



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Our Commitment

RESTART LIVES is committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued and where those with diverse experiences are able to contribute. We recognise that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experience bring fresh ideas and perceptions. We wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant, recognising that this will enhance our effectiveness in carrying out our work.

We will foster a supportive and inclusive culture for:

- All those who need and use our services, our guests
- Our volunteers
- Our staff
- Other stakeholders

Policy Statement

RESTART LIVES is committed to ensuring that no job applicant, volunteer, staff member or guest is discriminated against directly, indirectly, by association or perception because of disability, gender (including transgender/ gender reassignment), race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, marital status or civil partnership, responsibility for dependents, sexuality, pregnancy or maternity, age, trade union activity, political or religious, agnostic or atheist beliefs and (unrelated to the post) criminal convictions.

RESTART LIVES recognises the positive value of diversity, promoting equality and fairness, and challenging discrimination. We are committed to ensuring that we treat all our people with dignity and respect and will not tolerate any form of harassment, victimisation or discriminatory behaviour. Staff and volunteers will be supported to challenge inappropriate behaviour through training and referral to management teams.

This policy statement will feature in appropriate RESTART LIVES publications, be made available to all new staff and volunteers and will be placed in staff and volunteer handbooks. The Charity will keep its policies under review and will implement changes where these could improve equality of opportunity. This commitment applies to all the Charity's employment policies and procedures, not just those specifically connected with equal opportunities and diversity.

Services

RESTART LIVES is committed to meeting the diverse needs of our guests. We will take steps to identify guests' needs in our community and develop services, policies and procedures accordingly.

We will ensure, as far as possible, that guests:

- Are able to access our services in ways that suit them
- Are listened to and have their needs met as far as possible
- Are given help that is relevant to their problem and situation.
- Are treated fairly, with dignity and respect and without discrimination.

Staff and volunteers

RESTART LIVES recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will continually take steps to ensure that:

- We recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates possible
- Employment opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit
- Where appropriate, positive action measures are taken to attract applicants from all sections of society and especially from those underrepresented in the workforce
- All staff are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Selection for all training and career development opportunities will be purely on the basis of merit and organisational priorities. Supervisions and appraisals will be conducted in line with appropriate HR guidelines
- Any recruitment agencies acting for the Charity are aware of the requirement not to discriminate and to act accordingly.

Implementing the policy

Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for implementing this and other policies rests with the Charity's Board of Trustees.

The Board has appointed one of its members to oversee the operation of the policy alongside other policies.

Staff

RESTART LIVES' staff are required to read and understand this policy, to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles and requirements, to encourage the same level of behaviour in colleagues and in volunteers and immediately report any seeming breaches, whenever reasonable to do so, to the CEO.

Under the direction of the CEO, staff are responsible for promoting this policy and ensuring it is understood and complied with across the organisation. The CEO is responsible for dealing with breaches and complaints seriously, speedily, sensitively and confidentially while contributing ideas for the advancement of diversity principles within the Charity.

Complaints

RESTART LIVES treats seriously any concerns and /or complaints under this policy made by staff, volunteers, guests or other third parties and will take appropriate action. The CEO will report all concerns and /or complaints to the Chair of the Board of Trustees who will decide with the CEO how an issue is to be investigated in accordance with the Charity's grievance, complaints or disciplinary procedure. In the event of a complaint, the complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures.

RESTART LIVES does, however, encourage staff and volunteers to resolve misunderstandings and problems informally wherever possible, depending on the circumstances. Whether dealt with informally or formally, it is important for staff and volunteers who may have caused offence to understand that it is no defence to say that they did not intend to do so, or to blame individuals for being over sensitive. It is the impact of the behaviour, rather than the intent, that counts and that should shape the solution found both to the immediate problem and to preventing further problems in the future.

Monitoring

RESTART LIVES will monitor and record equality and diversity information about services, guests, staff and volunteers, including trustees. We will store equal opportunities data as confidential personal data and restrict access to this information. Equal opportunities information will be used exclusively for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring and will have no bearing on opportunities or benefits. At least every other year, we will monitor all elements of:

- Recruitment and selection processes (including profiles of successful and unsuccessful job applicants)
- Promotions and transfers?
- Training
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Take up of benefits (e.g. flexible working requests)
- Profiles of complaints under the grievance and disciplinary procedures

Results of this monitoring will be discussed by the Board of Trustees to identify any issues and, where appropriate, develop action plans.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

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