



Equality and Diversity Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Kindred LCR CIC (“the Company”) believes that all employees, associates, and members are entitled to be treated with respect, equality and dignity. It is committed to achieving an inclusive service and working environment, encouraging full contribution from its diverse community.

1.2 In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Company does not tolerate any unlawful or unfair acts of discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic:

- race (including ethnic origin, colour, and nationality)
- gender (including gender reassignment)
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation
- disability
- religion and belief; and
- age.

1.3 The Company also endeavours to provide a service that does not discriminate against any one of its members in how they can access the services and goods supplied by the Company.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

2.1 To ensure that all employees, associates and members are treated with respect, equality and dignity.

2.2 To reduce, stop and pro-actively prevent all forms of discrimination.

2.3 To guarantee that all company practices and service provision are determined equitably.



3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.

3.2 Diversity is a concept that encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that everyone is unique and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within everyone.

3.3 Discrimination is defined as unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than another on the grounds of a protected characteristic set out in this policy. Discrimination may be direct or indirect.

3.4 Direct Discrimination occurs when a person intentionally treats a person less favorably than another on the grounds of a protected characteristic. It also includes discrimination based on:

- Association i.e. discrimination because of a person's association with someone who has a protected characteristic; and
- Perception i.e. discrimination because someone wrongly thinks the person has a protected characteristic.

3.5 Indirect Discrimination is the application of a policy, practice, or criterion to a person which the employer would apply to others, but which is such that:

- It is detrimental to a considerably larger proportion of people from the group that the person the employer is applying it to represents.
- The employer cannot justify the need for the application of the policy on a neutral basis; and
- The person to whom the employer is applying it suffers detriment from the application of the policy.

3.6 Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient. Harassment may be intentional or unintentional.



4. SCOPE

4.1 The rights and obligations set out in this policy and procedure applies to all employees, associates, and Board members equally.

4.2 The Company seeks to apply this policy in the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development, promotion, and other areas that might affect its employees, associates and Board members.

4.3 The Company also endeavours to provide a service that does not discriminate against any one of its members in the means by which they can access the services and goods supplied by the Company.

5. DUTIES - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Board of Directors have the ultimate responsibility to provide, implement and review this policy.

5.2 It is the collective responsibility of Board members, associates, and employees to support the policy by ensuring that the Company's activities promote equality and diversity.

5.3 All employees and associates are responsible for supporting the organisation in meeting its commitment and avoiding unlawful discrimination.

5.4 Employees and associates can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Company for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees and associates who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

5.4 Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees, associates or members are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal or termination of contract without notice.



6. PROCEDURE

Dealing with Discriminatory Behaviour

6.1 The Company condemns acts of discrimination. This includes but is not limited to discrimination on the basis of:

- **Race, Colour, Nationality and Ethnic Origin** - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their race, the colour of their skin, their nationality or their ethnic origin.
- **Gender** - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of their gender. This applies to both men and women. For example, asking a woman during an interview if she is planning to have any (more) children constitutes discrimination on the ground of gender. Sexual harassment of men and women can be found to constitute sex discrimination.
- **Gender Reassignment** - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of their gender or if a person is thinking about changing their gender. This applies to both men and women.
- **Marital Status** - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably based on the fact that they are married or in a civil partnership. This applies to both men and women.
- **Pregnancy, Maternity & Shared Paternity Leave** - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because they are pregnant or on maternity leave. Additionally, all employees should be aware of the new policy changes in maternity leave that extend to shared paternity leave where both parents, regardless of gender can take a period of agreed leave for up to a year after the birth of their child.
- **Sexual Orientation** - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their sexual orientation. For example, an employer cannot refuse to employ a person because s/he is or is thought to be homosexual, or transsexual.
- **Disability** - It is not permissible to treat a disabled person less favourably than a non-disabled person. Reasonable adjustments must be made to give the disabled person as much access to the service and ability to be employed, trained, or promoted as a non-disabled person.
- **Religion or Belief** - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their beliefs or their religion.
- **Age** - It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their age. This applies to people of all ages. This does not currently apply to the calculation of redundancy payments or the provision of insured benefits.

6.2 Board members, employees and associates should report any acts of discrimination that they are subjected to or have witnessed to either their direct line manager or Chair of the Board.



6.3 In the event a Board member, employee or associate is the subject, witness or perpetrator to a discriminatory act, whether direct or indirect, the matter will be dealt with using the Company's Disciplinary and Grievance policies.

6.4 All Board members, employees or associates who make a complaint or assist in an investigation of discrimination will be protected from any victimisation or intimidation for doing so.

6.5 In the event that another Board member, employee or associate victimises another individual for making a complaint or assisting in an investigation of discrimination, that individual may be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Company's Disciplinary policy.

6.6 Where necessary, Board members, employees and associates should make use of other sources of information including the Equality and Human Rights Commission, ACAS the Citizens Advice Bureau, or Community Legal Service Direct.

6.7 All members should use the complaints procedure if they believe they have been subject to or witness to discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment by the Company or its Board members, employees or associates.

7. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

7.1 The Company has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the employment of a Disabled person. These may include:

- making adjustments to premises.
- re-allocating some or all of a disabled employee's duties.
- transferring a disabled employee to a role better suited to their disability.
- relocating a disabled employee to a more suitable office.
- giving a disabled employee time off work for medical treatment or rehabilitation.
- providing training or mentoring for a disabled employee.
- supplying or modifying equipment, instruction, and training manuals for disabled employees; or
- any other adjustments that the Company considers reasonable and necessary provided such adjustments are within the financial means of the Company.

7.2 If a Board member, employee or associate has a disability and feels that any such adjustments could be made by the Company, then they should contact their direct line manager or Chair of the Board. They will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate adjustments are made by liaising with appropriate bodies such as ACAS. It is expected that any updates on progress are fed back to the individual in question.

7.3 The Company reserves the right to ask current or prospective Board members, employees and associates to undergo a health assessment in order to establish whether or not they would be able to carry out the intrinsic functions of the job, or to seek advice regarding any appropriate adjustments so that these can be fully considered.



8. POSITIVE ACTION

8.1 The Company may choose to “positive action” when recruiting to increase the number of underrepresented groups in the workforce. For example, this could include:

- training and encouragement for under-represented groups to apply for vacancies within the Company; or
- taking under-representation into account when selecting between two equally qualified candidates.

8.2 However, there should be no automatic selection of under-represented groups and no quotas to fulfil.

9. TRAINING

The company will provide information and guidance to those involved in recruitment the Board, employees and associates where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise to help them understand their responsibilities and to avoid the risk of discrimination.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

10.1 This policy will be monitored periodically to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. Monitoring Information and data will be used by the Board to ensure compliance with equality and diversity policy and objectives.

10.2 The Board will identify any actions or activities to improve equality of opportunity.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

11.1 Any complaint relating to equality and diversity will be handled in the strictest confidence.

11.2 Any information provided by job applicants, employees and associates for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection legislation.



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