



Belfast Harbour Commissioners Policies and Procedures

Equal Opportunities Policy

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, the Chairman and the Board, the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team to the promotion of equality of opportunity in Belfast Harbour Commissioners (BHC).

It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age.

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions relating to recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice; it also makes sound business sense. Our Equal Opportunities Policy will help all BHC employees to develop their full potential and fully utilise their talents to maximise the efficiency of BHC.

TO WHOM DOES THE POLICY APPLY?

BHC's Equal Opportunities policy applies to all those who work for (or apply to work for) BHC.

EQUALITY COMMITMENTS

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

This policy is fully supported by senior management.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Human Resources Director has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Each manager and supervisor also has responsibilities and we expect all our employees to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants and relevant others (such as contract or agency workers)
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices (eg, staff newsletters, intranet)
- Obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our workforce
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfill the objectives of the policy.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy. The effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy will be reviewed annually.

COMPLAINTS

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures:

- Grievance Policy and Procedure*
- Dignity at work Policy and Procedures*

All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an Industrial Tribunal or the Fair Employment Tribunal under the following anti-discrimination legislation:

- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976, as amended
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, as amended
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003
- Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, as amended
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
- Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, as amended.

However, employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedures first.

Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

* Available from the HR Department
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