

## **SECTION THREE – Policies and Procedures**

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURE**

#### **Introduction**

The Company's Equal Opportunities Policy is applicable to all employees, workers and contractors. The Company is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and non-discrimination, and will not tolerate action or behaviour that is contrary to this policy.

Breaches of the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy by employees will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure and may be considered to be gross misconduct. Breaches by workers or contractors may be grounds for the Company to withdraw work or terminate contracts for services or similar.

This document sets out the Company's policy and objectives with regard to equality of opportunity. A complaints procedure has also been included to allow any employee, worker or contractor to raise concerns about discrimination or harassment, in order that any such complaint may be addressed quickly and appropriately.

#### **Policy Statement**

At all times, the Company aims to:

- Select, recruit, develop and promote the very best people, basing judgement solely on suitability for the job.
- Ensure all applicants and employees receive fair and equal treatment irrespective of sex, marital status, hours they work (part-time), fixed term contract status, nationality, colour, race, age, national origin, religion, belief, sexual orientation or disability.
- Maintain a working environment free from harassment and intimidation.
- Ensure that existing and new legislative Acts based on statutory rights to equal treatment are adhered to.
- Deal speedily and effectively with any complaints of alleged discrimination and/or harassment, ensuring all complaints are fully investigated and that remedial action is taken where necessary.

#### **What is Discrimination?**

Discrimination can take the form of direct or indirect discrimination. Detailed below are brief definitions. The definitions are for general guidance only in the context of this policy statement.

**Direct discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably than another and the reason for this is due to one of the prohibited grounds (i.e. sex, marital status, nationality, part-time or fixed term contract status, colour, race, age, national origin, religion, belief, sexual orientation or disability).

Examples of direct discrimination would be:

- where a part-time employee is paid a lower rate of pay (on a pro-rata hourly basis) than a full time employee carrying out the same job. **Or**
- where a female employee is not given the opportunity to apply for promotion, but male colleagues are.

**Indirect discrimination** is where **a condition or requirement** is applied that means a smaller proportion of persons of a particular sex, race, marital status, disability, age, part-time or fixed term contract status, sexual orientation or religion, than persons in another group and which is not objectively justifiable in the given situation.

Examples of indirect discrimination may include:

- seeking job applications only from people under 30 years old (this may amount to age discrimination) (i.e. a condition that you have to be under 30); or
- Not providing part-time employee with the same access to training – stating that an employee has to work full-time to receive training (i.e. the requirement is to be full-time).