EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Festival Angels Mission Statement:

Who: Volunteers drawn chiefly from the breadth of the Christian Church, working alongside and without prejudice, with those of any or no faith regardless of age, gender, disability, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

What: Seek to celebrate and promote a Christian presence by offering an exemplary service of care for the practical, emotional and spiritual needs of festival goers, staff and other volunteers. Provide safe spaces for others to share, explore and pray and respond to questions which may present an opportunity to share something of our own faith journeys as they explore theirs.

Why: Following the example of Christ who cared and accepted without judgement, and responded to the diverse physical, practical and spiritual needs of all those before him.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Introduction

Festival Angels is committed to ensuring all Volunteers – whether temporary or permanent, full time or part-time, and regardless of race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, sexual orientation or age (protected characteristics for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010) or any other unlawful reason – are treated fairly and are offered access to opportunities on an equitable basis. The Organisation is committed to avoiding unlawful discrimination and will not tolerate harassment, victimisation or discrimination. The Festival Angels Mission Statement is laid out on page 2.

The remit of this policy extends to – but is not limited to – recruitment, training, rewards, benefits, promotion and development.

This policy sits alongside and is complemented by the Grievance Policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Volunteers.

This policy does not form part of your contract and is therefore non-contractual except where it is expressly stated or where statute is in place to imply otherwise.

3. The Organisation's responsibilities

Festival Angels will:

- provide equal opportunity training to all Volunteers who are likely to be involved in recruitment, promotions or pay discussions or involved in other decisions where equal opportunity issues are likely to arise
- make available to all Volunteers, and others engaged in work at the Organisation, training to help them to understand their rights and obligations under the Grievance Policy and what they can do to create a respectful working environment, free of bullying and harassment
- provide additional coaching to enable line managers to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment
- make available to all Volunteers, training to ensure awareness of how to avoid discrimination
- treat all complaints made under this policy seriously, and in the strictest confidence. We will work with the complainant to resolve the matter (we will not treat you any differently if you raise a grievance, even if the outcome does not uphold your complaint unless your complaint was untrue or made in bad faith)
- support you (unless this becomes inappropriate) if you are accused of breaching the policy but have followed all correct processes and undergone appropriate training.

4. Expectations of Volunteers

You must:

- make sure that you attend and apply the relevant training for your role, e.g. if you will be, or are, involved in recruitment you must attend recruitment skills training which covers this policy
- try to resolve any issues informally; if this is not possible, then you should put your complaint in writing and follow the procedure set out in the Grievance policy
- keep the detail of any complaint confidential

5. The Policy

The Organisation will strive to avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment – including advertising, recruitment, training, promotion, pay, benefits and reward – by dismissing or subjecting a person to other detriments.

All the positions we advertise will seek qualified candidates who possess the necessary skills for that role. We will assess candidates for employment or promotion objectively against the requirements of the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made for disabled candidates.

We will make all attempts to avoid any potential for indirect discrimination in employment practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be performed, and the place where the work is carried out when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices. We will refuse such requests only if there are good reasons related to the needs of the business. And we will try to make reasonable adjustments to standard working practices to overcome barriers created by any disability.

The Organisation's long-term aim is that the composition of our workforce should reflect that of the community. Timetabled targets will be set for groups in the community that are identified as being underrepresented in the workforce. Where necessary, special steps, as permitted by law, will be taken to help disadvantaged and/or underrepresented groups to compete for jobs on a genuine basis of equality.

6. Selection and recruitment

Recruitment and employment decisions will be made based on fair and objective criteria. Our selection procedures are reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are appropriate for achieving our objectives and for avoiding unlawful discrimination.

Selection criteria (job description and employee specification) will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.

Wherever possible, more than one person must be involved in the selection interview and recruitment process, and all should have received training in equal opportunities.

Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies must be recorded.

7. Positive action - training, promotion and conditions of service

Underrepresented groups will be encouraged to apply for training and employment opportunities with the Organisation. Wherever possible, special training will be provided for such groups to prepare them to compete on genuinely equal terms for jobs and promotion. However, actual recruitment to all jobs will be strictly on merit.

Wherever necessary, use will be made of lawful exemptions to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups.

Wherever possible, efforts will be made to identify and remove unnecessary/unjustifiable barriers. We will also provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged and/or underrepresented groups.

8. Personnel Records

To ensure the effective operation of the equal opportunity policy (and for no other purpose) a record will be kept of all Volunteers' gender, age, racial origins and disability.

Where necessary, Volunteers will be able to check/correct their own record of these details. Otherwise, access to this information will be strictly restricted.

Such records will be analysed regularly and appropriate follow-up action taken.

9. Complaints covered by this policy

The procedure within this policy should be used for complaints relating to discrimination, unequal treatment or lack of access to opportunities about all aspects of employment because of a 'protected characteristic'.

- Race: including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins
- Sex or gender reassignment
- Marital status or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Disability of any kind
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Trade union membership.

10. Types of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination
occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in comparable circumstances because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see "perceived discrimination" below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see "associative discrimination"). An example would be a manager refusing to employ a woman because she was pregnant.

Indirect discrimination
Occurs when a procedure or Organisation unjustifiably places a group of Volunteers at a disadvantage because of a protected characteristic. An example of indirect sex discrimination could be requiring everyone to work full time unless there is a good reason, unrelated to sex, why the particular job has to be done on a full-time basis. (This is because requiring everyone to work full-time would normally adversely affect a higher proportion of women than men).

Associative discrimination
This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic. An example could be an employee who is discriminated against because of action she needs to take to care for a disabled relative.

Perceived discrimination
This is direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments
This occurs when working arrangements disadvantage an individual because of a disability and reasonable adjustments are not made to overcome the disadvantage.

11. Legal aspects

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment because of race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, sexual orientation or age (protected characteristics for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010).

It is unlawful to treat someone less favourably because of disability or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to or in employment caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes removing, adapting or altering physical features if these features make it impossible or unreasonable difficult for disabled people to make use of services. It could also include changes to a job role or working hours to accommodate a disabled employee.

It is unlawful to victimise someone because they have alleged unlawful discrimination, instigated an investigation under this policy, issued discrimination proceedings, or supported someone else who has made a complaint or given evidence about a complaint or proceedings.

Discrimination after someone has left the organisation may also be unlawful, e.g. by refusing to provide a factual reference.

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in the provision of goods and services on the grounds mentioned above.

The Organisation can be held liable for acts of unlawful discrimination. This liability can also be aimed personally at Volunteers. In addition, Volunteers who commit serious acts of harassment could be charged with a criminal offence.

12. Training

The Organisation will provide training in equal opportunities to those involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

We will provide training to all existing and new Volunteers and others engaged in work at the Organisation to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under this policy.

The Organisation will support Line Managers who need to deal with complaints raised under this procedure.

13. Consequences of breaching this policy

Acts of discrimination against Volunteers, suppliers, contractors or consultants are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Organisation's Disciplinary Procedure. Discrimination may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

14. Summary of the procedure

We aim to resolve any complaints as quickly as possible. All complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. The Grievance Procedure is the mechanism to be used for complaining about any acts of discrimination.

15. Frequently asked questions

Am I protected if I make a complaint, act as a witness or accompany a complainant to a hearing?
Yes. Any acts of retaliation or intimidation against an employee will be treated as a disciplinary offence. Having said this, an employee who maliciously makes an unfounded complaint could be subject to disciplinary action.

Where can I get further support?
Speak to your Line Manager.

What will happen if a formal complaint about a person is upheld?
Where a formal investigation has been conducted and where it has been reasonably concluded that some form of discrimination may have taken place, those responsible will be subject to our standard Disciplinary Procedure. Action will not usually be initiated without the agreement of the employee raising the complaint. Still, there are some circumstances where the Organisation may need to pursue the matter formally without the employee's agreement. For example, if other people could be at risk if no action is taken.

The outcome of the Disciplinary Procedure will depend upon the circumstances. Serious acts of discrimination will be regarded as gross misconduct and may lead to dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

What should I do if I have a complaint about a customer, supplier or other people not employed by the Organisation?
Volunteers should report any bullying or harassment by customers, clients, contractors, suppliers, consultants, visitors or others to their Line Manager who will take appropriate action by initiating steps under the Grievance Policy.

What should I do if I have any special requirements relating to equal opportunities?
We understand that people's needs at work are different and that some Volunteers may have special requirements. For example, Volunteers of a particular religion may need somewhere quiet to pray during their lunch break, need to take a holiday on a specific day for a religious event, or need somewhere to store specially prepared foods.

Alternatively, you may have a disability and may feel that you need to have changes made to your workplace to help you do your job.

We will accommodate your requirements where it is possible and practical, but we cannot do so unless you let us know. Where you need particular time off or are requesting a temporary change to your working hours, your Line Manager is more likely to be able to accommodate this if you let them know well in advance.

If you have any special requirements, you should discuss these with your Line Manager. They will seek advice. If you feel unable to discuss your request with your Line Manager, you can raise it directly with a Director.

What should I do if I have a complaint not covered by this procedure?
Complaints about harassment and bullying should be raised under the procedure in our Grievance Policy.

You should raise general work concerns such as complaints about your work, working conditions, pay and benefits, working hours and working relationships in line with our Grievance Procedure.

You should use our Whistleblowing Policy to report any suspected malpractice within the Organisation.

16. Interactions with third parties, customers, suppliers, consultants and contractors

The remit of this policy extends to third parties, customers, clients, suppliers, consultants and contractors. Any employee found to be in breach of the policy in their dealings with a third party will be subject to the Organisation's Disciplinary Procedure.

We will not discriminate unlawfully against any third parties with whom we have contact.

Likewise, any third parties using the Organisation's premises and working on behalf of the Organisation will be required to comply with the terms of this policy.