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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY



TRINITAS CONTRACTS LTD
ASBESTOS REMOVAL - PROJECT MANAGEMENT - DEMOLITION

Equal Opportunities Policy

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Why it's important

Diversity within an organisation's workforce and Management is of enormous advantage, ensuring that talent and potential is properly identified and developed.

This policy provides information on the positive advantages of promoting equal opportunities. It outlines our commitment as an employer to developing a diverse work force and explains some of the terms used in relation to discrimination.

A Diverse Workforce

Equal opportunities and ensuring a diverse workforce is important for all employers. It isn't just important because there are laws about it but because it is of enormous benefit to our organisation as talent and potential are distributed across the population.

The benefits include:

- ensuring our workforce really does represent the community we serve,
- being able to attract and keep the very best staff,
- giving your organisation the edge over other employers in an increasingly diverse and competitive labour market,
- improving staff morale and productivity,
- avoiding losing good staff,
- avoiding under-using and under-valuing able staff,
- managing all staff better,
- helping to develop good practice.

The Law

It is unlawful to discriminate against people at work because of someone's sex, sexual orientation, marital status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, age or because of a disability (including mental illness). It is also unlawful to discriminate because of pregnancy, childbirth, or maternity leave, because a person is a member or non-member of a trade union or because they are part-time workers or on a fixed term contract.

The Legislation

- **Race Relations Act 1976, 2000 Amendment and 2003 Amendment Regulations**
 - It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of race, colour, nationality – including citizenship – or ethnic origins in employment, education, housing and the provision of goods, facilities and services.
 - The 2000 Amendment places enforceable duties on public authorities to promote equality.
 - The penalties for race discrimination can be high since there is no limit on compensation and there is no length of service requirement in bringing a claim.
- **Equal Pay Act 1970**
 - It's unlawful to discriminate between women and men in contracts of employment, including pay and other benefits.
- **Sex Discrimination Act 1975, 1986 Amendment, Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005 and Gender Equality Duty 2007**
 - It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of sex or marital status in employment, education, housing and the provision of goods, facilities and services.
 - Less favourable treatment of women on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave is also defined as a form of discrimination.
 - Sex based harassment - i.e. harassment based purely on the victim's sex; harassment of a sexual nature - i.e. physical activity of a sexual nature or non-physical activity of a sexual nature such as offensive jokes or vulgar comments; sexual harassment on grounds of gender reassignment status; and harassment on grounds of rejection of harassment or submission to harassment are expressly prohibited.
 - The penalties for sex discrimination can be high since there is no limit on compensation and there is no length of service requirement in bringing a claim.
 - The Gender Equality Duty requires public authorities to promote gender equality.
- **Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007**
 - It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their sexual orientation, whether lesbian, gay, heterosexual or bisexual in employment or vocational training.

- Discrimination relating to perceived sexual orientation is also unlawful.
- The penalties for sexual orientation discrimination can be high since there is no limit on compensation and there is no length of service requirement in bringing a claim.
- The Equality Act also made it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and services on the grounds of sexual orientation.
- **Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations and Gender Recognition Act 2004**
- It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds that they have undergone, are undergoing or intend to undergo gender reassignment in employment and vocational training.
- A person who has undergone gender reassignment also has the right not to be discriminated against as a person of their acquired gender.
- **Civil Partnership Act 2004**
- Same sex partnerships are recognised and those who undergo the ceremony have the same rights as married couples.
- **Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and the Disability Equality Duty 2006**
- It's unlawful for any employer or service provider, regardless of size, to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their disability.
- Employers and service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable a disabled person to work or use a service.
- The penalties for disability discrimination can be high since there is no limit on compensation and there is no length of service requirement in bringing a claim.
- A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Since December 2005, this also includes people with cancer, HIV and multiple sclerosis.
- **Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act 2006**
- It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief in employment, vocational training and education and when providing goods, facilities and services.
- Belief is considered to be philosophical systems which are similar to religion. People who have no religion or belief (such as atheists or agnostics) are also protected under the Act.
- Religious harassment is defined as a form of discrimination.

- **Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006**
 - It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of age in employment and vocational training.
 - Harassment and victimisation on the grounds of age are expressly prohibited.
 - Age is now the only equality strand that is not protected from discrimination in the provision of goods and services.
- **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**
 - Ex-offenders have certain employment rights if their convictions become 'spent', including not having to declare spent convictions and protecting them against dismissal or exclusion (with certain exceptions such as for those working with children).
- **Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000**
 - The regulations aims to ensure that part-time workers are not treated less favourably than comparable full-time workers, including having the same rates of pay and pro rata holiday entitlement.
- **Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002**
 - The regulations aims to ensure that employees on fixed-term contracts are treated no less favourably than comparable permanent employees, including having the same terms and conditions of employment.

Definitions of Discrimination

Direct Discrimination is when you treat someone less favourably than others for unlawful means, for example not employing someone because of their gender or disability.

Indirect Discrimination is when an employer has a policy, practice or procedure that applies to everyone but might disadvantage a particular group, and which cannot be justified in relation to the job.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment.

Victimisation is when you treat someone less favourably or discriminate against them because they have pursued or intend to pursue their rights relating to alleged discrimination.

Positive discrimination is unlawful.

Positive action to address imbalances in the workforce is allowed in particular circumstances. Examples would include setting equality targets (but not quotas which are unlawful); encouraging people from particular groups to apply where they are under-represented; training for promotion or skill training for employees from under-represented groups who show potential.

The Equal Opportunities Policy

Principles

This company wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment. We aim to encourage, value and manage diversity and we recognise that talent and potential are distributed across the population. Not only are there moral and social reasons for promoting equality of opportunity, it is in the best interest of this organisation to recruit and develop the best people for our jobs from as wide and diverse a pool of talent as possible. That diversity adds value.

The Company recognises that many people in our society experience discrimination. Discrimination is acting unfairly against a group or individual through for example exclusion, verbal comment, denigration, harassment, victimisation, a failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation.

Discrimination can be direct or indirect (where there is a requirement or condition on all, but which has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be justified).

All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not. Employees have a duty to co-operate with the Company to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination. Employees should draw the attention of their manager to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or cases of bullying or harassment.

Statement of Intent

The Company aims to create a culture that respects and values each others' differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.

We aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to our organisation's performance and to develop an organisational culture that positively values diversity.

We are committed wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce that broadly reflects the local community in which we operate.

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Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated fairly in all aspects of their employment at the Company.

Our aim is that the workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society. Selection for employment or promotion or any other benefit will be on the basis of merit and ability only. Selection for training will be on the basis of job requirement only. Intimidation, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.

The Company will challenge discrimination in its own policies. It aims to provide equality and fairness for all job applicants, employees whether part-time, full-time, fixed term or temporary, volunteers and Management Committee members irrespective of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or age.

Implementation

The Directors are responsible for the policy's day-to-day implementation. Consultation will take place with a staff working group on the implementation and development of this policy. The Company has drawn up an Action Plan detailing how it will deliver this policy and challenge discrimination in other policies.

It is the responsibility of the Directors to monitor effectiveness, and to review and develop the policy where necessary. Monitoring and review will take place annually.

Each employee, volunteer, consultant, trainer, facilitator or Director is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action against employees, termination of contracts for services of consultants or trainers, or withdrawal of volunteer agreements.

Employees who feel they have been discriminated against should raise the matter with their line manager. Initially the employee and manager should aim to resolve the matter informally. It may be that discriminatory action is unwitting and easily resolved once the problem is clear.

If they are dissatisfied with the outcome, the complaint is very serious, or their line manager is the cause of the complaint, the employee should raise the matter, in writing, as a formal grievance under the Company's Grievance Procedure.

The Company will ensure that all new employees, volunteers, and Directors will receive induction on the policy and action plan and that consultants, trainers and facilitators will be fully informed.

Appropriate training and guidance will be provided to develop equality and diversity. Adequate resources will be made available to fulfil the aims of this policy. The policy will be widely promoted, and copies will be freely available and displayed in the Company's offices.

The Action Plan

The Company has drawn up this Action Plan in order to deliver the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Organisation Audit

An audit of the organisation was undertaken by by the Directors.

The aim was to get a picture of the Company's current position and where priorities will need to be made, as well as providing a starting point from which we can measure progress.

Priorities for Action

It was agreed by the Directors that the following areas are the Company's current priority for action.

Action required	Person Responsible	Resources required	Timescale	Target
Policy & Planning changing images on the organisation's website to promote positive images of a diverse workforce	Mark Feathers	Web design access	1 year	Recognise and identify different elements of our workforce
Recruitment & Selection changing the methods by which jobs are advertised	Mark Feathers	Translation / employment services	1 year	Advertise vacancies in multiple languages

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Monitor, review and evaluate

Action required	Person Responsible	Outcomes achieved	Evidence	Areas for further improvement
Policy & Planning Website review December 2009	Mark Feathers	Website re-modelled and displays ethnic diversity of our work force	Brazilian, Polish , UK, and Australian employees are all represented.	Represent non-white ethnic minority workforce
Recruitment & Selection	Mark Feathers			

