**Policy Title: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

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# Policy statement

Leonard Cheshire believes that equality, fair treatment and diversity amongst the people who use its services, its employees and volunteers adds value to the organisation. The differences in culture and range of life experiences bring creativity, vitality and innovation to the organisation and to the services we provide.

We will provide equality of opportunity and will not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of disability, age, sex, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, social class, employment status, political beliefs or trade union membership.

To encourage and foster diversity and inclusion, Leonard Cheshire will, in delivery of services, employment practices and volunteering experiences:

* Promote good and harmonious working and service environments, where everyone is treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of discrimination or harassment is tolerated.
* Prevent any form of direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation by employees, volunteers, or people who use our services.
* Fulfil all our legal obligations under the relevant legislation and associated codes of practice.
* Continually improve our services and ensure they are accessible and provided fairly to all.
* Promote equality of opportunity in the delivery of services, employment practices and volunteering experiences.
* Seek to challenge discrimination and prejudice in all its forms, and endeavour to make sure all employees, volunteers and people who use our services are treated fairly, respectfully and with dignity within Leonard Cheshire.
* Ensure all organisational policies and procedures support equality of opportunity for all.
* Not tolerate any behaviour from our employees, volunteers, people who use our services or visitors which goes against our equality and diversity aims.
* Comply with the requirements of the Fair Employment legislation applicable in Northern Ireland.
* Promote initiatives to provide new opportunities for employees and volunteers at all levels and seek to redress any imbalances in the workforce and volunteer profile so that it reflects our service users and local communities that we serve.

# Linked policies and guidance

This policy is intended to provide a framework within which all other policies and guidance should operate. Whilst this section is focused on People Policies the policy is also aligned with Operational and Service policies.

People policies include:

1. Dignity at Work policy and guidance (formerly prevention of bullying and harassment policy and procedure)
2. Maternity guidance
3. Adoption guidance
4. Paternity guidance
5. Parental leave guidance
6. Shared Parental leave guidance
7. Recruitment and Selection policy and guidance
8. Time Off for Religious and Cultural Festivals policy and guidance
9. Resolving and Dealing with Employee Concerns guidance
10. Flexible Working policy and guidance
11. Health and Safety Procedural Arrangement – New and Expectant Mothers
12. Sickness Absence policy and guidance
13. Whistleblowing policy and guidance

# Roles and responsibilities

The Trustees, Chief Executive and Directors have a responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy in relation to employees, volunteers and people who use our services.

In order to implement this policy, the People Director, through Directors and all other managers, will ensure that:

* The policy is communicated to all employees, people who use our services, and volunteers through induction, training, meetings and via the Staff Association.
* The policy will made known to job applicants and prospective volunteers.
* Agencies providing LC with temporary staff are required to have an Equality and Diversity Policy that meets all legal requirements and promotes equality. Agencies must ensure that their staff are aware of their policy and the responsibility to promote equality.
* Appropriate training and development will be provided for all employees and volunteers.
* Employees, people who use our services and volunteers will be encouraged to value diversity and will be expected to treat all others with dignity and respect.
* Employees, volunteers and people who use our services will understand that acts of discrimination are not acceptable. Concerns will be dealt with through the relevant procedures.

# Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

# Comments and queries

Any comments or queries relating to the terms or application of this policy should be directed to its owner (named below) or the relevant department head.

# History

Policy commenced: 01/04/2008

Last full review: 13/11/2019

Last annual review: 13/11/2019

Next full review due: 13/11/2022

Department: HR

Policy owner: Head of HR

# Approval

This policy has been approved by the Management Board with delegated authority from the Board of Trustees.