



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MANAGING DIVERSITY STATEMENT

TRIPLE A is committed to equal opportunities and diversity. This commitment extends to our volunteers and we welcome everyone from our community as a volunteer.

We will not discriminate against our volunteers on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, disability or impairment, age, race, creed, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, trade union activity, HIV or marital status, religion or belief or similar bases.

TRIPLE A also recognise that many potential volunteers have criminal records and may be reluctant to apply for either paid posts or volunteering roles where they would be required to disclose details of their record. Having a criminal record is not necessarily a bar to working or volunteering with us and TRIPLE A welcomes applications from ex-offenders.

Furthermore, we value difference and recognise the value that the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of our volunteers bring to the organisation.

TRIPLE A will not tolerate behaviour that contradicts the letter or spirit of this statement or our full Equal Opportunities Policy.

Equal Opportunities: Dignity At Work Policy

TRIPLE A is committed to creating an environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Some harassment is unlawful discrimination and serious harassment may be a criminal offence.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power which is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end. Examples of bullying would include picking on someone or setting them up to fail or making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to sex, gender reassignment, race or ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or any other personal characteristic which:

- Has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, or
- Is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating their dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Examples of harassment would include: physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to a serious assault, unwelcome sexual advances, demeaning comments about a person's appearance, unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature or about an individual's age, the use of obscene gestures and the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person, eg magazines, calendars or pin-ups.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a "joke" may offend another person. Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to them and to have their feelings respected by others. Behaviour which any reasonable person would realise would be likely to offend will be harassment without the recipient having to make it clear in advance that behaviour of that type is not acceptable to them, eg sexual touching.

It may not be so clear in advance that some other forms of behaviour would be unwelcome to, or could offend, a particular person, eg certain "banter", flirting or asking someone for a private drink after work. In these cases, first-time conduct which unintentionally causes offence will not be harassment but it will become harassment if the conduct continues after the recipient has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to them.

A single incident can be harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

If you think you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to sort matters out informally. The person may not know that their behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. You may feel able to approach the person yourself, or with the help of someone else at the organisation. You should tell the person what behaviour of theirs you find offensive and unwelcome and say that you would like to stop immediately.

If an informal approach does not resolve matters, or you think the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint by using TRIPLE A's grievance procedure. In the case of grievances about bullying or harassment, the normal grievance procedure is modified so that you can choose whether to raise your grievance with your manager or supervisor.

All complaints will be investigated and if appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser. You will have the right to be accompanied by a representative of your choice at any meeting dealing with your grievance. You will be kept informed of the general progress of the process of investigation and the outcome of any disciplinary proceedings.

TRIPLE A will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible.

You have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint in good faith, even if the complaint is not upheld. However, making a complaint which you know to be untrue may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Your Responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist TRIPLE A to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities and avoid unlawful discrimination.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the organisation for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees or volunteers who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

TRIPLE A Commitment

TRIPLE A is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment or to volunteers, service users.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in our service.

This policy is intended to assist TRIPLE A to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees and volunteers do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

The Law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment on grounds of sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sexual orientation or religion or belief, or because someone is married or is a civil partner. It is unlawful to treat someone less favourably on grounds of disability than others without that disability are or would be treated, unless the less favourable treatment can be justified, or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to employment or volunteering opportunities caused by disability. It is unlawful to discriminate unjustifiably on grounds of age in relation to employment. Discrimination after employment may be unlawful, eg in refusing to give a reference or in the form of reference given.

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in the provision of goods, facilities or services to customers on grounds of sex (which may include gender reassignment), pregnancy, religion or belief, sexual orientation, colour, race, nationality, or ethnic or national origins. It is unlawful to discriminate without justification on the grounds of disability or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services.

Some types of harassment or bullying will be unlawful discrimination. It is unlawful to victimise someone because they have alleged unlawful discrimination or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

Types of Unlawful Discrimination

Direct Discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another in comparable circumstances on a prohibited ground. An example of sex discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she was pregnant. Unlike the other forms of discrimination, direct discrimination on the grounds of age can be justified.

Indirect Discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied which is such that it would be to the detriment of a considerably larger portion of the relevant group to which the individual belongs than to others, which is not objectively justifiable and which is to the individual's detriment. An example of indirect sex discrimination could be requiring everyone to work full time unless there is good reason, unrelated to sex, as to why the particular job has to be done on a full time basis, since requiring everyone to work full time will normally adversely affect a higher proportion of women than men.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct related to one of the prohibited grounds which has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, or is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating their dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them even if this was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where arrangements disadvantage an individual because of disability and reasonable adjustments are not made to overcome the disadvantage.

Victimisation is where someone is treated less favourably than others because they have alleged unlawful discrimination or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

Equal Opportunities in Employment

TRIPLE A will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

TRIPLE A will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering request for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if TRIPLE A considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any prohibited ground of discrimination for doing so. TRIPLE A will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. TRIPLE A will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

TRIPLE A will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion) and the number of people with disabilities within these groups and will consider and take appropriate action to address any problems which may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

TRIPLE A cannot lawfully discriminate in the selection of employees for recruitment or promotion, may use appropriate lawful methods, including lawful positive action, to address the under-representation of any group with TRIPLE A identifies as being under-represented in particular types of job.

Customers, suppliers and other People not employed by TRIPLE A

TRIPLE A will not discriminate unlawfully against customers using or seeking to use goods, facilities or services provided.

Your responsibilities

Every employee and volunteer is required to assist TRIPLE A to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees and volunteers can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, TRIPLE A for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees or volunteers who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees, volunteers or service users are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under TRIPLE A's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Grievances

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you may use TRIPLE A's Grievance Procedure to make a complaint. TRIPLE A will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance which it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Use of TRIPLE A's Grievance procedure does not affect your right to make a complaint to an employment tribunal. Complaints to an employment tribunal must normally be made within three months beginning with the act of discrimination complained of.

This policy will be monitored periodically by TRIPLE A to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

Law Relating to this policy:

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Disability Discrimination Act 2005

Race Relations Act 1976 & 2000

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Civil Partnership Act 2004

Equality Act 2006