race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or age.

2. OUR POLICY

This policy sets out the Charity's policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), which incorporates our moral, social and legal responsibility to our staff, volunteers and communities we serve.

At YMCA Lincolnshire we believe in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and that everyone has the right to fair and equal treatment, recognising that people who use our services and those that work for us come from diverse backgrounds.

As a service provider and major employer, we recognise we have a moral and legal responsibility to promote equity. YMCA Lincolnshire understands the benefits that embedding equity and inclusion in to the work place and ensure it is embedded across our services.

We conduct our business in line with all relevant codes of practice and recognise we have a duty to challenge prejudice and discrimination whenever it is identified, and promote and advance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. We are committed to dealing with all areas of discrimination through our policies and procedures.

3. WHO IT APPLIES TO

This policy applies to all areas of Lincolnshire YMCA and covers all service areas and employment.

This policy also applies to our employees, Board members, volunteers,

residents, committees, partners, customers, stakeholders, contractors and suppliers, and to any external organisation supported or engaged by us.

This policy will also be used to address discrimination through perception and association. Please find below some example cases of this:-

- 3.1 Sonali is refused a place at her local playgroup because the management committee knows that her younger brother has cerebral palsy. They operate a policy of automatically offering places to siblings and they are concerned that looking after her brother would take too much time. This is direct discrimination against Sonali because of her association with her brother.
- 3.2 A volunteer for a charity that runs a bring-and-buy sale in the local community hall tells Sanjeev, who is Sikh, that they don't serve Muslims because of concerns about Islamic extremists. Sanjeev explains that he is not Muslim, but the volunteer does not believe him and still refuses to service him. This would be direct discrimination because of his perceived religion even though Sanjeev is not Muslim.
- 3.3 Steve, who drinks in his local bar, is constantly subjected to homophobic abuse by Alan, who works behind the bar. Steve is not gay and has told Alan this, but Alan continues to abuse Steve. This is direct discrimination because of sexual orientation even though Steve is not gay.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

A summary of the relevant legal framework is set out in Appendix 1. This policy deals with discrimination in the legal sense. That means discrimination on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, pursuant to the Equality Act 2010;

Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion and belief, Sex, Sexual orientation.

We also adopt the principles of the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Discrimination can take a number of different forms and may be direct, indirect or amount to harassment. See appendix 2 for further information relating to the varying forms of discrimination and how they are defined within The Equality Act 2010.

5. KEY PRINCIPLES

We are committed to ensuring that there should be no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, in either an employment or service delivery context. No-one will receive more or less favourable treatment because of any of the nine protected characteristics or illness, employment status, career status, memberships of trade unions or political beliefs (unless these beliefs condone or influence extremism – see section 8);

We promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion amongst everyone we work with and our workforce and the services we provide aim to reflect the diverse needs of the individuals and communities we serve;

All staff and customers' needs are understood and all services we provide meet individual needs, including in relation to the protected characteristics and vulnerable customers with additional support needs;

We encourage staff, customers, and all other stakeholders to challenge and eradicate discrimination wherever it is encountered in respect of any of the protected characteristics;

We keep up to date with changes in society, legislation and regulation and put actions in place to ensure we comply with the changes.

We will occasionally ask employees and customers for personal information – for example, in relation to their protected characteristics and lived experiences. This information will be used for monitoring purposes only and will not be shared with any other agencies. Obtaining this information will enable us to deliver our services to maximum effect. This information will be collected and retained in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

6. SERVICE DELIVERY

We ensure that EDI is acknowledged and considered in policy, strategy and service development and review through effective Equality Impact Analysis to

ensure consideration to discrimination against anyone in respect of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

All our services are designed to be inclusive and meet the needs of all our customers and staff. We aim to remove or reduce barriers to accessing our services.

We will recognise and respond to the diverse needs of our customers and staff by providing accessible information in suitable formats and tailoring our services in response to their specific needs.

7. EMPLOYMENT, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

We are a committed Equal Opportunities employer. We seek to achieve a balanced workforce that reflects the community we serve and maximise the contribution and potential of our people.

We will provide employment opportunities fairly and without discrimination and will keep to all relevant codes of practice, legislation and regulation.

All employees and volunteers will be treated equally. In general terms, we will appoint, train, develop, reward and promote on the basis of merit and ability.

All staff will receive EDI training appropriate to their role at induction stage with refresher training provided at regular intervals.

Unfair treatment, discrimination or harassment of or by any of our employees/ volunteers will not be accepted.

8. WORKING WITH PARTNERS, CONTRACTORS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

We will work with a range of community partners across Lincolnshire to improve, develop and advance our practices and projects in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

During the procurement process, we will request information from potential contractors on their Equality & Diversity Policy and/or guidance.

9. HATE CRIME AND ANTI-TERRORISM

We will ensure incidents are reported, that the victims and their families are supported, and that action is taken against the perpetrators by:

- Encouraging the reporting of hate crime through the development of procedures and staff training;
- Continuing to promote the designated offices that are registered hate reporting centres.

In line with the government's Prevent Strategy, we will work with local authorities, the police, statutory partners and the local community to safeguard children and adults from being drawn into committing terrorist related activities; recognising that early interventions may help to protect and divert them away from these risks.

10. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

10.1 LEADERSHIP

It is the responsibility of the Board, Executive and wider Leadership Team to ensure that:

- Ensure effective Leadership in relation to EDI at Board and across the whole organisation
- Promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the organisation.
- Monitor and audit EDI Performance
- Ensure appropriate resources are available to ensure EDI initiatives and measures are progressed.
- Monitor instances of non-compliance
- All staff are aware of this policy,
- The charity acts within the law,
- All staff are provided with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.
- Appropriate action is taken against employees whose actions are inconsistent with this policy.

10.3 EVERYONE

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is always considered when developing and delivering services to our customers;
- Any actions that are witnessed to be inconsistent with this policy are brought to the relevant manager's attention at the earliest opportunity.
- Regular reports will be presented to the Board of Trustees in relation to our work in this area.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The Legal Framework

The main pieces of legislation and regulation relevant to this policy include:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Localism Act 2011;
- The Public Sector Equality Duty
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994;
- Employment Act 2002;
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Schedules 6 & 8) 2006;
- Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended by the Employment Relations Act 1999 and the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013);
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997;
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard of the Homes & Communities Agency's (HCA's) Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England; and
- The Government's Prevent Strategy

Appendix 2: The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010 bringing together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act so that it is easier to use. It sets out the personal characteristics that are protected by the law and the behaviour that is unlawful. Simplifying legislation and harmonising protection for all of the characteristics covered helps Britain become a fairer society, improve public services, and help business perform well.

The Equality Act 2010 is concerned with the avoidance of discrimination and the promotion of environments where diversity is encouraged and people of all kinds can work together.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies various forms of discrimination, in particular:
Direct Discrimination

This is to find us treating someone or a group less favourably than you would treat anyone else in the same circumstances. For example, refusing services to somebody who has met all of the criteria but who has one of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, for example, they are black, deaf or unmarried.

Indirect Discrimination

This happens when a requirement or condition is put into place that means that some members of a group are unable to comply with it, even though it is applied equally to anyone. For example, refusing services to people who are shorter than 5'8" is discriminatory to women, whose average height is 5'7".

Victimisation

This has a special meaning under the Equality Act 2010. Victimisation occurs if a person is treated less favourably because they have complained about some other unlawful activity under the Equality Act 2010.

The complaint does not have to be substantiated provided that it is made in good faith.

Harassment

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct on the grounds of a protected characteristic that effects somebody's dignity or has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment. Harassment is dealt with in a separate policy and is more particularly defined there.

Disability Discrimination

As well as being a form of direct and indirect discrimination, disability discrimination also occurs where a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something arising in consequence of their disability which cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate end. For example, refusing to provide services to a client who has learning disabilities because they are difficult to deal with may well be a form of disability discrimination.