

Operating Policy on:

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & CODE OF PRACTICE**

Name of Business:

Trading as:

Type of organisation:

Limited Company	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public Ltd Company	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sole owner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Collective	<input type="checkbox"/>

Director or partner responsible for health and safety:

## **1 Statement of policy**

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the chief executive, Board of Directors and senior management team to the promotion of equality of opportunity in Sexual Health On Call.

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 about 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 those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

## **2 To whom does the policy apply?**

### **(Scope)**

SHOC wish to state that the SHOC policy applies to all those who work for (or apply to work for) the organisation, and include:

Job applicants and potential applicants  
Employees  
Agency workers  
Trainee workers and students on work experience or placements  
Volunteer workers  
Former employees.

## **3 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 and has been agreed with workplace representatives.

#### **4 Implementation**

The director has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Each director/ manager 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)
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate, including training on induction and management courses.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in nondiscriminatory 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 fulfil the objectives of the policy.

#### **5 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 regularly at least annually in consultation and action taken as necessary. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to address the imbalance.

#### **6 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. A copy of these procedures is available from administration. 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
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Race Relations
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations
- Fair Employment and Treatment
- Employment Equality (Age)
- Equal Pay Act

However, employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedures first<sup>2</sup>.

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.

**Sexual Health on Call (SHOC)** is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in employment and in the provision of its services and is developing its practices to ensure the effectiveness of the policy. This policy aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, volunteer or client/user receives less favourable treatment because of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, family responsibility, disability, sexuality, age or religion.

In doing so SHOC, its employees/volunteers and service users are required to comply with all current legislation.

Whilst much can be done to promote equal opportunities by the application of legal requirements, SHOC is committed to a programme of positive action to make this policy fully effective.

Anyone who feels they have been discriminated against has the right to bring it to the management's attention.

#### 1. Publicity

SHOC's general publicity material should be ant-racist and anti-sexist. It should not reinforce negative image of lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities. No oppressive materials will be used.

Sexist, racist and other discriminatory language will be not used. Language, whether written or verbal, will not identify jobs with a particular sex, and sex linked words will be avoided. Discriminatory jibes and disparaging terms for particular groups will not be acceptable.

*All publicity will state that SHOC operates an Equal Opportunities policy.*

#### 2. Language

Language is dynamic and words in common usages are always changing. Terms used within equal opportunity frameworks are no different and people must be

prepared to accept the lead given by the various groups themselves as to what words are acceptable.

However, no language, deemed sexist, racist or in any way discriminatory is acceptable.

Definitions of sexist racist or discriminatory language cannot be set in concrete but the individual's perception of the language must be acknowledged (sensitively).

Should any member of staff/volunteer feel language being used in the workplace / organisation is inappropriate, they should raise the matter through normal line management or to the management committee.

3. Terms and Conditions of Employment, Benefits, Facilities and Service

These will be offered equally to all employees/volunteers in the same or similar circumstances.

All employees/volunteers with responsibility for children or other dependents will not face discriminatory treatment because of these responsibilities.

For disabled employees / volunteers and employees / volunteers who become disabled, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 will be complied with in full.

Date: .....

Signature: ..... Chief Executive