

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

1. Equality Act 2010

1.1 People First (PF) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, members, and volunteers, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce, members, and volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee and volunteer to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation, in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities, is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- Provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time, full-time, voluntary or as a member.
- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms, and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities

1.2 People First (PF) 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 other's differences. PF 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 and Inclusion Policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or ineligibility for membership.

2. What is discrimination?

PF 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 PF services are covered by this policy.

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

PF services will be reviewed regularly and changed where needed.

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

4. Recruitment and selection

PF 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, including Job Descriptions will be monitored to ensure no discrimination is occurring at the point of shortlisting and selection.

5. Partnership Working and Escalating Concerns

PF will actively seek to build and maintain relationships with partners who proactively work to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. We will work with partners to identify and address any barriers to services (both internal and external) to ensure local minority communities can access services.

Any barriers identified within PF will be escalated to the Inclusion Director with details of action taken or proposals for action needing to be taken.

PF will not become complicit in unlawful discrimination through lack of understanding, acknowledgement and/or responsive action.

PF will actively escalate any concerns to the most appropriate agencies and the most appropriate route including formal complaints, legal advice and contracting arrangements. This list is not exhaustive.

6. Miscellaneous

6.1 Work Environments

PF 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. This includes office accommodation, temporary workspaces, and external meeting rooms and places.

6.2 Promotion of policy

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

7. Implementation and monitoring

Monitoring of the Equality and Diversity policy and its implementation is the responsibility of PF's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead with support from Line Managers.

Reviewed – September 2022

Agreed by Trustees – November 2022

Date of next review – November 2024

SLT Responsible – Harry Harrison (Inclusion Director)