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## **Equality, diversity and inclusion policy**

### **Version History**

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description of Changes
2024/1	20 June 2024	Governance and Risk Committee (GRC)	Transfer to new policy template

### **Policy Owner**

Head of Central Services

### **Purpose and Scope**

YMCA East Surrey is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation and supports an environment which is free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. As an equal opportunities employer, YMCA East Surrey recognises the need for, and supports equal opportunity and diversity in all areas of work and responsibility.

This purpose of this policy is to:

- Give guidance to all at YMCA East Surrey on equality, diversity and inclusion legislation.
- Ensure provision of equality, fairness and respect for all those in our employment, those who are self-employed and volunteer with us and to all of our service users.
- Promote and maintain equality of opportunity, freedom from discrimination or harassment and to ensure all staff are aware that they must not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of a protected characteristics.

This policy applies to all staff (including those who are self-employed or volunteers) and service users.

### **Relevant Legislation**

In adherence with the Equalities Act 2010, it is illegal to discriminate or harass on the basis of nine protected characteristics:

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Sexual Orientation
- ▶ Gender Reassignment
- ▶ Marriage or Civil Partnership
- ▶ Pregnancy or Maternity
- ▶ Race
- ▶ Religion or Belief
- ▶ Disability

## Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 provides the following definitions:

- ▶ Direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic (see above).
- ▶ Discrimination by association – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a particular protected characteristic.
- ▶ Discrimination by perception – direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic.
- ▶ Indirect discrimination – can occur when there is a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular protected characteristic.
- ▶ Harassment – employees can now complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it not directed at them.
- ▶ Harassment by a third party – employers are potentially liable for harassment of their staff by people they don't employ.
- ▶ Victimisation – someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under the act.

## Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures:

- Disciplinary
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Grievance
- Maternity and Paternity
- Recruitment and Selection
- Safer Recruitment

## Policy Requirements

As an employer of paid staff, and an organisation that has Board members, volunteers, and service users, YMCA East Surrey will not discriminate or treat any individual less favourably on the grounds of protected characteristics. It values diversity and welcomes interest from all sections of the community and it is committed to building and reinforcing a culture where people value each other with dignity and respect and free of bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination.

YMCA East Surrey is committed to ensuring that all people have equal access to the facilities, services and opportunities that it provides.

YMCA East Surrey aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunities to enter employment or to become Board members, volunteers or service users. In doing so, it will fully consider making reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. In addition, if a staff member becomes disabled, every effort will be made through reasonable adjustment, retraining or redeployment to enable them to remain in the service of YMCA East Surrey.

Entry to employment or a change of post for paid staff, or the equivalent for Board members and volunteers within YMCA East Surrey will be determined by personal merit and the ability to meet the requirements of the job description or aims and purposes of the organisation.

YMCA East Surrey will promote the policy with service users with a view to avoiding discrimination on the part of service users and will put in place procedures to enable service users to recognise, challenge and report discriminatory incidents.

YMCA East Surrey values the views of all and it aims to actively involve, not just consult on the development, implementation and monitoring of its Equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

The ways we currently involve people are:

- ▶ Surveys for all users to evaluate current provision.
- ▶ Staff consultation activities, inviting feedback from all staff and volunteers.
- ▶ Regular one-on-ones.
- ▶ Exit interview questionnaires.

## **Responsibilities**

### **The Board**

The Board will ensure that they:

- ▶ Are aware of their statutory responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010.
- ▶ Ensure business plan includes a commitment to equality.
- ▶ Approve the Equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

### **The CEO**

The CEO will ensure that:

- ▶ YMCA East Surrey complies with current legislation and meets its specific and general duties.
- ▶ They give a consistent and high-profile lead on equality issues.
- ▶ They create a positive and inclusive ethos by promoting the Equality, diversity and inclusion policy both inside and outside the organisation.
- ▶ All aspects of the Equality, diversity and inclusion policy is applied to all of its activities.

### **Managers**

It is the responsibility of Managers to:

- ▶ Ensure that all groups have equal opportunities for staff development through training and promotion.
- ▶ Follow the principles of the Equality, diversity and inclusion policy if they are involved in interviewing.
- ▶ They are aware of equality issues and recognise forms of discriminatory behaviour. Equality issues will be addressed through training provision.

## Human Resources Manager

The Human Resources Manager will ensure that:

- ▶ Employment benefits available to support the family life of a member of staff, such as parental leave, are extended to include same sex partnerships.
- ▶ Procedures in employee onboarding, including recruitment and selection, follow best practice guidelines.
- ▶ The staff induction will include a section on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- ▶ All staff are aware of and have access to this policy and are therefore aware of their responsibilities.

## All staff

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to ensure that that they adhere to and uphold the principles and the spirit of the Equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

All staff must ensure that:

- ▶ They are aware of YMCA East Surrey's statutory responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010
- ▶ The Equality, diversity and inclusion policy is followed.
- ▶ They promote equality and ensure that they do not discriminate against anyone.
- ▶ They are able to recognise, challenge and report all discrimination incidents, whether wittingly or unwittingly, by other members of staff, outside contractors or service users
- ▶ They keep up to date with the law on equalities and take up training and development opportunities in this area.
- ▶ Discrimination or harassment will be actively challenged.
- ▶ They understand that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

## Breach of policy

YMCA East Surrey will provide a supportive environment for staff and service users who make claims of discrimination or harassment. All allegations or complaints of discrimination and harassment will be treated seriously and investigated in line with our Grievance or Disciplinary policy. Serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

## Implementation and Review

Monitor and review:	Head of Central Services
Approve:	Governance and Risk Committee
Endorse:	Board

The organisation is committed to reviewing policies every two years or sooner if required, for example if there is a change in legislation.