

Policy statement

Crossways' aim is to provide a place of outstanding service and excellence for its residents and as such, looks to ensure that it employs dedicated, highly qualified and experienced employees. It is committed to providing an environment where all can develop to their full potential. In order to assist the organisation to achieve this aim, this policy sets out Crossways' approach to equality and diversity, to promoting equal treatment both as an employer and as a service provider and to embracing diversity in employment. Its ultimate aim is to ensure that no group or individual will be unfairly excluded or disadvantaged in terms of their ability to access employment opportunities or the services of Crossways and to create a responsive and flexible environment.

The policy also aims to give those who use the services the confidence that they will be treated with dignity, respect and equality at all times.

Scope of the policy

These standards apply to all who work at and volunteer for Crossways. It is the responsibility of each employee, Trustee and volunteer to make themselves aware of and adhere to the policy and its requirements. If an employee does not understand any aspect of this policy, it is their responsibility to discuss with their line manager. Any person who feels that there has been a breach of this policy should report the matter to their line manager or other appropriate manager.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that all employees are able to work in an environment free from discrimination and will challenge if they become aware of discrimination in the workplace.

Principles

Crossways is a Christian organisation opposed to discrimination in society and seeking to work towards equality at work. It is committed to policies, procedures and practices that do not discriminate unfairly or unlawfully against anyone, and which promote equality of opportunity for all.

We are committed to listening to the experience of those who have encountered racism or discrimination of any form. We will do all we can to ensure that our behaviour as an organisation fully reflects the value and the diversity of race and culture which includes saying sorry if we get this wrong.

We are also committed to playing our part in the social transformation of the wider community to which we belong.

As a result, Crossways will:

- not discriminate against any person applying either for accommodation or employment, who conducts business with Crossways or who is employed by Crossways, on the grounds of their: sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, age, political views, cultural background, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, colour/ race, ethnic or national origin, or offending background. This also applies to former or existing residents, employees or business contacts;
- promote an inclusive culture which recognises and maximises the abilities of individuals. It will demonstrate that it is committed not only to its legal obligations but also to the positive promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment;
- consider each resident's application on an objective-needs basis and not observe a 'quota' with regards to racial and cultural diversity and actively distributed the eligibility criteria and application process to relevant agencies;
- on a regular basis review and meet the training needs of managers and employees (particularly where they have a responsibility for recruitment and selection) to ensure that both promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices in the workplace;
- consider the cultural needs and racial diversity of its residents and encourage applications that reflect these backgrounds when recruiting;
- take steps to ensure that both residents (whilst on premises owned by Crossways) and employees (whilst in the course of their employment) are protected from harassment;

- treat all employees and residents and those with whom it comes into contact with dignity and respect.
- Ensure that staff have appropriate training in Equality and Diversity during their induction period and thereafter at regular intervals

The Equality Act 2010

Crossways and employees will be aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The headings of age, disability (including mental health and obesity), race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity are known as “protected characteristics”. Discrimination on the grounds on any of these will not be tolerated.

Complaints of discrimination can be of seven types and employees should be aware of the different ways that discrimination can take place:

- direct - discrimination because of a protected characteristic;
- associative - discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person with a protected characteristic, such as a carer or married to a person from another country;
- harassment - behaviour deemed offensive by the recipient, even if it is not directed at them;
- harassment by a third party - employers are potentially liable for the harassment of staff or customers by people they don't directly employ, such as a contractor;
- victimisation - discrimination against someone because they made or supported a complaint under Equality Act legislation;
- discrimination by perception - direct discrimination against someone because others believe they have a protected characteristic (even if they do not).

Employees should ensure that they are aware of and do not discriminate in any of the ways above.

Grievance, Bullying and Harassment and Disciplinary Action

The Grievance or Bullying and Harassment policies are to be used for complaints of discrimination.

Acts of discrimination, harassment or abuse committed by any employee in the course of their work will be dealt with according to the terms of the Disciplinary policy.

Monitoring

The Chief Executive has primary responsibility for monitoring the operation of this policy using information from employee records including recruitment statistics. Where monitoring indicates that the policy is not working in practice, Crossways will take appropriate remedial action.

The Chief Executive will, on an annual basis review, and where necessary revise existing policies and procedures to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all employees, residents, contractors, volunteers and job applicants.

Policy Impact

Although a standalone policy, to reflect its importance to Crossways, equality and diversity will underpin all aspects of its work and the organisation is committed to embedding equality and diversity in all aspects of its operation.

Responsibility for this policy lies with:

Andy Wheeler, Chief Executive



January 2024

Version:	Issued By:	Review Date:
January 2024	AW	January 2025
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