



Hope Church Network
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

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Statement

Hope Church Network is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

We are also committed against unlawful discrimination of members, visitors and all with whom we interact as an organisation.

The policy operates using the biblical principles found in Galatians 3:28 and 2 Romans 2:11

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)

For God shows no partiality. (Romans 2:11)

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, congregations and visitors of Hope Church Network.

Purpose of policy

The aim of this policy is for Hope Church Network to undertake the following:

1. To provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
2. To not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
3. To oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline
 - dismissal
 - redundancy

- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Application

Hope Church Network encourages equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and support our core values.

The Charity will create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training all employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand 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, our congregations, suppliers and the public

Hope Church Network will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, our congregations, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the Charity's activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

The Charity will make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

The Charity will make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

As an organisation seeking to deliver services within a Christian context, many of our roles can only be filled by Christians. The nature of these posts or the context in which they are carried out, and their link to the ethos of the organisation, give rise to a 'protected characteristic' (or 'genuine occupational requirement') for the post-holders to be Christians.

Therefore, all volunteers, trustees and employees have an Occupational Requirement to be a Christian, as permitted under Schedule 9, Part 1, of the Equality Act 2010 which reflects the charity constitution, as a charity motivated by our faith.

Hope Church Network will review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Hope Church Network will monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.