

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Equality Act 2010

- 1.1 This policy outlines the basics of what staff and volunteers must and should do to make their workplaces a fair environment and comply with equality legislation under the Equality Act 2010. There are nine protected characteristics listed under the Equality act:
- Age;
 - Disability;
 - Gender reassignment;
 - Marriage and civil partnership;
 - Pregnancy and maternity;
 - Race;
 - Religion or belief;
 - Sex (gender); and
 - Sexual orientation.
- 1.2 People First Independent Advocacy (PFIA) recognises that many people in our society experience discrimination or lack of opportunity for reasons which are not fair. PFIA will challenge discrimination and lack of opportunity in its own policy and practice and will help other organisations and individuals to do the same.
- 1.3 The organisation aims to create a culture that respects and values each others' differences. PFIA sees these differences as an asset to our work as they improve our ability to meet the needs of the organisations and people we serve.
- 1.4 All volunteers and employees must comply with the objectives of this Equality and Diversity Policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or ineligibility for membership.

2. What is discrimination?

PFIA believes that discrimination can take one or more of the forms set out below.

2.1 **Direct discrimination** is treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others solely because they have one of the nine protected characteristics. Refusing to employ someone who has the required skills because they are deaf or because they are pregnant would constitute such discrimination.

2.2 **Indirect discrimination** occurs where there is a requirement or condition which applies equally to everyone but which, in practice, has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be justified.

For example an unnecessary physical or age requirement can discriminate against women or disabled people. The setting of language tests, where language skills or fluency are not really needed for a job, is another example.

2.3 **Abuse and/or harassment** – Discrimination also covers actions which amount to abuse and/or harassment of people or groups of people because of any of the nine protected characteristics.

2.4 **Victimisation** occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because she/he has pursued or intends to pursue their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.

2.5 **Institutional racism (Macpherson Report, 1999)**

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen in the processes or attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination, to unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.

2.6 **Racist incident (Macpherson Report, 1999)**

Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. If the victim doesn't want to complain, another person may do so.

Discrimination in any of the forms stated above is unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

3 Service provision

All PFIA services are covered by this policy.

All PFIA staff and volunteers will promote equality and diversity in its work with other agencies or individuals.

PFIA services will be reviewed regularly and changed where needed.

All trainers, facilitators and consultants contracted to work for PFIA will be required to support our Equality and Diversity policy.

4. Recruitment and selection

PFIA believes that no person or group should be treated less favourably in employment because of any of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

Staff appointments will be monitored to ensure no discrimination is occurring at the point of selection.

5. Miscellaneous

Office accommodation

5.1 PFIA will make every reasonable adjustment to ensure that premises used in relation to its work are accessible and inviting for all members of the community.

5.2 Promotion of policy

Copies of this policy will be freely available to staff, volunteers, members and any other interested parties.

6. Implementation and monitoring

Monitoring of the Equality and Diversity policy and its implementation is the responsibility of Line Managers.

Agreed by Trustees – October 2019

Date for Review by Centre for Learning Manager – October 2020