

	<p style="text-align: center;">POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</p>
<p>Implementation Date: August, 2015</p>	<p>Version 2: May, 2022</p>

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Perth Autism Support SCIO (PAS) recognises that discrimination and victimisation are unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the charity and its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. PAS opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end, the purpose of this policy is to foster a culture of fairness, equality and diversity for all employees and to recognise the positive contribution that each individual can make to the organisation.

PAS aims for its workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best. It is the aim of PAS to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender identity/reassignment, marital status, pregnancy/maternity leave, racial or ethnic origin (including colour, race, nationality and national or ethnic origin), religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the **protected characteristics**).

This policy applies to the advertisement of jobs, recruitment and appointment, training, conditions of work, pay, any references issued and to every other aspect of employment. All terms and conditions of employment and related benefits shall be non-discriminatory, other than where there are legal grounds for discriminating such as in the case of gender specific jobs. Applicants for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be assessed according to their skills, experience and suitability for the job. This policy also applies to the treatment of service users and their families.

Perth Autism Support SCIO will make every effort to ensure that employees are treated equally and fairly in relation to recruitment, promotion, pay, terms and conditions, training and development, performance management and termination of employment.

All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, are entitled to be treated fairly and with respect and dignity. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

All employees have a personal responsibility for the implementation of this policy, and will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass colleagues, service users or their families

because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the organisation's services.

This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

DEFINITIONS

Types of Unlawful Discrimination

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. No type of unlawful discrimination as defined below will be tolerated by Perth Autism Support.

1. **Direct discrimination** occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. (An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant).
2. **Indirect discrimination** occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.
3. **Associative discrimination** is where someone is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another person who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).
4. **Perceptive discrimination** is where someone is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).
5. **Harassment** related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
6. **Third party harassment** occurs where an employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as service users or their families.
7. **Victimisation** is less favourable treatment of someone who has raised or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010 for discrimination or harassment, or because they are suspected of doing so.

ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENTS

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- Every staff member 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 staff.

- To promote equality in the workplace which the organisation believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- To regularly review all employment policies, practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by the Management Team and the Board of Trustees.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the Chief Executive. However, if any employee believes that they have been discriminated against on any of the grounds referred to above, they may raise the matter informally with their Line Manager. If the employee wishes to raise the matter further, they should invoke the Perth Autism Support Grievance Procedure, setting out in detail the basis of their complaint. Line Managers will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each Line Manager will ensure that:

- all their staff members are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- proper records are maintained.

The Board of Trustees will be responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy in respect of employees and job applicants, including periodic departmental audits.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Responsibility for ensuring that there are no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff members. The attitudes of staff members are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. All members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements.
- not discriminate in their day-to-day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their Line Manager as soon as practically possible if they experience an incident of third-party harassment. Perth Autism Support will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.
- inform their Line Manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

RIGHTS OF DISABLED PEOPLE

Perth Autism Support SCIO attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people. Perth Autism Support SCIO is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for those staff who are disabled or who become disabled for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 during their employment with Perth Autism Support. If a staff member is disabled or becomes disabled, they are encouraged to tell their Line Manager about their condition so that Perth Autism Support SCIO may support as appropriate.

If a staff member experiences difficulties at work because of their disability, they should contact their Line Manager or the Chief Executive to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help to overcome or minimise the difficulty. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services.

Under the terms of this policy, Managers are required to:

- make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of a staff member who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
- include disabled people in training/development programmes;
- give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

RIGHTS IN RELATION TO RELIGION AND BELIEF

Perth Autism Support SCIO will make all reasonable efforts to provide suitable accommodation for prayer and religious observance, or quiet contemplation where practical.

All employees, regardless of their religion and belief, are required to work in accordance with their contract. There is likely to be some flexibility over how the hours are worked whilst still meeting service/business needs. Line Managers should make every attempt to ensure that those whose religion requires them to pray at certain times during the day are enabled to do so through agreed flexible working arrangements. In addition, similar effort should be made to accommodate requests from those who require, for example, an extra hour for midday prayer on Friday, or not to work beyond sunset on Friday, or (in the case of staff whose normal contracted hours of work would include weekend working) at the weekends in ways which conflict with their religious beliefs.

Some religions and cultures determine a certain mode of dress. For example, the wearing of compulsory items such as the Kara (bangle) by Sikh men and women.

Wearing of clothes displaying offensive material, in any language, or which are in some other way offensive and may breach national law (for example, sectarian or racist slogans) will be considered a breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy and other Perth Autism Support SCIO policies and regulations.

EQUALITY TRAINING

Regular briefing sessions will be held for staff on equality issues. These will be repeated as necessary. Equality information is also included in all induction programmes.

Training will be provided for Managers on this policy and the associated arrangements. All Managers who have an involvement in the recruitment and selection process are entitled to receive specialist training.

MONITORING

The organisation deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation. Accordingly, a monitoring system will be introduced to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.

The system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on employees by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, grade and length of service in current grade. Information regarding the number of staff who declare themselves as disabled will also be maintained.

There will also be regular assessments to measure the extent to which recruitment to first appointment, internal promotion and access to training/development opportunities affect equal opportunities for all groups.

Perth Autism Support SCIO will maintain information on staff who have been involved in certain key policies: Disciplinary, Grievance and Bullying & Harassment.

Where appropriate, equality impact assessments will be carried out on the results of monitoring to ascertain the effect that the organisation's policies and services may have on those who experience them.

The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.

If monitoring shows that the organisation, or areas within it, are not representative, or that sections of the workforce are not progressing properly within the organisation, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, organisational policies and practices, as well as consideration of taking legal Positive Action.

GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINE

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Perth Autism Support Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure Policy.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences, and they will be dealt with under the Organisation Disciplinary Procedure.

POLICY AND REVIEW

Version:	Date of Issue:	Reviewed By:
1	August, 2015	Angie Ferguson
2	May, 2022	Teri Turnbull