




Standard Policy

Ref: POL/HH/HR/014/06

**Equal Opportunities**

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<b>Version Number: 06</b>
<b>Approved</b> 
<b>Summary of Significant Changes</b> <b>None</b>

This policy applies to all service users, employees and potential employees of Haven House together with anyone else working for Haven House including, agency workers, contractors, consultants, suppliers, volunteers and supporters.

**Statement of Policy**

Haven House is committed to equal opportunities in employment and service delivery. The policies and practices of the organisation aim to promote an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination and values the diversity of all people. At the heart of our policy, we seek to treat people fairly and with dignity and respect.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Diversity policy.



## Policy Statement

Haven House is committed to equal opportunities in employment and service delivery. The policies and practices of the organisation aim to promote an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and values the diversity of all people. At the heart of our policy, we seek to treat people equally, fairly and with dignity and respect.

Haven House will take every reasonable and practical step to ensure that no person working for the organisation, all job applicants, former employees or any service user using the premises or services will receive less favourable treatment (direct discrimination) or will be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions that cannot be shown to be justifiable (indirect discrimination) because of; are perceived to be; or, are associated to any of any of the following:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil partnership
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
- Religion/belief or non-belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economic status
- Trade Union membership or non-membership

We will take proactive steps to ensure that the policy is known to all employees, potential employees and organisations that we work with. We will also ensure that equal opportunity is embedded in all our policies, procedures, day to day practices and external relationships.



## Scope

This policy applies to all service users, employees and potential employees of Haven House together with anyone else working for Haven House including, agency workers, contractors, consultants, suppliers and volunteers.

## Key Principles – Legal Framework

This policy has been developed and will be implemented within the framework of both relevant UK and European legislation and the related codes of practice.

## Implementing Equal Opportunities

### 1) Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

*Aim: Encourage the highest quality candidates from all backgrounds to apply and ensure equal and fair treatment throughout the recruitment process.*

Haven House will strive to ensure that:

- Through recruitment and promotion, our workforce better represents the community we serve
- All posts including secondment and promotion opportunities are advertised widely in order to provide an equal opportunity for all people interested to apply unless a restructuring, reorganisation or redeployment situation exists when advertising will not apply
- All advertisements reflect the job description and person specification and do not use words or phrases which indicate bias (unless there is an occupational requirement to do so)
- The statement “Haven House is committed to equal opportunities” is included in all recruitment advertisements and all job applicants are given a copy of the Equal Opportunities policy
- All job applicants who report a disability and who meet the minimum employee specification will be guaranteed an interview. All such candidates will then be considered on their merit and abilities
- We will identify and where appropriate ask candidates whether reasonable adjustments are required prior to the interview and take this into consideration when arranging the interview
- All employees are recruited and promoted on the basis of ability, objective and measurable job-related criteria that is consistently applied to all candidates
- All staff involved in recruitment and selection have had appropriate training in line with Haven House’s safer recruitment procedure in accordance with equal opportunities
- Selection criteria and reasons for the selection or rejection of individual candidates are recorded



## Learning and Development

*Aim: All employees are encouraged to reach their full potential through appropriate fair access to learning, development and career progression opportunities*

Haven House will strive to ensure:

- Ensure all new employees are given and made aware of the organisation's Equal Opportunities Policy during the induction process.
- Relevant equal opportunities elements are included in learning opportunities where appropriate and form an integral part of recruitment and selection training
- All employees are encouraged to invest in their development and consider opportunities to develop their competencies and skills, taking into account a broad range of learning and development options in the organisation.
- Learning opportunities for employees are appropriate and accessible, in line with organisation and job-related needs
- Learning and development opportunities for relevant employees are advertised widely
- Learning and development programmes, where possible, are planned with the needs of part time staff considered as well as those of full- time staff
- Learning and development programmes are designed to support this policy and take into account the different preferred learning styles of different groups of employees

## Terms and Conditions

*Aim: All policies covering pay, benefits, grades and terms and conditions are formulated and implemented with regard to equal opportunity.*

Haven House will strive to ensure:

- Terms and conditions are non-discriminatory and are applied fairly and consistently to all staff
- The use of flexible working arrangements is promoted wherever possible, to try to balance individual staff circumstances with organisation or operational requirements
- Accesses to work requirements (reasonable adjustments) for those with disabilities are considered in a fair and open manner
- The appropriate use and application of the organisation's policy for 'Special Leave' is promoted to assist staff who may require time off work for personal or domestic reasons; to ensure that Haven House meets its statutory obligations

## **Discipline and Grievance**

*Aim: A working environment that is inclusive and where no form of discrimination is tolerated.*

Haven House will strive to ensure:

- Discrimination, harassment or victimisation of employees or service users are treated as disciplinary offences and dealt with under the grievance procedure.
- This will also apply to employees who attempt to induce other employees to discriminate, harass or victimise
- All employees have the right to raise any complaint relating to equal opportunities through Haven House's grievance procedure. Complaints of discrimination, victimisation or harassment are dealt with sensitively and seriously by managers, are investigated and dealt with in a fair and transparent manner
- Prompt action is taken to investigate any employee grievance concerning discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- Support is provided to any employee who is the victim of harassment or bullying in the course of their employment
- Disciplinary rules and standards are applied consistently to all employees within Haven House's employment

## **Service Delivery**

*Aim: Services are accessible to all, taking into account different needs of all members of the community.*

Haven House will strive to ensure:

- Ensure visitors to our premises experience a welcoming and positive welcome from staff who are comfortable with different abilities and cultures.
- Our contracts and agreements give due regard to equality and operate an equal opportunities policy in accordance with our policy
- We work with partners including statutory bodies, voluntary and community groups to prevent and eliminate discrimination

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

*Aim: Regular monitoring and review so that the effectiveness of this policy can be measured and information used to support informed decision making.*

Haven House will strive to ensure:

- All policies and procedures which impact on employees and service users are regularly analysed for equality to ensure they are free from discrimination.
- Confidential records of employees and applicants are maintained in order to monitor the progress of equality of opportunity within Haven House
- Continuous review of our Equal Opportunities policy to comply with changes in legislation



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Senior Management Team (SMT)**

The SMT has overall responsibility for organisation's Equal Opportunities Policy and will ensure that it is properly implemented, promoted, monitored and reviewed where necessary. In particular, they will be accountable for:

- Delivering the policy through business planning and performance management arrangements
- Ensuring that everyone in the organisation understands what the policy means for them and provide practical learning and positive support to help managers meet their obligations in turning policy into practice
- Ensuring the Equal Opportunities policy is implemented and adequately monitored
- Ensuring the policy is well publicised and communicated to all staff and organisations that have dealings with Haven House

### **Managers**

It is the responsibility of all managers to supervisors to:

- Ensure that strategies, policies and projects within their area of responsibility are designed giving due regard to this policy
- Be proactive in promoting diversity and equal opportunities and in preventing and eliminating all forms of discrimination
- Familiarise themselves with the procedures in all equal opportunities documentation
- Ensure that they are not instructing or putting pressure on employees to act in a discriminatory manner
- Bring the details of the policy and procedure documents to the attention of all staff
- Treat complaints of discrimination, victimisation or harassment sensitively and seriously
- Ensure that information on equal opportunities is incorporated in all local induction processes for new or temporary staff and is supported by ongoing training

### **All Employees**

All employees have a responsibility to ensure that there is no discrimination and accept personal responsibility for the practical application of the Equal Opportunities Policy. In particular every employee is required to:

- Promote equal opportunities and treat everyone with fairness, equity, dignity and respect
- Recognise and value the diversity of staff and service users, taking into account diverse needs when providing services
- Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Ensure their behaviour and/or actions do not amount to discrimination or harassment in any way



- Report any discriminatory, bullying or harassment acts or practices.
- Not induce or attempt to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination or harassment
- Not victimise anyone as a result of them having reported or provided evidence of discrimination or harassment

### **Breaches**

- Haven House is opposed to all forms of discrimination and will treat any breaches of this seriously. Breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be investigated and may be regarded as gross misconduct under Haven House's Disciplinary Policy
- Employees and or service users or supporters who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the grievance procedures and or complaints procedures
- Significant breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy can also be raised through the Whistle Blowing Policy
- All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially and the council will aim to ensure that no employee is victimised as a result of exercising their right to raise a complaint or for supporting someone who has raised a complaint under the Equal Opportunities Policy

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in line with future changes in legislation.

This policy should be cross reference with the following policies;

- Staff Handbook
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Diversity Policy

Implementation Date: August 2006

Updated: May 2023

Review date: May 2026

Approved: Director of Human Resources