

## Policy on equality, diversity and inclusion

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### **Policy statement**

1. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, trustees, panel members and anyone who represents PACT.
2. PACT is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion both as an employer and as a service provider. We are committed to reflecting the communities we serve by bringing people together from different backgrounds and experiences and recognize the benefits this will bring.
3. We believe:
  - that equality provides equal opportunity and access for all, for those who work for or represent PACT and for our service users.
  - That wider diversity can enrich our understanding of others’ perspectives, enhance our workplace and the services we provide and make a positive difference to the lives of the people we work with.
  - in a fully inclusive environment as we are a supportive and respectful organization that believes each person is unique and we encourage all individuals to contribute as fully as possible and feel valued by others.
4. We have established a focus group as a voice for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole organisation. The group’s purpose is to promote and support the delivery of our commitment to be an organisation where differences are acknowledged and valued. The group aim to achieve this through open, appreciative discussion and the delivery of agreed and planned actions.

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5. PACT aims to tackle discrimination or disadvantage proactively and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 and or not aligned to PACT’s Code of Conduct or Values. In doing so, we strive to:
- Ensure that no-one is treated less favourably than any other on any grounds of any characteristic protected by the Act, or other non protected characteristic and can work in an environment of dignity and respect
  - Adopt positive action or the use of occupational requirements only when there is a genuine and legitimate reason for doing so (see Appendix 2 - ‘Definitions – genuine occupational requirement’)
  - Help people fulfil their potential at work whilst finding the right work/life balance, through our flexible working policy
  - Ensure everyone understands we do not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to any form of bullying, victimization, harassment or discrimination including that by a third party
  - Investigate all concerns of bullying, harassment or discrimination that are raised through PACT’s grievance procedures or by our service users.
  - Make our employment, volunteering opportunities and services welcoming and open to all members of the community
  - Ensure our services meet the diverse needs of the children, young people and families we serve by consulting with them on service reviews and development of services in the spirit of partnership
  - Work towards attaining a more fully represented workforce and our Board of Trustees reflecting the diverse communities we serve
  - Be aware of local demographic profiles and respond accordingly to ensure we remain accessible by accommodating the requirements of others
  - Make our offices and services accessible wherever possible
  - Provide appropriate training and encouraging supervision feedback so that we have the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

**Implementation – all PACT employees, volunteers and trustees**

1. This procedure applies to all aspects of PACT’s working practices including the way in which we deliver our services, the recruitment and selection of employees, volunteers and trustees and all employment related policies, practices and procedures.
2. Everyone has a responsibility to guard against any form of discrimination and avoid action which goes against the spirit of this policy. Employees, volunteers and trustees must ensure that there is no discrimination in their decisions or behaviour and are responsible for:

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- Implementing the policy in their day to day work and interactions with others, for instance other employees and service users
  - Notifying their line manager of any concerns about the conduct of other employees, volunteers, service users, contractors or third parties
  - Co-operating with any measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity
  - Sharing their ideas and suggestions on actions we could take that will deliver our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
3. This policy is made available to all new employees, volunteers and trustees on our staff intranet, PACTConnect and forms part of the induction programme for new joiners.

### **Implementation – PACT Managers**

1. In addition to the responsibilities that everyone has for implementing this policy (see point 2 above), managers at all levels have additional responsibilities for operating this policy, including:
- Implementing the policy and communicating it to others as part of their day to day line management
  - Applying employment policies and procedures in a fair and equitable way
  - Ensuring that all policy or service decisions that will change working practices or service provision are assessed in line with the spirit of this policy
  - Effectively managing and dealing promptly with complaints or concerns relating to potential discrimination raised by employees, volunteers or service users
  - Proactively looking for ways to increase the diversity of our organisation
  - Encouraging reflective discussions about biases and discrimination in support and supervision meetings

### **Implementation – Corporate Commitments**

1. Disability - PACT will consider all reasonable adjustments recommendations to working conditions and/or to the physical working environment to help overcome the practical effects of a disability.
2. Bullying and Harassment - Any employee who is concerned that they may be subject to bullying, harassment or discrimination should refer to the 'Bullying and Harassment' policy. This shows the steps that should be taken.
3. Complaints of Discrimination - PACT takes all claims of discrimination very seriously and will carry out a full investigation and take any identified subsequent action against those concerned through formal procedures. This covers all behaviour, including remarks and insinuation, verbal and non-verbal. Acts of discrimination on the grounds of any of the

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protected characteristics will be treated as gross misconduct and will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter which may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal without notice.

4. Data Collection, Storage and Use - Mindful of the GDPR and Data protection legislation to only collect information that is necessary, up to date with a clear reason for collecting it, PACT has carefully considered what data it will gather.

The data collected is used to support the advancement of equality of opportunity. The information helps to identify gaps or trends and inform areas of development, including taking positive action as and when required. Monitoring is also undertaken to meet the reporting requirements of funders, regulators and other stakeholders.

### **Implementation - Partners & Third Party Organisations**

1. External contractors, third parties or sub-contractors who we work in partnership with or who supply us with services are expected to demonstrate a firm commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and to evidence this.

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## Appendix 1 - Definitions

**Equality** - Equality can be described as breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups, both in employment and for goods and services; the basis of which is supported and protected by legislation

**Diversity** - Diversity can be described as a range of different characteristics and recognising/celebrating differences. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contribution

Equality and diversity are interdependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued, harnessed and taken account of.

**Inclusion** - Inclusion can be described as creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued. An inclusive environment can only be created once we are more aware of our unconscious and conscious biases and are committed to managing these. An inclusive workplace culture allows all people to feel valued, accepted and supported to be able to thrive at work, regardless of any characteristic (protected or otherwise), identity, background or circumstance.

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## Appendix 2 - Forms of Discrimination

**Direct discrimination** occurs where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a Protected Characteristic. Protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are:

Age  
 Disability  
 Gender reassignment  
 Marriage and civil partnership  
 Pregnancy and maternity  
 Race (includes colour, nationality and ethnic origins)  
 Religion and or belief  
 Sex  
 Sexual orientation

**Indirect discrimination** can happen when there are rules or arrangements that apply to a group of employees or job applicants, but in practice are less fair to a certain protected characteristic.

**Associative discrimination or discrimination by association** – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic.

**Discrimination by perception** – direct discrimination against someone because it is thought that they possess a particular Protected Characteristic even if they do not actually possess it.

**Reverse discrimination** - The unfair treatment against others categorized as being in a dominant or majority group.

**Harassment** – unwanted conduct related to a relevant 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. You may complain of such offensive behaviour even if it is not directed towards you personally.

**Bullying** - offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, involving an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

**Victimisation** – when an employee is treated less favourably because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010 or are suspected of doing so.

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**Equal Pay** - The Equality Act 2010 gives an individual a right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, where individuals are doing:

- Like work; or
- Work rated as equivalent under an analytical job evaluation study; or
- Work that is proved to be of equal value

**Rehabilitation of Offenders** - The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 enables some criminal convictions to become 'spent' or ignored, after a 'rehabilitation period'. For further information see DBS Checks procedure.

**Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR)** - In rare cases an employer might be able to prove an applicant needs a certain protected characteristic (such as a person's sex, race or religion) to do a particular job. This is known as an 'occupational requirement'.

For it to be an occupational requirement, both of the following must also apply:

- the protected characteristic is essential for and relates to the main tasks of the job
- the employer can prove it has a good business reason ('objective justification')

For example, our services at Alana House require female support workers as the women feel safer if the worker is female.

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