

<b>Policy</b>	
<b>Policy Number:</b>	003
<b>Policy Title:</b>	Equality and Human Rights
<b>Scope of this Document:</b>	All Staff (including employees and volunteers)
<b>Recommending Committee:</b>	Quality and Safety Committee
<b>Approving Committee:</b>	First Person Project Board of Directors
<b>Date Ratified:</b>	01/10/2021
<b>Review Period:</b>	2 Years
<b>Version number:</b>	1.0
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<b>Published by:</b>	First Person Project CIC  <a href="https://www.firstpersonprojectcic.co.uk/">https://www.firstpersonprojectcic.co.uk/</a>

<b>Version Control:</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Reason for Change</b>	<b>Change Author</b>	<b>Change Date</b>
1	Original Policy	MC	01/10//21

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## **1. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE**

**1.1** Our vision is to be a champion and leader in promoting diversity, managing diversity and challenging discrimination. Diversity implies that we acknowledge people's differences whether they are visible or non-visible and attempt to promote the differences in a positive way. We deliver our services via a workforce that is made up of many talented individuals with a large diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, styles and characteristics. This policy provides a framework in which equality and human rights can be delivered, it sets out individual and collective responsibilities, explains the legal framework and defines the complaint procedure.

## **2. OUTCOME FOCUSED AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

**2.1** This document provides the framework from which all strategy, policy and procedure is developed. It sets the standards to enable the Organisation to meet its duties in relation to these specific areas described in the legal framework including:

**2.2** Enhance and promote high quality services which are responsive to different communities and individual's needs;

**2.3** To ensure the Organisational commitment to its responsibilities in relation to the Human Rights Act (1998) and the development of human rights based approach enabling the protection of individuals Human Rights;

**2.4** Assist in creating a productive, safe and prejudice-free work environment which treats all people fairly and with respect;

**2.5** Demonstrate and promote a commitment to equality issues to both the community and our colleagues by challenging discrimination

**2.6** Promote diversity in all aspects of Organisational business and ensure that people's views are listened to and responded

**2.7** Improve the motivation, performance, retention, skills and morale of the workforce.

**2.8** Demonstrate our commitment to best practice in employment and service delivery and working towards being a model employer.

**2.9** Ensure all staff are made fully aware of this policy and without exception must adhere to its requirements.

**2.10** Ensure that any person who feels that they have experienced bullying, discrimination, harassment, or victimisation whilst at work has the right to pursue their complaint through internal policies and procedures.

**2.11** Promote Equality, Diversity and human rights as the responsibility of everyone.

### **3. SCOPE**

3.1 This policy applies to all colleagues, service users, carers, visitors and contractors.

### **4. DEFINITIONS**

#### **4.1 Protected Characteristic:**

Age, Disability, Religion or Belief, Race and Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, Gender, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Transgender

#### **Direct Discrimination:**

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of their age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment or marriage or civil partnership (known as protected characteristics)

#### **Indirect Discrimination:**

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

### **5. DUTIES**

**5.1** The Board of Directors will oversee the implementation of all aspects of the national and local equality frameworks for service and employment. Specifically, the aim is to provide strategic leadership to drive equality, diversity and human rights across the organisation for to improve services and the workforce. Equality and Diversity forms a part of the standard agenda for Board meetings.

**5.2** The Quality and Safety Committee is a part of the governance structure of the Organisation which has the responsibility to ensure that safeguarding of adult's arrangements are managed appropriately across the organisation. The Quality and Safety Committee ensures that the policy is appropriate and receives assurances in relation to compliance with the requirements of this policy through receipt of reports and audit activity.

**5.3** The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Organisation complies with Equality and Human Rights legislation. This includes:

- Ensuring that staff are appropriately trained and updated in matters of equality & human rights.
- Ensuring that all staff have access to the Policy and procedures and that they are aware of their responsibilities.
- Ensuring that staff views on equality and diversity in the organisation are captured in the annual staff survey and reported to the Board of Directors.
- Directing the implementation of this Policy and other supporting HR policies and procedures.

**5.4** Service and Project Management staff are directly responsible for the effective implementation of this Policy and procedures at operational level. They should familiarize themselves with the Policy and procedures and ensure that their staff are aware of how they can access them. They are responsible for ensuring all staff participate in mandatory training on equality and diversity and refresh this training every three years.

**5.5** Board of Directors will ensure that all managers are accountable for the promotion and implementation of this Policy. The Board will monitor progress on equality, diversity and Human Rights issues and initiatives on a regular basis, and will ensure the implementation of any relevant actions points and plans concerning equality, diversity and Human Rights diversity issues.

**5.6** All staff have a responsibility for ensuring that they act within the spirit of the Policy and procedures and participate in equality and diversity training every three years.

**5.7** Failure to comply with the Equality & Human Rights Policy and procedures will lead to disciplinary action which applies equally across all staff groups.

**5.8** Where the Organisation uses external providers of services they will be required to ensure that the equality and human rights standards identified in this Policy are met.

## **6 Process**

### **6.1 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **6.2 Equality Act:**

In 2010 equalities legislation was significantly updated with the passing of the Equality Act. The Equality Act has two aims, which are to harmonise and consolidate the different strands of discrimination law (over 100 pieces of separate legislation) into one single act. Therefore, simplifying and strengthening the law to support progress on equality.

There are nine protected characteristics covered by the legislation including:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Faith
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Gender Reassignment

**6.3** The Equality Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against people who share a protected characteristic and applies to services and public functions, premises, work and education.

#### **6.4 Organisational Equality Duties**

First Person Project CIC is committed to the avoidance of discriminatory practices and will integrate equality into their core business in the following ways:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is unlawful under the Equality Act
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations
- Set specific, measurable equality objectives.
- Analyse the effect of our policies and practices on equality and consider how they further the equality aims.

- Publish sufficient information to demonstrate we have complied with the general equality duty on an annual basis.

## **6.5 The Human Rights Act:**

The Human Rights Act 1998 came into force in the UK in October 2000. It is based on the European Convention for Human Rights which mean that individuals can take human rights cases to domestic courts. They no longer have to go to Strasbourg to argue their case in the European Court of Human Rights.

All public authorities and anyone carrying out public functions must comply with the Human Rights Act.

The Act sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that individuals in the UK have access to. They include:

- Right to Life
- Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment
- Right to liberty and security
- Freedom from slavery and forced labour
- Right to a fair trial
- No punishment without law
- Respect for your private and family life, home and correspondence
- Freedom of thought, belief and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of assembly and association
- Right to marry and start a family
- Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms
- Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property
- Right to education
- Right to participate in free elections

**6.6** All staff, service users, families and members of the public can raise a concern or complaint about potential discrimination via First Person Project's Complaints Policy.

**6.7** The CQC are the independent regulator of health and social care in England. The CQC regulate care provided by the NHS, local authorities, private companies and voluntary organisations. The Commission's aim is to make sure better care is provided for everyone



in hospitals, care homes and people's own homes. The Commission also seek to protect the interests of people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

## **7. Consultation**

7.1 First Person Project CIC have embedded a Quality and Safety Committee within the organisation.

## **8. Training and Support**

8.1 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Training is mandatory for all colleagues of First Person Project CIC.

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

9.1 The Quality and Safety Committee is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and will provide an annual report detailing compliance to the Board.

9.2 The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored via:

- Service User Feedback
- Service User Complaints and Concerns
- Feedback from partners and affiliates.
- Staff Feedback via supervision, annual staff survey and staff networks