

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY SOUNDLY FOSTERING

We at Soundly Fostering, are unequivocal our commitment to equal opportunities. We hold the expectation that non-discriminatory practice is at the heart of everything that we do, in our work, interaction and practice. We are mindful of conscious and unconscious bias and will assist each other in correcting any incidents of these, as well as developing understanding through training and opportunities for reflection. Fair treatment and equal opportunities will be continuously monitored and improved upon.

Soundly Fostering aims to be an equal opportunities employer and we are determined to ensure that no applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, disability, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status, or race, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

This policy should be used alongside our equality and diversity, safer recruitment of staff, safer recruitment of foster carers, anti-bullying and complaints policies.

Scope of this chapter:

The description of what 'Equal Opportunities' means in practice for workers and staff, protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 your rights as a worker and our commitment to equal opportunities in recruitment, pay, training, promotion and benefits.

Legislation:

Equality Act 2010

The Human Rights Act 1998

Employment Rights Act 1996

National Minimum Wage Act 1998

Employment Relations Act 1999

The Maternity and Parental Leave Etc. Regulations 1999

Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000

Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006

Agency Workers Regulations 2010

Guidance:

The Human Rights Commission.

Know your rights

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/know-your-rights>

Equality Act 2010 -Equal Pay: Statutory Code of Practice

What does 'Equal Opportunities' mean for staff and workers

All workers within an organisation, should be entitled to and have access to all of the organisation's facilities at every stage of employment, including the pre-employment phase.

This means every individual should have:

- An equal chance to apply and be selected for posts pre-employment
- An equal chance to be trained and promoted while employed with the organisation
- An equal chance to have their employment terminated equally and fairly

Denying any employee or prospective employee their right to equal opportunity in the workplace is tantamount to discrimination, which is considered unlawful under the Equality Act 2010

Protected characteristics

The Equality Act has specified 9 areas that are termed in the legislation as protected characteristics. These include (in no particular order):

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Disability
5. Pregnancy
6. Marital status
7. Sexual orientation.
8. Gender reassignment
9. Religious background

Your 'Rights'

As a worker, you have a right to:

- Fair practices and behaviour in the workplace
- Fair allocations of workloads
- Equal access to benefits and conditions
- A workplace that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying at work.
- Competitive merit-based selection processes for recruitment and promotion

Processes for complaints and grievances are fair and are detailed in our complaints policy.

Significant commitments to Equality and Opportunity

Soundly Fostering will ensure that:

- All similarly qualified employees have equal access and opportunity to all training and advancement facilities regardless of sex, gender, age or disability.

- As an Agency, we would like all of our employee's to develop their skills. We are clear that individuals will not be overlooked for training or promotion, because of any protected characteristics.
- Soundly Fostering will make reasonable adjustments in the workplace to accommodate physically challenged employees.
- Soundly Fostering will make reasonable adjustments in respect of neurodiversity, mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Employee and associated contractors will receive fair remuneration for work carried out.
- Employee's will not be paid any more or less than any of their colleagues, who are equally qualified, equally experienced and performing the same role.
- We will endeavour to advertise new roles externally as well as internally, in order for anyone who meets the qualifying criteria to have the opportunity to apply as outlined in our recruitment of staff and equality and diversity policies.
- Employee's are never dismissed solely because of a personal characteristic.
- Soundly Fostering celebrates diversity and commits to anti-racism.
- Soundly Fostering will employ the same criterion regarding additional time off during religious holidays to employees from all religions.