

**CARE & REPAIR (NORTHAMPTON) LTD**  
**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

**STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Care and Repair (Northampton) Ltd, hereinafter referred to as 'the Agency', is committed to ensuring that all individuals and groups are treated fairly and valued equally. Our actions and policies will be governed by this commitment in our dealings with our workforce, with the citizens of Northampton and with visitors and all others with whom we have contact or dealings. The Agency's equality policy and principles will apply to all, and The Agency will do its best to provide an example of good practice to the community at large.

The Agency will oppose discrimination against any individual or group specifically on grounds of race, ethnic or national origin; religion or creed; disability or impairment; gender; sexuality or marital status; employment status; social class; HIV status; age; dependent-care responsibilities or need or on any other unjustified grounds.

No one, whether customer, volunteer or employee will receive less favourable treatment, or will be disadvantaged by unjustifiable requirements or conditions, as our aim is to eliminate unfair discrimination.

**POLICY TOWARDS CLIENTS**

The Agency values the positive contribution made by Northampton's diverse community to local social, cultural and economic life. It also recognises the differing forms of discrimination and oppression that particular groups suffer.

As a significant provider of services, and being opposed to all forms of unfair and unlawful discrimination and harassment, The Agency places great importance on the removal of barriers to equal service delivery. It will seek to ensure good practice by any contractors it uses and by those included in any information provided to prospective clients or users of its services and contract documents issued will require contractors compliance with their statutory obligations under equality legislation.

The Agency requires its employees to behave at work in a non-discriminatory way to all clients. Clients, or prospective clients, who consider they have been unfairly treated will be informed of their right to complain and of the appropriate procedures. All complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with courteously and promptly. Clients also have the right to make or refer their complaints to the Northamptonshire County Council Social Care & Health Directorate, Complaints Officer and can also seek support from another agency to help them pursue their concerns. The Complaints Officer can be contacted at Northamptonshire County Council offices. The Agency reviews its service arrangements regularly, and will consult representative users to help ensure its services are appropriate to need and accessible throughout the community

**POLICY TOWARDS COMMUNITY GROUPS**

The Agency will develop partnerships based on the principles of equality with similar voluntary sector and other organisations, is particularly concerned to

consult with and respond to the needs of individuals and groups experiencing the effects of historical disadvantage and will seek to establish procedures for liaison and consultation so as to work more effectively with community organisations and representatives of minority and/or oppressed groups. This will include working with other agencies to ensure the safety of and protect the civil rights of people subjected to physical or mental abuse as a result of discrimination.

## **POLICY TOWARDS EMPLOYEES & VOLUNTEERS**

The Agency aims to reflect in its employment policies the strengths and diversity of the population of Northampton, and will apply consistent principles of equality and fairness in terms of recruitment and promotion, access to information, training and funding, and in the protection of rights at work.

The Agency is committed to providing for all its employees and volunteers a working environment free from harassment, victimisation and bullying and will introduce policies and establish sound guidelines for the achievement of equal treatment in the workplace.

The Service Director has overall responsibility for implementing the equal opportunities policy. Particular requirements according to equality law, employment law and best practice are placed on the Service Director and the Agency's Managers. These involve advertising posts, recruitment, selection, interviewing, disciplinary procedures and fair treatment at work. Strategies for achieving them will be reviewed from time to time to ensure effective compliance with this policy, principles of equality and with the relevant legislation.

## **REVIEW OF EQUALITY POLICY**

The Agency will establish effective means of monitoring its fulfilment of these policy requirements and addressing complaints of perceived discrimination.

In order to involve clients directly in developing and improving its services, The Agency will give notice of and report on these reviews and will seek to involve clients, volunteers and its employees in the consultation process.

Any employee or volunteer may use the grievance procedure to complain about perceived discriminatory conduct. If the matter relates to sexual or racial harassment then the grievance may be raised directly with the Service Director or any member of the Management Committee. The Agency is concerned to ensure that employees and volunteers feel able to raise such grievances and no individual will be penalised for raising such a grievance unless it is untrue and made in bad faith.

Any instance of doubt about the application of the policy or other questions, should be addressed to the Service Director as should any request for special training.