

## **EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

### **1. Purpose**

This purpose of this policy is to:

- (i) Give guidance to all staff (including those that are self-employed or volunteers) and members, based on current legislation.
- (ii) Give guidance on equality, fairness and respect for all those who are employed, self-employed, that volunteer with International Rugby League and to all of our members and the personnel that make them function.
- (iii) Promote and maintain equality of opportunity, freedom from discrimination or harassment and to ensure that all our staff are aware that they must not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of a protected characteristic (see section 2).

### **2. INTRODUCTION**

IRL is committed to encouraging equality and diversity across the organisation and supports an environment which is free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. IRL is an equal opportunities employer, therefore in all areas of work and responsibility IRL recognises the need for, and supports, equal opportunity and diversity. The Equality Act 2010 replaced all of the separate legislation that existed to protect people who have a protected characteristic. It is illegal to discriminate or harass on the basis of nine protected characteristics:

- a) Age;
- b) Sex;
- c) Sexual Orientation;
- d) Gender Reassignment;
- e) Marriage or Civil Partnership;
- f) Pregnancy or Maternity;
- g) Race;
- h) Religion or Belief;
- i) Disability.

The Equality Act 2010 provides the following definitions:

- a) Direct discrimination – someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic (see above).
- b) Discrimination by association – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a particular protected characteristic.
- c) Discrimination by perception - direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic.
- d) Indirect discrimination – can occur when there is a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular protected characteristic.
- e) Harassment – employees can now complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it not directed at them.
- f) Harassment by a third party – employers are potentially liable for harassment of their staff by people they don't employ.
- g) Victimisation – someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under the act.

IRL is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our workforce and we are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.





### **3. POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

#### **3.1 The organisation**

As an employer and contractor of paid staff, and an organisation that has Board members, volunteers, and members, IRL will not discriminate or treat any individual less favourably on the grounds of protected characteristics. It values diversity and welcomes interest from all sections of the community and it is committed to building and reinforcing a culture where people value each other with dignity and respect. IRL is committed to ensuring that all people have equal access to the services and opportunities that it provides.

IRL aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunities to enter employment or to become Board Members, volunteers or active participants in all rugby league activities. In doing so, it will fully consider making reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that persons with a disability are not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. In addition, if a staff member acquires or develops a disabled characteristic or condition, every effort will be made through reasonable adjustment, retraining or redeployment to enable them to remain in the service of IRL.

Entry to employment or a change of post for paid staff, or the equivalent for Board Members and volunteers within IRL will be determined by personal merit and the ability to meet the requirements of the job description or aims and purposes of the organisation.

#### **3.2 Stakeholders**

IRL values the views of all and it aims to actively involve, not just consult, on the development, implementation and monitoring of its equity and diversity policy.

The ways we currently involve people are:

- a) Surveys for all users to evaluate current provision;
- b) Staff consultation activities, inviting feedback from all staff and volunteers;
- c) Regular one to ones;
- d) Exit interview questionnaires.

#### **3.3 Responsibilities**

##### **3.3.1 All staff**

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to ensure that that they adhere to and uphold the principles and the spirit of the equity and diversity policy. Managers and other members of staff also have additional responsibilities.

All staff must ensure that:

- a) They are aware of IRL's statutory responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010;
- b) The equity and diversity policy is followed;
- c) They promote equality and ensure that they do not discriminate against anyone;
- d) They are able to recognise, challenge and report all discrimination incidents, whether wittingly or unwittingly, by other members of staff, outside contractors or members;
- e) They keep up to date with the law on equalities and take up training and development opportunities in this area;
- f) Discrimination or harassment will be actively challenged;
- g) They understand that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in





the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

### **3.3.2 Managers**

It is the responsibility of Managers to:

- a) Ensure that all groups have equal opportunities for staff development through training and promotion
- b) Follow the principles of the Equity and diversity policy if they are involved in interviewing
- c) They are aware of equality issues and recognise forms of discriminatory behaviour. Equality issues will be addressed through training provision.

### **3.3.3 The CEO**

The CEO will ensure that:

- a) IRL complies with current legislation and meets its specific and general duties;
- b) They give a consistent and high-profile lead on equality issues;
- c) They create a positive and inclusive ethos by promoting the equity and diversity policy both inside and outside the organisation;
- d) All aspects of the equity and diversity policy is applied to all of its activities.

### **3.3.4 The Board**

The Board will ensure that they:

- a) Are aware of their statutory responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010;
- b) Ensure IRL strategy includes a commitment to equality;
- c) Approve the equity and diversity policy.

### **3.3.5 Members**

All service users will ensure that they:

- a) Adhere to IRL's equity and diversity policy, where it does not conflict with their own recognised policy or national legislation;
- b) Do not discriminate against anyone;
- c) They are able to recognise, challenge and report discriminatory incidents

## **3.4 Breach of policy**

IRL will provide a supportive environment for staff and members who make claims of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All allegations or complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination will be treated seriously and investigated in line with our operational rules.

## **3.5 Policy Review**

The organisation is committed to reviewing policies on a biennial basis or sooner if required, for example if there is a change in legislation.

**January 2020**

