



# **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy**

**February 2023**

## **Diversity & inclusion statement**

Individuals with different cultures, perspectives and experiences are at the heart of the way SCA works. We want to recruit, develop, and retain the most talented people, regardless of their background<sup>1</sup> and make best use of their talents. At SCA we are guided by our values in everything we do and recognise that being a diverse and inclusive employer helps us fulfil our responsibility to make a difference for patients.

We seek to develop a work environment where we treat all employees as individuals, fairly and in a consistent way. We work within the spirit and the practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and actively challenging discrimination, should it ever arise. We will remove unnecessary barriers for our employees' seeking opportunities through training and development, promotion, and career planning.

We will continue to support our leaders, staff, and volunteers to demonstrate the principles of diversity and inclusion in their everyday activities, roles, and functions.

Date produced: February 2023
Date of next full review: February 2025

Manager Mrs Bali Rodgers

Trustee: Mrs Ceri Griffiths

Date February 2022

Bizniz point  
Dartford  
Kent  
DA11DZ  
[info@safercommunitiesallaince.org](mailto:info@safercommunitiesallaince.org)

## **Respecting Equality and Diversity within the organisation and fair recruitment procedures**

SCA understands its legal obligations and this policy is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 and all relevant legislations. Further information on The Equality Act 2010 can be found on the Gov.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>.

### **Zero tolerance**

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination

The sole exception to this is where a specific service requires us to implement positive discrimination. This may require us to recruit candidates of one or other sex to safeguard the users or staff of that specific service; for example, a service for very vulnerable young women may require that we recruit only female workers to work with that group, or – conversely – a service for young men displaying harmful sexual behaviour may recruit only male workers to work with that group.

Where this is the case the service model for that service will explicitly set out why recruitment for workers in that service will be focused specifically on one sex over another and this will be reflected in the recruitment process.

To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for everyone and not to discriminate on grounds of the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. These characteristics are:

- age.
- disability.
- gender reassignment.
- marriage and civil partnership.
- pregnancy and maternity.
- race.
- religion or belief.
- sex
- sexual orientation

SCA will also endeavor to work beyond the Equality Act 2010 with additional groups not specified in the act such as part time workers, carers, and ex-offenders, etc.

## **Définitions**

The Equality Act 2010 describes certain forms of discrimination. All staff and volunteers should be aware of these ways of discrimination. They are: -

### **Inclusion and Respect**

Every client and staff member of SCA project should be made to feel equally welcome and included at all SCA's Projects and activities.

Sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behavior are not acceptable. These constitute harassment and have no place in the Association.

### **Direct Discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favorably than others in similar circumstances because of a protected characteristic.

For example: Paul a senior manager turns down Jenny's application for promotion to a supervisor position. Jenny who is a lesbian, learns that Paul did this because he believes the team, she applied to manage are homophobic. Paul thought that Jenny's sexual orientation would prevent her from gaining the team's respect and managing them effectively. This is direct sexual orientation discrimination against Jenny.

### **Perceptive discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

For example: Jim is 45 but looks much younger. Many people assume that he is in his mid 20's. He is not allowed to represent the company at an international meeting because the Managing Director thinks that he is too young. Jim has been discriminated against on the perception of a protected characteristic.

### **Associative discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses any one or more of the protected characteristics.

For example: June works as a project manager and is looking forward to a promised promotion. However, after she tells her boss that her mother, who lives at home, has had a stroke, the promotion is withdrawn. This may be discrimination against June because of her association with her disabled mother.

### **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination can happen when there is a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in the organisation that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Employers can only

justify indirect discrimination if they can show that they acted fairly and reasonably in managing their business (e.g., to achieve a legitimate aim) and they would need to show that they had considered other, less discriminatory alternatives. Like direct discrimination, indirect discrimination is unlawful whether it is intentional or not, unless it can be fully justified.

For example: A small finance company needs its staff to work late on a Friday afternoon to analyse stock prices in the American finance market. The figures arrive late on Friday because of the global time differences. During the winter some staff would like to be released early on Friday afternoon in order to be home before sunset – a requirement of their religion. They propose to make the time up later during the remainder of the week. The company is not able to agree to this request because the American figures are necessary to the business, they need to be worked on immediately and the company is too small to have anyone else able to do the work.

The requirement to work on Friday afternoons is not unlawful indirect discrimination as it meets a legitimate business aim and there is no alternative means available.

### **Failure to make Reasonable adjustments**

The duty to make reasonable adjustments aims to make sure that disabled people have, as far as is reasonable, the same access to everything that is involved in getting and doing a job as a non-disabled person. This may mean changing the way in which employment is structured, the removal of physical barriers and/or providing extra support for a disabled worker or job applicant.

The employer is under a positive and proactive duty to take steps to remove or reduce or prevent the obstacles that face a disabled worker or job applicant.

The employer only must adjust where they are aware – or should reasonably be aware – that someone has a disability.

Many of the adjustments your employer can make will not be particularly expensive, and they are not required to do more than it is reasonable for them to do.

### **Victimisation**

Victimisation is when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

For example: Anne makes a formal complaint against her manager because she feels that she has been discriminated against because of marriage. Although the complaint is resolved through the organisation's grievance procedures, Anne is subsequently ostracised by her colleagues, including her manager. She could claim victimisation.

For example: Lydia is pregnant and works at a call center. The manager knows that Lydia is pregnant but still disciplines her for taking too many toilets breaks as he would for any other member of staff. This is discrimination because of pregnancy and maternity as this characteristic doesn't require the normal comparison of treatment with other employees.

## **Harassment**

The law defines harassment as "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual."

For example: Peter is disabled and is claiming harassment against his line manager after she frequently teased and humiliated him about his disability. Richard shares an office with Peter, and he too is claiming harassment, even though he is not disabled, as the manager's behavior has also created an offensive environment for him.

## **Sexual harassment**

This is unwanted behavior which is of a sexual nature, and which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. A person should not be treated less favorably because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex.

For example: Steve is continually being called gay and other related names by a group of employees at his work. Homophobic comments have been posted on the staff notice board about him by people from this group. Steve was recently pushed to the floor by one member of the group but is too scared to take action. Steve is not gay but heterosexual; furthermore, the group know he isn't gay. This is harassment because of sexual orientation.

## **Whistle blowing**

There may be occasions where staff or volunteers feel that colleagues are not following the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and their behavior or attitudes are questionable. Those making a complaint in good faith will be given a full, fair, and sensitive hearing and may do without fear of subsequent victimisation.

## **Policy Actions**

### **Recruitment of staff**

**SCA** ensures that all recruitment for vacancies is done fairly and that applicants are judged on their aptitude and ability alone. The recruitment process is set out in the SCA Safeguarding policy but includes:

- Advertising which includes a statement showing that SCA is a fair and inclusive employer
- An application pack including a job description, a person specification and an application form
- Applications are then shortlisted using a marking scheme by at least two people

- At interview candidates are interviewed by at least two people and scored using a marking scheme
- The successful candidate will then be asked if there are any adjustments reasonable needed to make the workplace more accessible or to be considered to help them do their work.

### **Induction of staff and volunteers**

As part of the induction process staff and volunteers will be required to sign to uphold the policy.

The principles set out in this policy will also be reflected in all contracts and project plans. We will expect anyone we sub-contract or with whom we work in partnership to work in line with this policy or to demonstrate that they have their own appropriate equality policy and practices in place.

It is a condition of employment that all employees respect and act in accordance with this policy. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary procedures being instigated which could lead to dismissal.

All employees will be required to read this policy on joining the organisation.

### **SCA clients**

SCA projects are open to all and SCA will do all it reasonably can to accommodate the individual needs of any young people accessing its projects or activities or adults accessing training.

### **Training**

**SCA** will ensure that all staff, volunteers, and trustees have regular training in equality and diversity and are aware of how their actions and words can affect those around them. Training needs of staff and volunteers are discussed at supervision meetings and an appropriate action plan will be drawn up. This will be the responsibility of the manager who may delegate this to another appropriate employee. Equality, Diversity, and inclusion will be a regular item on the Directors meeting agenda.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all areas of Safer Communities alliance projects and to all staff, by which term we mean all employees, volunteers – including trustees -, seconded staff, agency staff, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is subcontracted to undertake specific duties. Wherever this policy refers to staff or employees it includes everyone mentioned here unless specifically stated otherwise.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- **All staff and volunteers** are responsible for familiarising themselves and acting in accordance with this policy. Employees should inform their manager Bali Rodgers or another trustee Ceri Griffiths if they know or suspect that discrimination or harassment is occurring.

### **Pregnancy, Maternity and Paternity.**

In employment SCA will endeavor to provide time off for prenatal & antenatal care appointments. Employees are entitled to paid time off to keep appointments for antenatal care made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife, or registered health visitor.

Antenatal care is not restricted to medical examinations. For example, it could also include relaxation classes and parent craft classes if necessary.

SCA will uphold all paternity rights for its employees.

### **Positive images**

SCA will always endeavor to portray positive images and role models in their publications and website which do not discriminate against anyone. Images will be representative of the area of Kent and Medway in which we work.

### **Impact assesment**

As a charity we must carry out equality impact assessments on all new policies, procedures, projects, and services, to prevent unfair discrimination.

The equality impact assessment focuses on 9 areas:

- age
- disability
- faith
- sex
- sex reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- sexual orientation.

An equality impact assessment should be used to anticipate and identify the impacts of new policies, procedures, projects, or services on these areas.

Managers should then make sure that any potential negative consequences are removed or balanced out by either changing the policy, procedure, project, or service or introducing other measures alongside it.

## **Complaints**

Please see attached complaints policy

## **Active monitoring and review**

To ensure that this policy and the procedures relating to it remain effective this policy will be reviewed annually

## ***Related policies and procedures***

The following policies and procedures may need to be consulted in conjunction with this policy as applicable:

- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Conduct Code
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Complaints Policy (Making a Complaint)
- Procurement Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy<sup>1</sup>