

Equal Opportunities Policy

Our Commitment

Norse Contracting Limited is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment. It is also committed to providing equal opportunities in the provision of access to services.

This policy is intended to assist Norse Contracting Limited to put this commitment into practice.

Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

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 employment.

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 favorably on grounds of disability than others without that disability are or would be treated, unless the less favorable treatment can be justified, or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to employment caused by disability. From October 2006, it will be unlawful to discriminate unjustifiably on grounds of age in relation to employment. Discrimination after the employment relationship has come to an end may be unlawful, e.g. 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, colour, race, nationality, or ethnic or national origins. It is unlawful to discriminate, without justification, on 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.

It is unlawful to victimize someone because he or she has 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 favorably than another in comparable circumstances on a prohibited ground. An example of direct sex discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she was pregnant.

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 proportion 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 a 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 his or her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him or her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct. Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where arrangements disadvantage an individual because of a disability and reasonable adjustments are not made to overcome the disadvantage.

Victimization is where someone is treated less favorably than others because he or she has alleged unlawful discrimination or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

Equal opportunities in employment

Norse Contracting Limited 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.

Norse Contracting Limited 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 requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if Norse Contracting Limited considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any prohibited ground of discrimination, for doing so. Norse Contracting Limited will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. Norse Contracting Limited will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

Norse Contracting Limited 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 any appropriate action to address any problems which may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

Norse Contracting Limited cannot lawfully discriminate in the selection of employees for recruitment or promotion, but Norse Contracting Limited may use appropriate lawful methods, including lawful positive action, to address the under-representation of any group which Norse Contracting Limited identifies as being underrepresented in particular types of job.

Training

Norse Contracting Limited will provide training in equal opportunities to managers and other staff involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

Norse Contracting Limited will provide training to all existing and new employees to help them understand their rights and responsibilities and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. Norse Contracting Limited will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

Your responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist Norse Contracting Limited to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

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

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