

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Aims of this Policy

Lesniak Swann recognises and values people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential.

The organisation will do all it can to ensure it recruits, trains and promotes people based on qualifications, experience and abilities for all roles within the organisation.

This policy is designed to ensure that Lesniak Swann complies with its obligations under equality legislation and demonstrates our commitment to treating people equally and fairly.

Lesniak Swann is unreservedly opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (defined as Protected Characteristics).

Using fair and objective employment practices, the organisation aims to ensure that

- All employees and potential employees are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment
- All employees and service users have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour. Such behaviour may come from other employees or by people (third parties) who are not employees of Lesniak Swann, such as customers or clients
- All employees and service users have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination
- All employees and service users have the right to be free from discrimination because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic or because others perceive that they have a particular Protected Characteristic, even if they do not.

## Scope of the policy

The policy applies to Employees, Job applicants, Students on work experience, Clients and Suppliers.

The policy applies to all stages of employment including recruitment and selection, promotion and training.

The directors will ensure all parties abide by the Policy so that no-one is treated less favourably than anyone else because of their sex, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity leave, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief or age.

The directors will also ensure that no-one will be discriminated against because they are part time or are on a fixed term contract.

## Third Party Harassment

Lesniak Swann will not tolerate an employee being harassed by any third party who is not an employee eg clients or suppliers. Any breach of the Policy will not be tolerated by the Agency and steps to prevent it happening again will be taken.

## Policy statement

As an organisation, we value the variety of different views, outlooks and approaches that a diverse workforce bring. This assists us to provide improved services and increase our understanding of our clients.

We will do all we can to ensure no one will receive less favourable treatment or is to be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions, which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Lesniak Swann is committed to providing a working environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff are respected and which is free from unfair discrimination, prejudice, intimidation and all forms of harassment including bullying. This commitment is encapsulated in the Agency's values and is central to our beliefs.

## Responsibilities

Employees and Directors of Lesniak Swann have a duty to act within this policy, ensure it is followed and to draw attention to any suspected discriminatory acts or practices.

Responsibility for promoting awareness of this policy and monitoring that it is being followed rests with Directors and Employees at all levels.

### **Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy by employees**

Breaches of this policy by employees will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under the relevant disciplinary procedures policy.

### **Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy by Clients or Suppliers**

Any breach of the Policy by clients or suppliers will not be tolerated by the Agency and steps to prevent it happening again will be taken.

Employees, Clients and Suppliers are also personally liable under equality legislation for any act of unlawful discrimination.

## Equality and diversity in practice

- To provide and promote equal opportunities for all employees in the areas of Recruitment and Selection and Conditions of Service by:
  - Particular attention will be placed on the following:
  - Use of selection criteria that does not unlawfully discriminate in recruitment and promotion procedures
  - Requiring entry to employment or progression within it to be based on merit
  - Not discriminating in opportunities for recruitment, training, promotion or transfer of employees
  - Ensuring that every individual is assessed according to his or her personal capability to carry out a given job/role
  - Ensure that all employees are given equal treatment with regard to terms and conditions of employment, provided they do the same or broadly similar work, or work of equal value
  - Ensure equal opportunities and non-discrimination in the operation of grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Ensure that all relevant requirements of the Equality Act in relation to disability are met and adhered to. This will include making reasonable adjustments to ensure access to employment or volunteering tasks and opportunities
- Ensure that any amendments to any legislation relating to discrimination are met and adhered to.

## Implementation of the policy

Employees at all levels will be involved in creating an equality environment and one that values diversity.

The policy will be publicised as widely as possible:

- And available to prospective applicants
- Ensuring all new starters have the opportunity to discuss the policy with managers and/or colleagues
- Making use of team meetings to discuss the policy and defining areas where practice could be improved
- Providing non- discrimination selection training for managers who are recruiting
- Providing Equality and Diversity training and guidance to employees
- Including reference to abiding by the policy in staff terms and conditions agreements
- Incorporating specific responsibilities into job/role descriptions

Lesniak Swann ensures **services are accessible** by considering:

- Formats for promotional material
- Appropriate use of language / formats / fonts / size
- Whether information should be available in alternative formats e.g. easy read / other languages
- Locations where the organisation's services are promoted / advertised
- Accessibility of locations from which the service is provided
- The diverse make up of our staff in relation to your service users
- The impact of proposed new services on the user group

## Working with Partners

In selecting our partners we will consider their commitment to Equality and Diversity by ensuring their policies have the same values that are central to the beliefs of Lesniak Swann.

## Monitoring the Policy

This policy will be monitored to judge to what extent it is working and identify areas for improvement. Monitoring will relate to employees at all levels and to service users and methods used will include:

- Information of location of service users
- Information on how they heard of your service / accessed your service
- Elements of the service used by people

## Reporting discrimination / potential discrimination

Employees who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue by following the Lesniak Swann grievance procedure and through the following means:

- By speaking or reporting (in the first instance) to their departmental manager
- By speaking or reporting to either of the Directors should the departmental manager be implicated

Employees should also use this approach if they feel that they been the subject of harassment from someone who is not an employee of Lesniak Swann. Lesniak Swann will not tolerate any harassment from third parties towards its employees and service users and will take appropriate action to prevent it happening again.

If an employee or service user witnesses behaviour that they find offensive in relation to age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, even if it is not directed at them they should also use this procedure.

*All complaints will be treated seriously, promptly and confidentiality.*

## Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by (the Directors) to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and practices of the organisation.

The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered