

Soup Kitchen/Whitefield Charity SK Corporation (SK/WC): EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY (EOP)

Approved by Board: October 2015

To be reviewed: October 2016

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1 DECLARATION OF INTENT

- 1.1 The Soup Kitchen/Whitefield Charity SK Corporation is an Equal Opportunities Employer. The aim of its equal opportunities policy is to ensure that no job applicant, employee, Board member, volunteer or guest receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, HIV antibody status, AIDS or disability. The Soup Kitchen/Whitefield Corporation will strive to redress any imbalance that may become evident.
- 1.2 The SK/WC will evaluate any complaints or comments regarding its Equal Opportunities Policy (EOP).
- 1.3 The Board shall review the content and effectiveness of the policy annually and if there is a complaint. The Director is responsible for the policy's day to day implementation.
- 1.4 The SK/WC will monitor and review the composition of its executive committee with the aim of making it as broad-based as possible.

2 RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

The organisation will monitor and keep under review its procedures and practices to assess the impact of the policy in the following areas:

- I) job descriptions/person specifications
- ii) wording, presentation and media used for advertising
- iii) response to advertising
- iv) shortlisting from returned application forms
- v) interview assessments
- vi) offers of employment
- vii) acceptance of offers
- viii) numbers of leavers and reasons for leaving

- ix) access and uptake of training opportunities (internal) / and further education (external)
- x) existing staff.

- 2.1 A written job description and person specification shall be prepared, in line with the EOP, in respect of every vacancy that arises and every new post that is created. Applicants should be made aware that general life experience and voluntary as well as paid work are valued.
- 2.2 All jobs must be advertised externally and as widely as possible. Adverts should clearly state the minimum requirements for the post. Copies should be kept of adverts, publications used, all applications, short list and notes of the process of recruitment.
- 2.3 No final interview for any post should be conducted by a panel of fewer than two people, selected to be as representative of the different backgrounds within the membership as possible. Whenever possible, an external assessor shall be invited to join the panel in a non-voting capacity. Interview forms, correspondence and contracts should be kept on record.
- 2.4 An open invitation will be given to short-listed applicants with a disability to discuss their specific needs and requirements. The SK/Whitefield Charity SK Corporation will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the specific needs of disabled employees are met.
- 2.5 During each interview, notes should be taken and at the end of the interview a form completed for each candidate, assessing their response to the topics and themes raised. These should be reviewed at the end of the interview process by the panel to see that each candidate has been treated fairly.
- 2.7 2.6 Questions on the following topics are forbidden in an interview. Any candidate who is asked these questions has the right to refuse to answer. It is the responsibility of the Chair, or any other member of the panel to stop such questions being asked:
 - age
 - marital status
 - sexual orientation
 - occupation of partner
 - number of children/domestic arrangements (it should be made clear that the organisation aims to be flexible to individual requirements)
- 2.7 A copy of the EOP should be sent out to all job applicants.

3 TRAINING

- 3.1 Staff will be made aware of training opportunities available and will be encouraged to take them up where possible. Reasonable facilities will be offered for staff to take study leave.
 1. Equal opportunities will apply to all irrespective of race, age, sex and disability.
 2. Discussion and, if necessary, internal training will be undertaken annually for staff and management to combat sexual and racial harassment at work.
 3. Procedures and practices will reflect the cultural and religious needs of employees.
 4. As far as possible, special and particular needs training as required by the employee as a result of her/his disability will be available.

5. As far as possible premises will be suitably adapted to meet the needs of disabled employees and client groups.

4 SUPPORT

- 4.1 All workers should have access to support. If a worker feels isolated, reasonable provision will be made for support from other providers, e.g. professional networks, counsellors, GP, self-help groups.

5 DISCIPLINE and GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

- 5.1 It will be made clear to all employees that proven discrimination, abuse or harassment on the grounds of race, gender, age, disability or sexuality, is a dismissable offence.

6 THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

- 6.1 This policy applies to:
- a. all staff, volunteers, guests and Board members of SK/WC.
 - b. all aspects of the functioning of SK/WC.

7 IMPLEMENTATION

- 7.1 Employment procedures and practices will be undertaken strictly in accordance with the following and all other relevant legislation:

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975-85
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

- 7.2 In order to implement this EOP, SK/WC accepts that it needs to ensure that all trustees and staff involved in selection and recruitment within the organisation are given adequate understanding of:

- i. interview techniques
- ii. codes of practice
- iii. disciplinary and grievance procedures as contained in the organisation's staff manual.

8 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

8.1 The Soup Kitchen/Whitefield Charity SK Corporation's commitment

The SK/WC is committed to ensuring equality of access to all its services. The Board will aim to ensure that no sector of the community shall be denied access or receive a poor service on the grounds of age, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnicity or religious belief. The Board will aim to ensure that all its services will be provided in line with this anti discrimination policy. In order to promote equality of access the Board will aim to ensure good practice.

8.2 Corporate Organisational Arrangement

- All Board members of SK/WC will be responsible for the overall implementation of the EOP.
- All staff have a duty to implement SK/WC's EOP.

- Although the Chair of the Board has legal responsibility, the Director shall be responsible for achieving greater equality by overseeing priorities and performance of the organisation as a whole and managing the development and implementation of EOP work.

8.3 Key tasks in developing and implementing policy

The organisation should:

- i. Discuss its EOP once a year with the staff.
- ii. The Board must discuss and approve the EOP once a year.
- iii. Each new member of the staff and Board should be given a copy of the EOP and, so it can be part of the induction process, the Induction Information requests that new volunteers review copies of the Policy on the board in the Director's office and in the SK telephone closet periodically and make any comments to the Director.

9 REVIEW

The SK/WC will monitor and review the effectiveness of the EOP on an annual basis.

9.2 The Director should present an annual report to the Board.

10. INFORMATION

This policy shall be circulated to all employees and job applicants. Volunteers must be informed of it during induction.