



Equality & Diversity Policy 2021

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Reviewed by:	Safety Forward Ltd		
Company Details:	Urban Planters		
The Forge, The Stable Business Park Rooksbridge Somerset BS26 2TT	 URBAN planters for a greener world		
Responsible Person: Alan Page			

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Introduction

Urban Planters is committed to creating an environment of positive working relationships. To preserve and protect such an environment, the organisation has policies and procedures that set out standards of conduct that must be observed and enable staff to raise concerns, to be provided with a response and for those concerns to be addressed in an appropriate forum and to obtain an appropriate remedy.

This policy applies to all employees, agency workers, contractors, consultants, trainees, volunteers, visitors, part-time and fixed term employees, customers and job applicants, (collectively referred to as 'staff' in this policy), for all aspects of our relationships and to relations between staff members of all levels. This includes job advertisements, recruitment and selection, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment and contracts.

Urban Planters believes that every employee has the right to be treated with equality, dignity and respect in the workplace and is committed to providing a supportive working environment to foster such a culture. All staff should be valued for their different skills and ways of working and be treated with dignity.

Urban Planters is committed to the principle of eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, disability or age (the protected characteristics).

Urban Planters is also committed to the fostering of good relations and to encourage people with a protected characteristic to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low.

All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.

Our values set out how we work and behave. We are:

- Passionate and excited about delivering high quality in everything that we do.
- Highly responsive to client needs.
- Always aspiring to the highest standards.
- Professional and enterprising.
- Innovative and creative.
- Friendly and welcoming.
- An inclusive organisation.

Responsibilities

The Directors are responsible for promoting equal opportunities on behalf of Urban Planters and for ensuring that effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure and continuously improve the quality of equal opportunities throughout the business.

The Directors are responsible for promoting, monitoring and reviewing this Policy and for evaluating its effectiveness.

The Directors are responsible for promoting, monitoring and implementation of all aspects of this Policy relating to the employment of staff.

All staff have a responsibility for implementing this Policy and Procedure and promoting equal opportunities in all aspects of their work.

Forms of Discrimination

Discrimination by or against a member of staff is prohibited. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct Discrimination - This occurs when a person is treated unfairly or less favorably because of one or more of the protected characteristics. Apart from limited exceptions to the general prohibition of discrimination, direct discrimination is automatically unlawful, whatever the reason for it. There can be no justification for the difference in treatment.

Associative Discrimination – This occurs where a person is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another person who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Perception -This occurs where a person is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that the person has a particular protected characteristic, when in fact they do not.

Indirect Discrimination – This occurs where a provision, criteria or practice is applied that appears to affect everyone equally but which in fact puts people who share a protected characteristic at a disadvantage.

Harassment – This occurs when someone behaves in such a way that their conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an environment that is offensive, hostile, degrading, humiliating or intimidating for a person where;

- This is related to a protected characteristic.
- This is of a sexual nature (sexual harassment).
- A person is treated less favourably because they have either submitted to or rejected sexual harassment, or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment (this is known as 'consequential harassment').

Harassment by Third Party – This occurs where a member of staff is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients or contractors.

Victimisation – This occurs when a person experiences a disadvantage because they have supported someone in making a complaint or an allegation of discrimination or because they personally have made an allegation of discrimination.

Equality and Diversity Procedure

Urban Planters will endeavor to ensure that the good practice detailed within this Policy informs the actions of staff at all times.

Urban Planters seeks to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment for everyone in relation to all of its activities.

Urban Planters recognises the existence of discrimination and is committed to making changes in any area of the organisation's practice where there is evidence of failure to provide an appropriate and professional service. It is committed to addressing areas of institutional failure, in relation to issues of religion, racism, gender, sexism, ageism, disability, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity leave, gender reassignment, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin or other inequalities.

Urban Planters is committed to impact assess relevant policies and procedures and adjust policies, procedures and practice if impact assessments identify areas for improvement.

Recruitment and Selection

Urban Planters aims to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate.

Employee Training, Promotion and Conditions of Service

Employee training needs will be identified through regular employee performance and development reviews. All employees will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

Workforce composition and promotions will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all employees who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Termination of Employment

Urban Planters will ensure that termination of employment criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

Disability Discrimination

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your Team Leader or a Director to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

Breaches of this Policy

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against or subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter with your line manager.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in the strictest confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under Urban Planters' Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. Urban Planters takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy and procedure.

Legislation

This policy reflects national UK and EU legislation in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and guidelines on good practice.

Monitoring and Evaluation of this Policy

This policy will be monitored periodically by Urban Planters' Directors and will be updated in accordance with any required changes including those set out by statute.

Urban Planters will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure that it is achieving its objectives. Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by providing feedback to the Directors.

Period of Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. When statutory employment law changes, the policy is held automatically to have been amended by that change and will be updated as soon as practically possible.

Policy sign off

Company Directors acceptance of responsibility for the policy and its implementation.

As Directors of Urban Planters, we accept responsibility for ensuring that Urban Planters is managed in a manner that will provide for compliance with Urban Planters' legal obligations and conformity with the objectives and requirements as detailed in this policy.

Name: (Print) Alan Page (Director)

Signature: 

Date: 27th January 2021