

Provider's Name: Central Support Ltd – **Version number:** 2 – **Creation date:** 02/09/2024 –

Review date: 02/09/2025 –

Name of person reviewing/ reviewed this policy: Mohammad Abdulbasir

Equality and Diversity and FIR Policy

Policy Statement

Central Support Ltd is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, eliminating discrimination to all job applicants, staff, clients, and members of the community. We are actively committed to advancing FIR (Fairness, Inclusion & Respect) among our workforce and our supply chain, where everyone is recognised for having their own characteristics, background, experience and abilities. We consider the diverse nature of communities when we make decisions to become more effective at attracting, recruiting and retaining a representative workforce. The Equality Act protects people against discrimination. Therefore, Our aim is to treat everyone fairly, openly, honestly, with dignity and to respect and value differences irrespective of and regardless of:

- Sex (including marital status, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity and paternity)
- Sexual orientation (including civil partnership status)
- Race or racial group (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief
- Age
- Caring responsibility
- Disability

General Statement of Policy

We believe that our policy and practices are a means of maximising the effective use of human resources in our and the employee's/service users best interests.

All members of staff and service users will be given equal opportunity irrespective of their sex, religion/belief, race, age or marital status in all aspects of employment and training. Our commitment also extends to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all areas of our business.

The operation of recruitment, training and promotion policies to all individuals will be on the basis of job requirements, and the individuals' ability and fitness for work/training.

Staff employed by this organisation shall be made aware of the provisions of this policy. This may be done, for example, by means of advertisements, job descriptions, application forms, posters, training courses and handbooks for appropriate managerial and supervisory staff.

All key personnel involved in management, selection and dealing with the public shall be given training and guidance in the legislation and organisational policy. This includes their own personal liability under the law and the nature of discrimination.

Definition of Discrimination & Legislation

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In this policy 'discrimination' means discrimination where a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of disability, sex or marital status, as defined in the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, or on grounds of race, creed, colour or age as defined in the appropriate Acts (see below).

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we and our staff and associates do not unlawfully discriminate under the Single Equality Bill which come into force in October 2010 as well as the following Acts;

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975; (c) the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Rights Act 1996
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- the Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief Act) Regulations 2003
- the Work and Families Act 2006
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006; and
- any other relevant legislation in force from time to time relating to discrimination in employment and the provision of goods, facilities or services

Nominated Person

Reashma Begum, will be nominated as the person responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the equality and diversity policy with overall responsibility for its implementation and supervision remaining with the Management.

All aspects of personnel policies and procedures shall be kept under review to ensure that they do not operate against equal opportunities and analysis made of the sex, race, religion/beliefs or marital status of employees in relation to their employment with this organisation.

Where it appears that any employees/applicants/ are not being offered equal opportunities, the circumstances will be investigated by management to see if there are any policies or criteria which exclude or discourage employees and, if so, whether these policies and criteria are justifiable.

Appropriate action will be taken, where necessary, to redress the effects of any policy or criteria which may be found to have unjustifiably limited the provision of equal opportunities.

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Our commitment

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff and service users are recognised and valued
- Every employee/associate and service user is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- We will undertake planned reviews on all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- This policy is fully supported and agreed by senior management, employees, and partners
- The policy has, and will be reviewed annually against evaluations, feedback and changes to legislation
- To raise awareness of policies and procedures to ensure that our services are accessible for a diverse range of people
- To promote the principles of equality and diversity with clients and /partners/subcontractors and recruitment agencies

By implementing equality and diversity policies we have found the benefits of not only compliance with the law, but also enjoy several other advantages including:

- Making full use of the talents of all members of the workforce and our candidates which helps to ensure the best return on what is often a costly investment in recruitment and training
- An improvement in motivation and performance which, in turn, can reduce turnover levels
- A broadening of the "talent base" which develops individuals abilities faster and further whilst creating the potential for new and flexible approaches
- Better two-way communications
- An improvement in the external view of the organisation, so that talented people will want to join and also attract more candidates

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- The implementation of equality and diversity policies stimulates a healthy and more productive atmosphere and creates a better quality of working life

Recruitment and Promotion

Applicants for posts/training shall be given as much clear and accurate information about opportunities through advertisements, open days, inductions, job descriptions and interviews in order to enable them to assess their own suitability for the opportunity they are applying for. Information about opportunities shall also be placed and prominently displayed where it may reach individuals of all groups.

Recruitment literature shall not imply that there is a preference for one group of applicants. However, in accordance with Sections 47 and 48 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, we may encourage persons of one sex only to apply for vacancies where, during the previous 12 months, the number of persons of that sex employed on particular work is small in comparison with the number of persons of the opposite sex employed on that work by us. However, after encouraging such applications each candidate must be considered on his/her own merits and suitability for the post and their membership of an under-represented group shall not influence the appointment.

Advertisements and recruitment drives shall be aimed at as wide a group of suitably qualified and experienced candidates as possible.

All applicants shall be informed that we encourage equality and diversity. Such information could be conveyed in advertisements, job descriptions or application forms.

All personal specifications for posts shall include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job, as we understand requirements that are convenient rather than necessary may be discriminatory.

All interviews shall be thorough, conducted on an objective basis and shall deal only the applicant's suitability for the job and ability to fulfil the job requirements. Where it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect performance of the job (for example, where it involves unsociable hours or extensive travel), this should be discussed objectively without detailed questions based on assumptions about marital status, children and domestic obligation. Questions about marriage plans or family intentions should not be asked, as they could be construed as showing bias against them. Information necessary for personnel records can be collected after a job offer has been made.

All staff shall be encouraged to discuss their career prospects and their continued training needs and aspirations with their manager.

Vacancies shall be given as wide an internal circulation as possible to staff who are likely to possess appropriate qualifications or have relevant experience.

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We will not discriminate on the basis of sex, marital status, age, religion or disability in the allocation of duties or shifts between staff employed in any grade or grades with comparable job descriptions, except where night work restrictions apply, in which case exemptions may be considered.

Where appropriate and/or necessary, we will endeavour to provide appropriate specific needs of employees, service users and which arise from their ethnic or cultural background, gender responsibilities as carers, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

All new employees and associates are issued with either a Company Handbook or an Associate Manual with details of all employment related issues.

Staff training / Development

It is our Policy that we will not discriminate in the provision of training and development courses. Appropriate training shall be provided to enable staff to perform their jobs effectively. Such training will make provisions where necessary for individuals returning to work following a break for domestic reasons.

Age limits for entry to training schemes should not be unnecessarily restrictive to exclude certain groups.

Central Support Ltd is an Equal Opportunities Employer. Our staff and service users are entitled to equal treatment irrespective of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation and civil partnership, religion or belief and age, taking into account the diversity of the community that we serve. We feel it is our responsibility to ensure that our clients promote equality and diversity codes of practice to our within the organisation, therefore we will promote awareness.

Central Support Ltd is committed to meeting the diverse needs of staff and service users. We will take steps to identify their needs and develop policies and procedures, setting out how we will meet these needs. We will ensure the services we provide are accessible to all. We will take into account the needs of staff and service users with a disability and who are unable to communicate effectively in English. We will consider whether particular groups are predominant within our client base and devise appropriate policies to meet their needs: including men and women; carers; children; the elderly; members of religious groups; ethnic groups or nationalities; and lesbian, gay or transgender people.

Our learning programmes include discussion about equality and diversity and further reading and research is encouraged. Signposting is undertaken to relevant up to date sources of information.

Possible Pre-conceptions

In the application of this policy, it is essential that managers guard against discrimination on the basis of possible assumptions that individuals' because of their sex, race, disability, religion or marital status possess characteristics which would make them unsuitable for employment or receiving training. Examples of such assumptions might be:

- Lack of commitment to work

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- Have outside commitments which would interfere with work or training
- Possess poor mental/physical ability
- Produce an anticipated unfavourable reaction of other staff and members of the public
- Be unsuitable for the job/training because of a feeling that certain types of work are only suitable for a member of the opposite sex or of single status
- Be unable to supervise
- Possess limited career intentions
- Be unwilling to undertake training
- Have poor standards of behaviour/conduct
- Have limitations imposed by so-called traditional female interests and experience

We emphasise that discrimination as a consequence of any such pre-conceptions is unacceptable

Any restrictions which are applied by management and which affect certain groups of staff/service users more than others, may effectively result in indirect discrimination, and should be reviewed to determine whether they are necessary rather than convenient and removed if this is not so.

Community Partnerships

Central Support Ltd will seek to develop community partnerships within the areas that we serve. Through working within the community we aim to ensure that we reach as wide an audience as possible.

Disciplinary Procedure

Any member of staff or associate who does not abide by this policy will be subject to the disciplinary procedure as detailed in the Company Induction. Central Support Ltd will fully investigate any reported incidents of discrimination by staff and service users.

Grievances and Victimisation

Particular care will be taken to deal effectively with any complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment which should be perused by application and fully investigated.

Monitoring and Reviews

Reashma Begum will be nominated as the person responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the equal opportunity policy with overall responsibility for its implementation and supervision remaining with the Directors.

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Central Support Ltd will actively monitor equality and diversity data to ensure that we are recruiting to meet the diversity of our community and that achievement opportunity to equal to all.

Central Support Ltd will review the operation of this policy not less than once a year (or more regularly if we identify any non-compliance or problem concerning equality and diversity issues with service users or staff or changes in legislation). We will take remedial action if we discover non-compliance under this policy or barriers to equality and diversity.

This document sets out our policy. It must be strictly adhered to unless there are legal limitations on employment to particular posts. Disciplinary procedure may be used in the case of a breach of our Policy.