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# **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

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## 1. BOARD STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 YMCA Norfolk is committed to ensuring equality, dignity and inclusion in all aspects of our work, and to challenging discrimination and social injustice wherever it occurs. This commitment is overseen by our Board and embedded across governance, employment and service delivery. We are committed to ensuring an inclusive environment where everyone can fulfil their potential.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 As a Christian organisation, we are committed to breaking down barriers to ensure everyone can belong, contribute and thrive.
- 2.2 We are committed to creating environments in which our clients, employees, volunteers, trustees, customers, partners, and visitors are treated fairly and with respect. We aim to create a culture that recognises, celebrates and values the differences between individuals. We believe that a diverse and inclusive workforce is integral to attracting and meeting the needs of our diverse communities and creating inclusive spaces.
- 2.3 By taking positive steps to tackle all forms of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, inequality, and unfairness whether direct, indirect, institutional or other, this ensures that our facilities, programmes, and services are, as far as reasonably possible, welcoming, and accessible to all.
- 2.4 We make sure that reasonable adjustments are made where this is necessary, to support individuals and take particular account of people with disabilities to overcome barriers in the working, volunteering and governance environment, and whilst using our services.
- 2.5 All employees, contractors, young people, volunteers and trustees are expected to support this ethos, and this is a fundamental condition of being a part of YMCA Norfolk.
- 2.6 This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we reserve the right to modify this policy from time to time at our discretion and in line with legislation.

## 3. PURPOSE

- 3.1 This policy's purpose is to provide equality, fairness and respect for everyone who comes into contact with YMCA Norfolk.
- 3.2 To this end, we are committed to ensuring we do not unlawfully discriminate with respect to the Equality Act 2010 nine protected characteristics of:
  1. Age
  2. Disability
  3. Gender reassignment
  4. Marriage or civil partnership
  5. Pregnancy and maternity
  6. Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
  7. Religion or belief
  8. Sex

9. Sexual orientation

These characteristics will hereafter be referred to as “the Protected Characteristics.”

3.3 The different types of discrimination which are prohibited are as follows:

- **Direct discrimination.** Treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, if a pregnant woman fails to obtain a job solely because of her pregnancy.
- **Indirect discrimination.** The operation of a provision, condition or practice which may on the surface appear ‘neutral,’ but adversely and unjustifiably affects people with a Protected Characteristic more than others. The most common example is requiring a job to be done full time rather than part time. This would adversely affect women because they usually have greater childcare commitments than men and would be discriminatory unless it is possible to justify that requirement.
- **Disability discrimination.** Includes direct and indirect discrimination because of a disability, together with any unjustified less favourable treatment, and a failure to make reasonable adjustments for the disabled individual. For example, a requirement for employees to hold a valid driving licence for a job which involves little travelling could be discriminatory for someone who cannot drive as a result of their disability.
- **Victimisation.** Subjecting a person to any detriment or ill treatment because they have complained about discrimination or supported someone else’s complaint
- **Harassment.** Subjecting an individual to unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic which has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that individual or violating someone’s dignity because they possess a Protected Characteristic. This includes sexual harassment.

3.4 We will also seek to prevent unfair treatment on other grounds not covered by the Equality Act 2010 including physical appearance, class, caring responsibilities etc.

3.5 We will oppose and strive to avoid all forms of 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
- Selection for employment, promotion, training or other development opportunities
- Provision of services and support to clients and customers.

**4. SCOPE**

4.1 This policy applies to all current and potential employees, self-employed contractors, clients, volunteers, trustees, suppliers, partner organisations, customers and visitors to YMCA Norfolk.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 **EDI** means equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- 5.2 **Equality** means fairness: we must ensure that individuals, or groups of individuals, are not treated less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic.

Equality also means equality of opportunity: we must also ensure that those who may be disadvantaged can get the tools they need to access the same, fair opportunities as their peers.

- 5.3 **Diversity** is recognising, respecting, and celebrating each other's differences. A diverse environment is one with a wide range of backgrounds and mindsets, which allows for an empowered culture of creativity and innovation.
- 5.4 **Inclusion** means creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued. An inclusive environment can only be created once we are more aware of our unconscious biases and have learned how to manage them.

## 6. REFERENCES

- 6.1 The following related legislation is referenced with this policy:
- Equality Act 2010
  - The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023
- 6.2 This policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the following:
- Policy 20 – Complaints and Compliments Policy
  - Policy 24 - Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
  - Policy 46 - Disciplinary Policy
  - Policy 50 - Grievance Policy and Procedure
  - Policy 52 – Anti Harassment and Bullying Policy
  - Policy 68 – Whistleblowing Policy
  - Procedure 02 - Complaints and Compliments Procedure
  - Procedure 20 – Disciplinary Procedure
  - Our organisational Values

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 Everyone who works or volunteers with YMCA Norfolk should be aware of our commitment to EDI and work to achieve a more diverse and inclusive culture.

### Board of Trustees and Executive Team

- 7.2 The Board of Trustees holds overall responsibility for the policies which govern operational procedures within YMCA Norfolk.
- 7.3 The Board of Trustees, CEO and the Executive Team will ensure:

- The EDI Policy is implemented throughout the organisation and hold ultimate accountability for it.
- That EDI is reflected in YMCA Norfolk’s policies and that a culture which encourages, nurtures, and promotes EDI principles is actively promoted.
- Positive action is taken to ensure that YMCA Norfolk’s young people, staff, and governing body reflect the diversity of the community it serves.
- That a high profile is given to these issues at all levels of activity being conducted.
- Integrate EDI principles into business planning including strategy, operational plans and objectives throughout the organisation.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any kind.
- Ensure our marketing and internal and external communications reflect the spirit of this policy.
- Continual review of YMCA Norfolk’s provision of services to ensure they are designed to take into account the specific needs of all equality groups.
- The remit of the Compliance and Performance committee will be to monitor the implementation of the EDI Policy and make recommendations for changes to the Board of Trustees.
- The Committee will monitor and review employee and client data trends on a regular basis (including workforce, recruitment and complaints) consider any barriers which may exist, suggest actions to improve, and publish the findings as appropriate.

## Human Resources (HR)

7.4 The HR team is responsible for:

- Provide relevant training for all employees, trustees and volunteers on EDI matters.
- Review training to ensure this meets the particular needs of each stakeholder.
- Encourage, nurture and promote a culture that supports EDI principles.
- Devise employment, governance and volunteering policies, procedures and practices to ensure that all legislative requirements are met, and best practice adopted.
- Ensure that recruitment, advertising, selection and appointment procedures, performance management processes, disciplinary and grievance processes are fair, transparent, focused on merit and consistently applied.
- Treat all applications for flexible working practices on a fair and equitable basis and provide reasonable and objective reasons when such requests are refused.
- Advise staff on legal compliance and ensure best practice in all matters relating to EDI.
- Investigate all matters of alleged discrimination, harassment, victimisation and inappropriate behaviour promptly and thoroughly, recording all incidents and ensuring that the appropriate action is taken.
- Monitor employment data on a regular basis, suggest actions and publish the findings as appropriate.

- The HR Manager will be responsible for the maintenance of statistical information relating to the profile of the workforce, of all applicants and staff involved in disciplinary actions, grievances, leavers etc. The Compliance and Performance Committee will review and monitor these statistics to identify any trends of differences between equality groups.

## Line Managers

7.5 Line managers will be responsible for:

- Supporting day-to-day implementation of the EDI Policy.
- Encouraging, nurturing, and promoting a culture that supports EDI.
- Seek to ensure that partner organisations we work with share similar values and promote similar EDI principles.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, that employment decisions are implemented on a fair and equitable basis.
- Ensuring EDI is considered as part of all team planning processes.
- Ensuring diversity in recruitment at all times, seeking the broadest platform to attract a diverse candidate base.
- Ensuring EDI is considered in all aspects of service provision.
- Ensuring this policy is brought to the attention of all employees and workers under their direct control or supervision.

## Employees, Contractors and Volunteers

7.6 Employees, Contractors and Volunteers will be required to:

- Ensure the principles of EDI are upheld.
- Complete the mandatory EDI training as laid out by the HR team and training plans.
- Ensure the principles of this policy and our values are demonstrated through actions, and in any decisions taken as part of each employee's role.
- Treat colleagues, clients, partners, customers and visitors with the same dignity and respect with which everybody should be treated.
- Champion EDI principles and provide constructive challenge when behaviours do not promote or demonstrate them.
- To follow the EDI Policy and procedures, promoting best practice throughout the organisation.

## Clients, Partners and Visitors

7.7 Clients, partners and visitors will be required to:

- Ensure the principles of EDI contained within this policy are upheld.
- Champion EDI principles and provide constructive challenge when behaviours do not promote or demonstrate them.
- All young people will be encouraged to take part in Residents' Meetings activities, and these will be monitored to ensure that they are inclusive, and that young people on

decision-making bodies include those from all equality groups. (e.g., Interview panels).

- YMCA Norfolk will ensure that staff and young people from equality groups are consulted with, and involved in, the review of the EDI policy, and in identifying areas for action.
- YMCA Norfolk will (as far as possible) consult its staff and young people from different equality groups on other policies and strategies as required and will ensure that they engage in decision making through Resident Meetings in the future.
- Specific questions on EDI will be included in residents’ surveys and the results will be monitored by the Compliance and Performance Committee.

## **8. POLICY DETAILS**

### **Our Workforce**

- 8.1 YMCA Norfolk is an equal opportunities employer. Equal treatment applies to all aspects of employment including recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of work, promotions, appraisals, career development, reward, recognition, learning and development, grievance and discipline, redundancy and redeployment.
- 8.2 We value diversity and believe it takes all types of individuals to make a creative and innovative organisation. We look to attract, recruit, develop and retain talented people from all backgrounds at every level of the organisation, to draw on different perspectives and experiences that add value to the way we operate.
- 8.3 Everyone, regardless of their differences, should have access to the same chances and we therefore actively promote equality of opportunity.
- 8.4 We promote inclusion and encourage different ways of thinking to challenge the status quo. By believing that our organisation is richer when everyone is treated with dignity and valued for their contribution and the unique skills and life experiences they bring.
- 8.5 We look to create a safe environment for employees to disclose disabilities (visible and non-visible) so that implementation of appropriate workplace adjustments can be tailored to individual needs.
- 8.6 Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. If the conduct is sexual it is likely to amount to sexual harassment. If you have a concern about the way you are being treated at work, YMCA Norfolk’s Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy (Policy 52), sets out how the organisation will provide preventative training, risk assessments, support you and address any concerns.
- 8.7 YMCA Norfolk acknowledges that employees have commitments outside work (e.g., families and caring responsibilities) and we are committed to helping employees fulfil their potential at work whilst finding the right work/life balance.
- 8.8 As part of our employee induction programme:
  - We ensure individuals are aware of our values including policies and procedures that support our EDI principles.
  - Ensure training is provided on EDI.

- 8.9 We monitor the composition and diversity of our workforce.
- 8.10 We are committed to consistently reviewing our policies and practices to ensure they uphold our EDI principles and take account of changes in the law.

## **Occupational Faith Requirement**

- 8.11 In keeping with the Paris Basis of the YMCA Movement (1855), YMCA Norfolk exists to further the work of Jesus Christ through service to young people and the wider community. In line with the Charitable Objectives stated in our Articles of Association, as a Christian organisation, certain roles within YMCA Norfolk are central to the delivery of its Aims and Purposes by virtue of their responsibilities, influence, or context. These roles therefore carry an Occupational Requirement for the postholder to demonstrate an active commitment to the Christian faith, in accordance with the permitted exceptions set out in Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010. For all other roles, applicants are required to respect and actively support the Christian ethos, values, and mission of YMCA Norfolk.
- 8.12 The following posts or roles within the organisation are required to meet the Occupational Requirement to demonstrate an active commitment to the Christian faith: Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, Directors (Executive Team) Chaplain and Executive Assistant. These requirements are reviewed and agreed by the Board in line with the review of the policy.
- 8.13 The recruitment process for all other posts will include an assessment of the applicant's commitment to working within the values of YMCA Norfolk.

## **Provision of Services**

- 8.14 YMCA Norfolk is committed to ensuring our services are relevant and accessible to all, it is central to our mission: to enable transformation in the lives of young people. By creating environments based on the principles of openness, acceptance and participation, where individuals can feel free to be themselves, all individuals who use our services and take part in our programmes will be treated equally, with courtesy and respect.
- 8.15 We value each individual for who they are and recognise differences, so individuals feel understood and accepted whatever their ability or background.
- 8.16 We look to support underrepresented groups and build effective relationships within the wider communities where we operate through partnerships.

## **Making a complaint**

- 8.17 YMCA Norfolk takes a zero-tolerance approach to discriminatory treatment. We aim to create an environment where individuals can:
- Make a complaint of discrimination, or harassment without victimisation
  - Feel confident and able to challenge discriminatory attitudes and behaviours
- 8.18 All complaints relating to discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or bullying will be taken seriously, dealt with promptly and investigated as appropriate. High-level data on such complaints will be monitored and reviewed by the Board and the overall effectiveness of the complaints process will be periodically evaluated.
- 8.19 Employees wishing to make a complaint regarding discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying can refer to our Grievance Policy and Procedure and speak with our Human Resources team if they have any questions.

- 8.20 Clients, customers, volunteers, trustees, partners or visitors who have witnessed or experienced unfair treatment or behaviour and wish to raise a complaint can do so by following the procedure in our Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure.
- 8.21 YMCA Norfolk also has a Whistleblowing Policy (Policy 68) which outlines the approach to the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing. Examples of relevant disclosures under this policy may relate to suspected criminal activity, sexual harassment or unethical behaviour.
- 8.22 Any breach of this policy by an employee will be investigated and dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure. Where an employee is found to have unfairly discriminated (based on the types of discrimination set out above or otherwise), harassed or victimised against another individual, this will constitute gross misconduct and they may be dismissed.
- 8.23 Breaches by self-employed contractors or volunteers will be investigated and may result in the use of services being terminated.
- 8.24 Breaches by a partner organisation may result in the third party's employer being contacted and a formal complaint being made using that employer's procedures.
- 8.25 Breaches by a client will be investigated and may result in participation on the service or programme being terminated.

## 9. MONITORING & EVALUATION

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the Compliance and Performance Committee, who will also monitor client, staff and volunteers diversity trends and make recommendations
- 9.2 We will be collecting and analysing staff monitoring data and report on this annually to review our workforce and address any improvements that need to be made.
- 9.3 We will be collecting and analysing candidate data; reporting on this annually to ensure that we are attracting and recruiting a diverse pool of candidates for employment, governance and volunteering opportunities.
- 9.4 We will be collecting and analysing client data and report on this annually to review our service provision and address any improvements that need to be made.
- 9.5 This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of either staff, management, or the Board of Trustees, but will automatically be reviewed annually unless organisational changes, legislation, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.
- 9.6 This policy will be shared on our website and will be available on Y-Net so that employees and clients have access to this.

## 10. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- 10.1 There are no other documents associated with this policy.