

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY (Service Users)

Introduction and Policy Statement

Renovo Employment Group Limited ('Renovo') is committed to eliminating discrimination and embracing and promoting diversity in all of its business activities, including the provision of services and employment practices. Our aim is that our employees, candidate base and service users will be truly representative of all sections of society in which we serve and are treated fairly. We seek to develop a culture that reflects these beliefs and strive to maintain a positive working environment in which respect from each other, our service users, clients and suppliers are paramount. We strive to ensure our clients meet their own diversity targets.

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and the provision of our services and not to discriminate on the grounds of:

- Gender and gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religious belief
- Age

We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Renovo's commitment will be led by the CEO who will be supported by the management team who, in turn will support and communicate with their staff in relation to equality and diversity. Renovo will work in partnership with its service users to ensure that there is a shared approach to equality of opportunity in employment and in the avoidance of unlawful discrimination.

Purpose and Scope

This document sets out Renovo's policy on equality and diversity and the methods that will be used to achieve the objectives set out in this policy. It will ensure that Renovo's service users are aware of, and understand, their responsibilities in line with the policy.

Types of Discrimination

To discriminate means to classify individuals and people into groups and treat them differently in accordance with said groups. Discrimination is unlawful where it is practised against a particular individual / group that has been protected by law and is unjustified. There are several types of legally defined discrimination:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Victimisation
- Harassment
- Not making reasonable adjustments
- Instructions and pressure to discriminate
- Segregation

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

Our Commitment to our service users

- We will create and maintain a working environment in which individuals feel respected and valued
- All service users will be treated fairly, and with respect

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- We will seek to widen the media in which we recruit to ensure the diversity of our service users reflects the diversity of the society in which we operate
- We will work with our clients to help them meet their own diversity targets
- We will not accept instructions from clients that indicate an intention to discriminate unlawfully
- We will not discriminate unlawfully when short-listing service users for a vacancy with a client or helping to negotiate terms of employment on your behalf. All service users will be assessed and selected on the grounds of merit alone
- Our policies and practices (for the provision of services and employment) will be reviewed annually to ensure fairness, encourage diversity and eradicate any unlawful discrimination
- We will develop, monitor and review an action plan setting out how we intend to achieve this policy
- We will monitor diversity data to help us assess the impact of our policies and practices
- Breaches of our equality and diversity policy will be treated seriously, resulting in the withdrawal of services for service users

Our equality and diversity objectives

Renovo will set annual objectives to monitor whether its activities are having a positive impact on its commitment to equality and diversity. These will include:

- the implementation of this policy to all service users through various communication channels e.g. signing of agreements with service users
- the agreement and implementation of an equality and diversity training plan
- the measurement, through monitoring, of the ethnicity of our service users to ensure that we reflect the diversity in terms of ethnicity
- the measurement, through monitoring, of the gender make-up of our service users and, from that, determine what appropriate action should be taken e.g. the improvement in the representation of women
- the measurement, through monitoring, of the age profile of applicants and service users to determine if further action is needed to improve the diversity, in terms of age
- using reasonable endeavours to measure faith and sexuality having regard to the possibility that service users might not disclose that information
- developing products and services that are accessible and useable by all people, including those with disabilities
- ensuring all service users understand and work towards equality and diversity
- analysing and monitoring data in respect of:
 - job applications
 - applications from service users (recruitment) and success rates
 - applications from service users (career management) and success rates
 - training (who has received training versus who has not)
 - promotions (applications or selection versus actual)
 - performance ratings
 - complaints (who raises a complaint, against whom, who is involved in decisions and the outcomes).

Disabled Persons

Renovo will not discriminate against a disabled person on the grounds of disability:

- in the arrangements ie application form, interview or arrangements for selection for determining to whom a job should be offered, or

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- in the terms on which the employment or engagement of temporary workers is offered, or
- by refusing to offer, or deliberately not offering the disabled person a job for reasons connected with their disability, or
- in the opportunities afforded to the person for receiving any benefit, or by refusing to afford, or deliberately not afford him or her any opportunity, or
- by subjecting him or her to any other detriment (detriment will include refusal of training or transfer, demotion, reduction of wage, or harassment).

Renovo will accordingly make career opportunities available to all people with disabilities and every practicable effort will be made to provide for the needs of candidates and service users.

Where a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of an employer, or any physical feature of the employer's premises, places a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled, it will be the duty of an employer to take such steps as are reasonable, in all the circumstances of the case, to remove the provision, criterion, practice of physical feature.

Wherever possible, Renovo will make reasonable adjustments to hallways, passages and doors in order to provide and improve means of access for disabled employees, workers and service users. However, this may not always be feasible, due to circumstances creating such difficulties as to render such adjustments as being beyond what is reasonable in all the circumstances.

Age

Renovo will not discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise any person on the grounds of their age. We will encourage clients not to include any age criteria in job specifications and every attempt will be made to persuade clients to recruit on the basis of competence and skills and not age.

No age requirements will be stated in any job advertisements on behalf of Renovo.

Renovo will request age as part of its equal opportunities monitoring at recruitment but such information will not be used as selection, training or promotion criteria or in any detrimental way and is only for compilation of personal data, which the company holds on service users.

Part-time workers

This policy covers the treatment of those service users who wish to work on a part-time basis. Renovo recognises that it is an essential part of this policy that part-time employees are treated on the same terms, with no detriment, as full-time employees (albeit on a pro rata basis).

Gender Reassignment

Renovo recognises that any service user may wish to change their gender whilst using Renovo's services.

Renovo will make every effort to try to protect the service user who has undergone, is undergoing or intends to undergo gender reassignment, from discrimination or harassment from any client with whom a job application has been put forward.

All employees and workers will be expected to comply with Renovo's policy on harassment and bullying in the workplace. Any breach of that policy will lead to the appropriate disciplinary sanction.

Any service user suffering discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment, where there is a link to Renovo, should make recourse to the Renovo's complaints procedure.

Selection and Recruitment of staff (for service users' information only)

Renovo will ensure that this will result in the best applicant for the job regardless of gender, gender reassignment, race, marital status, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age and will ensure that the structure, design and requirements of individual jobs and advertising is not unlawfully discriminatory. This will be done through:

- where appropriate, advertising a position both internally and externally
- ensuring that there is an up-to-date role profile that includes fair selection criteria
- ensuring that all employees have equal opportunity to promotion and transfer
- training of those who involved in selection and recruitment
- selection methods that match the requirements of the role
- details of all applicants will be kept for a period of 6 months from the date the position is filled
- working all the time to improve – e.g. Working closely with disability organisations to help increase the number of those who are deemed disabled working for Renovo.

Training and development

Renovo will ensure that all training and development programmes are designed and regularly reviewed to ensure that they support this policy.

All employees will have equal opportunity to training to ensure that they can fulfil their roles to the best of their abilities.

All:

- employees and managers will receive training in equality and diversity to ensure that they understand Renovo's expectations as an employer
- all service users will receive Renovo's equality and diversity policy to ensure they understand Renovo's expectations
- managers, and any other member of staff, who are involved in selection and recruitment will receive training to ensure they understand how to conduct a fair procedure through the writing of role profiles, drawing-up the advertisement, development of the selection criteria, forming the questions and understand how monitoring should be carried out
- managers, and any other member of staff, who are involved with service users or another equal opportunities decision-making process, e.g. preferred supplier lists
- employees will have training on how to deal with issues around discrimination, harassment and/or bullying
- managers will have training on dealing with complaints of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying.

Training and development will be reviewed annually against Renovo's needs as a company; any team needs; individual needs; service user needs. This will be done through a variety of forums:

- induction
- annual performance appraisal
- mid-year performance appraisal
- return to work interviews
- at promotion or transfer
- feedback from service users.

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Approval, amendment and review

This policy was approved by the CEO of Renovo. It is supported by the management team.

The policy will be reviewed annually and/or in response to feedback, monitoring and new or revised legislation.

Complaints Procedure for Service Users

If you believe you have been subjected to any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying and it cannot be resolved informally by raising the matter with the individual concerned, or it is not appropriate to do so, you are encouraged to raise a formal complaint using the following procedure.

1. In the first instance you should write to Annaleigh Marshall, Director, setting out your complaint in writing.
2. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint and confirm the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint, next steps and expected timescales. We may also need to request additional information at this stage to help us carry out the investigation. You can expect to receive this acknowledgment letter within 5 working days of us receiving your formal complaint in writing.
3. We will record your complaint in our central complaints register within a day of having received it.
4. If you have been asked to provide us with additional information, we will acknowledge your reply within 5 working days.
5. We will commence an investigation into your complaint. Investigations will be carried out with sensitivity and with due respect to your rights and the person you are making the allegations against. This will normally involve the following steps;
 - reviewing the information you have provided
 - asking the staff member against whom you are making the complaint to provide a written response
 - examining all the information and evidence, including our internal records.
6. On conclusion of the investigation you will be invited to attend a meeting with the investigating manager to discuss the findings of the investigation and how it will be resolved. This will be followed up in writing to you within 2 working days of the meeting.
7. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible within a reasonable period of time, the investigating manager will send you a detailed response to your complaint including how we intend to resolve the matter. This will be done within 3 days of completing the investigation.
8. It is our aim to complete investigations and resolve allegations of discrimination, harassment and bullying within 15 working days of receiving a formal complaint in writing.
9. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation then you should write to the Chief Executive who will review the matter. A meeting will normally be held within 10 working days of receiving your appeal in writing and the outcome at this stage of the procedure will be final.

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