

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Introduction

At Independent People we know that discrimination happens and people can be prejudiced, and we work hard to make sure no one working with us, receiving our services, or applying for services is discriminated against because of:



Race

Pregnancy or maternity



Sex



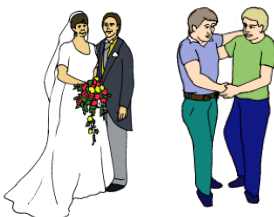
Religion and belief

Ethnic or cultural origins



Disability

Gender Reassignment



Marriage and civil partnership

Sexual orientation



Political or trade union membership

Age (although our support services are only for people aged 16 to 25)

# Criminal records



Independent People tries to make sure no one is discriminated because they have a record with the police. But because we work with vulnerable young people we have to think carefully when someone with a criminal record applies for our services or wants to work for us. We will not let anyone work for us or provide services if we think the risks to other service users or our employees is too high.



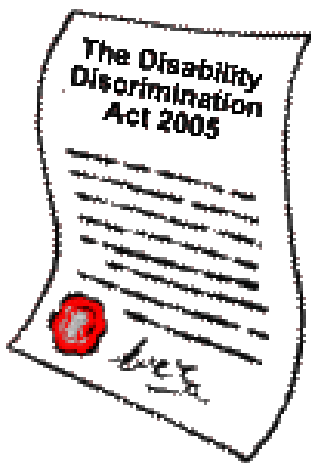
## What is Discrimination?

Treating a person differently because of something that shouldn't stop them from getting fair and equal treatment.



Discrimination is against the law and can be direct or indirect:

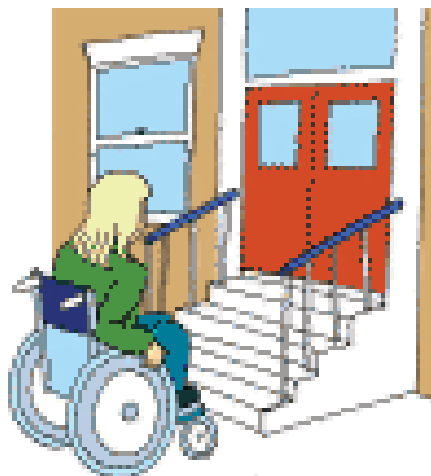
- Direct discrimination is on purpose
- Indirect discrimination is where unfair treatment is not on purpose but happened anyway



## What is Disability ?

Disability happens when a group or an individual doesn't allow for people's impairments and causes them to be left out.

Disability is not caused by an individual's particular impairment, but by the way in which people or rules fails to meet their needs.



# As a service provider we promise we will try to do these things:



We will check applications for housing and support services to make sure that discrimination does not happen.



We will not discriminate against a person applying for or accessing our services because of where the application has come from.



Contractors or providers of services to Independent People who harass service users in any way may have their contracts terminated. They will be removed from the Approved Contractors List.

We will avoid discrimination when developing and delivering services.



We will make sure information about services is published as widely as possible and in such formats as will encourage awareness in all service users and potential service users.



We will review and try different ways to make it easier to access our services.



We will ensure equality when dealing with your complaints, comments and compliments that you will never be victimised for making a complaint.

We will work with other organisations and agencies to give specialist support where needed.



We will make sure that there is a planned approach to supporting victims of any form of abuse, harassment or discrimination .

We will make sure that information is available to service users about cultural and religious organisations and centres.

We will take a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling discrimination and harassment.

## Measuring our progress

As part of our commitment to maintaining and improving performance we will:



Include equalities when we are deciding where to buy our services unless we are not allowed to by law or government guidance.



Every year we review who uses our services by age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and disability status.



Review and report annually on our service delivery internally and externally.

Make sure all reports to our Board identify Equality & Diversity implications.

# Independent People as a Policy Maker

Independent People is concerned that no policy discriminates directly or indirectly against any groups in our community. We will review policies, strategies and plans to make sure they are fair.



We will:

Think about equalities each time we write or change policies and our annual business plan review.



Promote and contribute to improving the awareness of equalities in the communities and strategy groups as part of our strategic role, particularly with regard to the needs of young homeless people.



Use national guidelines and definitions to inform our practices.

Involve service users in review of this policy.

Measure our progress.



As part of our commitment we will report our performance in the following ways:

We will maintain a glossary of terms and definitions informed by national guidelines as part of this policy.

The policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis.

# Independent People as an employer

We will:



Monitor personnel and employment procedures to make sure they are fair.

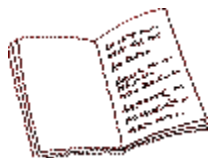


Try to attract a wide range of applicants for posts at all levels in the organisation.

Try to make sure the workplace is free from unfair discrimination and harassment.



Try to provide an accessible environment for people with disabilities.



Offer relevant training and development for employees on a fair and equal basis.



Make sure employees are fully aware of our Equal Opportunity and Anti-discriminatory policy, what it means for them and what they have to do through induction and supervision.

# Measuring our progress



We will produce an Annual Personnel Report for the staff team and our Board that shows the following:

How many of each gender, ethnic group and disability in each department including full and part time employees and Board members.



How many of each gender, ethnic group and disability of applicants for vacancies by post.

How many of each gender, ethnic group and disability of all short listed applicants for vacancies by post.



The number of applicants for jobs by sex and ethnic group.



Formal complaints by employees via the Grievance Procedure.



We will keep records of the following:  
Advertisements for vacancies by date advertised, place advertised and whether the vacancy was advertised internally and externally at the same time.



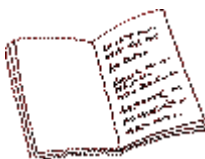
# Telling staff and young people about the policy



All new employees will be given a copy of the Equality and Diversity Policy when they start employment as part of the staff handbook and this will be covered in induction.



Existing employees will have a copy of the policy in their staff handbook and it should be available on all staff computers.



All new service users will have a summary of the policy in the Young People's Handbook and this will be gone through when they start to receive a service. Full copies of the policy will be available on request.



Main referrers will have a copy of this policy in their referral procedures, other referrers can obtain a copy on request.

A copy will be available in all office receptions.

# Monitoring, Review and Evaluation



We will gather information that will help us work out whether the policy works and if any changes need to be made

Who will do what...



Every year:

The Board will monitor take up of service, move on from service and employment. Annual audits will be carried out of the effectiveness of our Equality and Diversity policies.



The Management Team and the Board will also do a thorough review every 3 years to check its performance, and whether it actually does make sure there is equal opportunity and whether we are promoting anti-discriminatory practice.



# Responsibility for the Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discriminatory Practice Policy

All employees and others who work on behalf of Independent People have a duty to carry out the requirements and responsibilities outlined in this policy.

## Special responsibilities include:

### Board Members



Board Members support this policy and will work towards the promotion of equalities in all of Independent People's policies and other activities.



### Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy.



Operations Directors – are responsible for overseeing the implementation of the policy in the day to day delivery of services across the organisation and collation of monitoring information.

### Employees



All employees have a responsibility to implement the policy and work towards the provision of services that meet the goals and objectives of the policy.