

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

(10)

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## 1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

- 1.1 CHAS seeks to be an Equal Opportunity Employer and as such the CHAS Board of Management will rigorously observe the principles and actively pursue the objectives set out in the discharge of their responsibilities so that this policy is adhered to.
- 1.2 It is the policy of CHAS that any changes in such legislation are taken to be automatically incorporated in its equality policy.
- 1.3 Any reference to 'equality grounds' shall be taken to include all the following grounds:
  - I. Gender (to include trans-gender)
  - II. Marital or family status
  - III. Religious belief or political opinion
  - IV. Disability
  - V. Race or Ethnic Origin
  - VI. Nationality
  - VII. Sexual Orientation
  - VIII. Age
  - IX. Membership of the Travelling Community
- 1.4 CHAS is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. Employees and job applicants will be treated fairly and selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.
- 1.5 The equal opportunities policy will help all employees to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation. It will include where necessary taking lawful positive /affirmative action.
- 1.6 Any act which contravenes the equal opportunity policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action including dismissal being taken against an employee in breach of the policy guidelines.

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## 2 Implementation

- 2.1 The Board has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Management and employees have responsibilities also and it is expected that all employees abide by the policy and help create the equality environment, which is its objective. In order to implement this policy, CHAS will ensure that:
- I. The policy is communicated to all employees through induction training and made known to job applicants.
  - II. Line Managers are aware of their responsibilities through appropriate training.
  - III. Staff involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory recruitment and selection techniques
  - IV. Consultation will take place with recognised trade unions / employee representatives on the implementation of this policy and amendments to practice.

## 3 Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 The provision of equality of opportunity between women and men will be monitored through the collection and analysis of statistical data on the community background, ethnic background, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, status as a disabled person of all employees and job applicants.
- 3.2 CHAS will also monitor the workforce composition and undertake periodic reviews in line with Employment Equality Act 1998.
- 3.3 Progress on the implementation of this policy and any equal opportunities and affirmative/positive action programmes will be reviewed annually in consultation with staff representatives/recognised trade unions. CHAS will monitor and review its equal opportunities policy with regard to provision of equal treatment e.g. hierarchical structures amongst all staff.

## 4 Complaints

- 4.1 Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

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- 4.2 These internal procedures do not replace or detract from the right of the employees to pursue complaints under any relevant legislation in the jurisdiction. Every effort will be made to ensure that employees making complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

## **5 Indirect Discrimination**

- 5.1 Indirect discrimination can occur when a requirement or condition, which cannot be justified on grounds other than any of the equality grounds, is applied equally but has the effect in practice of disadvantaging a considerably higher proportion of persons in one or other of the above groups.

## **6 Disability Discrimination**

- 6.1 Disability Discrimination occurs when, for a reason related to his/her disability, a disabled person is treated less favourably than other people are and this treatment cannot be justified. It also occurs when an employer fails to comply with the duty to make a reasonable adjustment in relation to the disabled person, and if the failure cannot be justified.
- 6.2 An employer cannot justify less favourable treatment if, by making a reasonable adjustment, it would remove the reason for the treatment.

## **7 Victimisation**

- 7.1 Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another because that person has, for example, asserted rights under any of the discrimination laws or has helped another person to assert such rights or given information to the relevant statutory body, or because it is suspected that the person might do any of these things.