

Equality and Diversity Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out our commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all areas of our work. 24-7 Staffing aim to create a working environment and recruitment service where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and where individual differences are valued.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, workers, agency workers, contractors and temporary staff
- All job applicants and candidates engaging with our recruitment services
- All clients, suppliers and third parties working with 24-7 Staffing
- All activities connected with recruitment, employment, training and business operations

This policy is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) and other relevant UK legislation governing equality and anti-discrimination. 24-7 Staffing will ensure full compliance with statutory requirements.

Our Commitment

24-7 Staffing is committed to:

- Providing equal opportunities in all aspects of employment and recruitment
- Ensuring no individual is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic
- Creating an inclusive workplace culture where everyone can contribute and achieve
- Ensuring fair, transparent and non-discriminatory recruitment and employment practices
- Providing reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment and employment process
- Challenging discriminatory behaviour, instructions or decisions from any person or organisation
- Taking appropriate action where breaches of this policy occur

Recruitment and Employment Practices

24-7 Staffing will:

- Advertise roles in an accessible and inclusive manner
- Use fair and objective criteria when shortlisting and selecting candidates
- Avoid assumptions or requirements that are not relevant to job performance
- Provide reasonable adjustments when requested or when a need is identified
- Monitor and challenge discriminatory requests from clients
- Ensure all employees follow non-discriminatory practices
- Keep recruitment and employment decisions based on merit, capability and business need

Protected Characteristics

24-7 Staffing will not tolerate discrimination based on any of the following protected characteristics under the Act:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex and sexual orientation

Reasonable Adjustments

24-7 Staffing will provide reasonable adjustments where these fall within our control, such as adaptations to our recruitment processes. Where adjustments relate to a client's workplace, we will assess the needs of the candidate and promptly inform the client of any required adjustments.

As we do not have authority over our clients' workplaces, we cannot guarantee that all adjustments can be implemented; however, we will work collaboratively with clients to support fair access and advocate for appropriate accommodations.

Reasonable adjustments in recruiting could include:

- Modifying testing and assessment procedures
- Meeting the candidate at alternative premises which are more easily accessible
- Having flexibility in the timing of interviews
- Modifying application procedures and application forms
- Providing a reader or interpreter

24-7 Staffing will make career opportunities available to all people with disabilities or other protected characteristics, and every practical effort will be made to provide for the needs of staff, candidates and clients.

Definitions of Unlawful Conduct

To support understanding and compliance under the Act, the following behaviours are prohibited. This list is not exhaustive, and other forms of discrimination, harassment or victimisation may also constitute unlawful behaviour:

Direct discrimination

Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic. Treating someone less favourably means treating them badly in comparison to others that do not have that protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Applying a provision, criterion or practice (PCP) that places someone with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage and cannot be justified.

Harassment

Under the Act, harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that relates to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. This includes unwanted conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment is a specific form of harassment and is addressed in further detail in the Company's Sexual Harassment Policy.

Examples of prohibited harassment are:

1. verbal or written conduct containing derogatory jokes or comments, which may be referred to as "banter"
2. slurs or unwanted sexual advances
3. displaying sexually graphic pictures, posters or photos
4. photographs, cartoons, drawings or gestures which some may find offensive
5. physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or any interference because of sex, race or any other protected characteristic basis
6. threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favours
7. retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

Victimisation

Victimisation is subjecting someone to detriment because they have done, are suspected of doing, or intend to do an act which is protected under discrimination and harassment laws. It is not necessary for the person to have done the protected act in order for detrimental treatment to be considered as victimisation.

The protected acts are:

- a) Making a claim or complaint under the Equality Act 2010 (for example, for discrimination or harassment)
- b) Helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Equality Act 2010
- c) Making an allegation that someone has breached the Equality Act 2010, or
- d) doing anything else in connection with the Equality Act 2010.

Examples of victimisation include:

- a) Failing to consider someone for promotion because they have previously made a sexual harassment complaint
- b) Dismissing someone because they accompanied a colleague to a meeting about a sexual harassment complaint
- c) Excluding someone from work meetings because they gave evidence as a witness for another employee as part of an employment tribunal claim about harassment.

Responsibility

All employees and workers, irrespective of position or responsibility, must comply with this policy and support its application in all aspects of their work. Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action. Any individual found to have engaged in harassment may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Company's disciplinary procedure, which may include termination of employment.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

24-7 Staffing will review its policies, procedures and working practices to ensure they remain fair, inclusive and compliant with current legislation and best practice. Feedback, concerns and complaints relating to equality and diversity will be considered as part of our commitment to continual improvement.

Raising Concerns

Anyone who believes they have been subject to discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment is encouraged to raise their concerns promptly. Issues can be raised through the Company's grievance procedure. All concerns will be taken seriously and investigated fairly. If such complaints are found to be well founded, disciplinary action will be taken against those responsible and in serious cases may result in dismissal.

Individuals will not be victimised for making a complaint.

Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and may be altered from time to time in light of legislative changes or other prevailing circumstances.