



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY GUIDE

Contents

1. Purpose
2. Definition
3. Who it applies to
4. Why Is Promoting Equality And Diversity Important?
5. Introduction
 - 5.1 Can Volunteers Expect Protection From Discrimination?
 - 5.2 Our Goals
 - 5.3 What we can expect from you...
 - 5.4 Equality Act
 - 5.5 Equality Delivery System
 - 5.6 Key priorities
 - 5.7 Information and Communication
 - 5.8 Role and Responsibilities
6. Supporting Resources
7. Appendix 1
8. Appendix 2

1. PURPOSE

This guide has been completed to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in volunteering. It reflects best practice recommendations made by the Equality Commission in relation to paid employment, which should be echoed in the voluntary sector.

The aim of this document is to highlight and inform Lions, of the commitment of District 105 CN cabinet and the Lions organisation to deliver the best possible experience to our Lions and partners and recognises the importance of equality and diversity as crucial to this.

It is important to develop our values to ensure that people are treated fairly and that the Lions becomes the best place to volunteer.

2 DEFINITION

Equality is about making sure that people are treated fairly and given equal access to opportunities and resources. Equality is not about treating everyone in the same way, it is about treating everyone fairly, with respect and recognises that people from different backgrounds may have needs that are met in different ways.

Diversity is about valuing individual difference. Diversity challenges us to recognise and value all sorts of differences that exist when people work together in order to build stronger communities and harmonious environments for the benefit of all.

People come from a wide variety of backgrounds and we can be different from one another in many different ways. These can include differences that are highlighted in current equality legislation such as race, religion and gender but also include things like our personality, personal interests and lifestyle choices, such as being a vegetarian or a smoker.

3. WHO IT APPLIES TO

This guide applies to all members. The Lions is an equal opportunities organisation and service provider which ensures that all members and service users are treated with dignity. The district is committed to embedding equality, diversity and human **rights** into core functions of our organization.

4. WHY IS PROMOTING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

Equality and diversity is becoming more important in all aspects of our lives for a number of reasons.

- We live in an increasingly diverse society and need to be able to understand and respect diversity and respond appropriately and sensitively to difference in others.
- The successful implementation of an equality and diversity guide in all aspects of Lionism will help to provide a good and harmonious environment for all. It will also ensure that Lions are all valued, respected, motivated and treated fairly.

All members of the organisation will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions on membership, selection for office, training or any other benefit will be made objectively, without unlawful discrimination, and based on aptitude and ability. We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in all our activities will benefit the organisation. Our equal opportunities policy will help members to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the members will be utilised fully to maximise the effectiveness of the organisation.

This Lions District is committed to the principles and practice of equality and values the diversity of the local population. We want our services, facilities and resources to be accessible and useful to every citizen regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin, religious belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect a person's opportunities in life.

- We all have the right to be protected from discrimination and harassment. We also have a responsibility not to discriminate against others.

INTRODUCTION:

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion document is an overarching document bringing together all the objectives and challenges for Lions.

The District wants its members to identify the Lions organisation as a great place to volunteer, where we respect each other and prize the work the Lions club does.

The District has identified key priorities and will ensure the implementation of the guide and the legislation as set out in the Equality Act 2010. In addition to the legislative documents, there are also a number of key equality-based national

documents and guidance documents providing a framework for the Lions District to develop its approach to equality and diversity. These include:

- Equality Delivery System (EDS) commissioned by the national Equality and Diversity Council in 2010 and launched in July 2011
- Navigating Equality and Diversity 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Improving Working Lives; Gov.2017
- Volunteer Now 2019

The District needs to provide evidence that we are being proactive, heading in the right direction and in a position where equality for all is evident. Our clubs need to be conscious of considering the needs of all different members in day-to-day activities. It is important that all our members volunteer in a well-supported environment and are involved in decision making with visible, value-based leaders. If we get this right, volunteer satisfaction and outcomes will improve, members should rate the organisation better, volunteers will feel valued, and well-being improves.

The Districts commitment to equality-based documents through the provision of resources that respects and responds to the diversity of the local population.

4.1 Can Volunteers Expect Protection From Discrimination?

Yes they can, however this is mostly promoted and protected by a moral responsibility that should be acknowledged by all volunteer involving organisations rather than a legal responsibility placed on them by current equality legislation.

However as volunteers are not deemed to be employees, in most situations volunteers will not have legal protection under this framework. This is because there are a number of fundamental and important things that make volunteers stand out from paid employees. Firstly they provide their services for free, without an expectation of a salary or wage and secondly they cannot normally be compelled to provide these services and may withdraw them at any time.

Consequently this places the emphasis on the need for our organisation to acknowledge a moral responsibility to protect or members from discrimination. This is necessary to develop and promote a fair and harmonious environment for volunteering.

However we need to include not discriminating against groups of people who have specific protected characteristics (see Appendix 1), as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Our Commitment to our volunteers...

Although there is no statutory obligation under equality legislation we recognise a clear moral obligation to promote fairness and equality within Lions and value all individuals and their diverse & unique identity and backgrounds. These include (but are not exclusive to) the established equality grounds of religious

belief; political opinion; community background; ethnic and national origin; sex; sexual orientation; disability or age.

What you can expect from us...

We believe that Lions should reflect the diversity of communities they work in and have the right to work in an environment which is free from discrimination.

If you experience any form of discrimination or harassment while volunteering with us you have a right to raise a complaint with us through our grievance procedure. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons;
- promoting a good and harmonious learning environment in which all men and women are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of intimidation or harassment is tolerated;
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- fulfilling all our legal obligations under the national equality legislation and associated codes of practice;
- complying with our own equal opportunities guide and associated documents;

In order to implement this guide we shall:

- Communicate the guide to members through the District Forum, Newsletter and training events
- ; •The Lions District CN will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that it will not consciously, or unconsciously discriminate in the selection or recruitment of applicants for membership of the organisation;
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the guide.

5.2 Goals

Our goals state that we want to be regarded as the best place volunteer. To achieve this it is crucial that we continue to:

- To improve the quality and consistency of member experience
- Ensure our members are representative of the organisation and we deliver services
- Ensure our members have a positive experience within the organisation, are offered opportunities to meet their full potential and “live its values”
- Reduce inequalities and promote equality of access to, experience of membership
- Become a model volunteer organisation in respect of equality
- Meet our statutory duty and comply fully with current and future equality and human rights legislation
- Is accessible to all and recognises the need for a diverse membership that is capable of understanding the needs of culture of its members.

5.3 What we can expect from you...

When representing the Lions organisation as a volunteer we expect you to support our commitment to promoting equality. You must treat others with dignity and respect and not seek to discriminate against others.

You are expected to discourage discrimination by making it clear that you find such behaviour unacceptable and should alert the club president or Immediate Past President in the Club in the first instance if an incident occurs to enable the organisation to deal with it. (Please see bullying and Harassment guide for further information)

5.4 The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 created a **general duty** when carrying out functions to have due regard to:

- I. **The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.**
- II. **The need to advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- III. **The need to foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not (which will therefore cover good relations between people of different faiths and between people who have a religious faith and those who do not).

The Equality Act provides protection from 'prohibited conduct' for groups of people with protected characteristics. Examples of prohibited conduct includes: direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, associative discrimination, perceptible discrimination, harassment and victimisation. More information about the types of discrimination can be found in Appendix 2.

5.5 Equality Delivery System (EDS)

The EDS is about real people making real improvements that can be sustained over time. It focuses on the things that matter the most. It emphasises genuine engagement, transparency and the effective use of evidence. By using the EDS our organisation will be able to meet the requirements of the Equality Act.

5.6 Key priorities

- The Lions District will not discriminate against or disadvantage anybody for any reason.
- The Lions District will be an organisation where no form of harassment or discrimination is tolerated.
- The Lions District will take every opportunity to strengthen our approach to equality, diversity and human rights in the design, delivery.
- The Lions District will ensure executive level leadership in equality, diversity and human rights.

- The Lions District will provide members appropriate equality, diversity and human rights training.
- The Lions District will give guidance to members to promote understanding in their roles and responsibilities for equality, diversity and human rights.
- The Lions District will improve communication and information for members, being mindful of using different media.
- As a Service organisation the Lions District will meet its moral and legal responsibilities to tackle all forms of discrimination and promote inclusion within the population it serves.
- The Lions District will work towards improving well-being of members and the wider community that it serves.

The Lions District will achieve this by:

- Implementing the Lions Districts Equality Objectives (as above)
- Using the EDS system to assist in engagement with our members
- Developing our members through training,
- Having transparency in decision-making.

5.7 Information and Communication

Effective communication is vital to ensure that all members are well informed. This is of equal value to all members of organisation and there is commitment to ensuring this is adhered to whether the person is able bodied or has a disability.

Lack of, or misinterpretation, of information is a major cause for complaint. It is essential that all information for members is clear, comprehensive and consistent. The Equality Act 2010 requires that all information is to have reference to special needs as an integral part of the document. Information should be provided in formats other than standard size print. For example:

- Larger print
- Braille
- Audio CDs

5.8 Role and Responsibilities

The Cabinet is responsible for ensuring that the needs of minorities are taken into account and that their needs have been considered and appropriately included in any actions undertaken.

The Cabinet are accountable to the National and International Boards

District Officers are central to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination. They are responsible for promoting this guide and for implementing all relevant procedures and initiatives within their area.

Equality and Diversity training is provided for all members. Ongoing awareness training will be provided as part of the organisations training and development programme

Supporting References / Evidence Based Documents

Crown. (1998). *Human Rights Act 1998*. Available:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

Crown. (2010). *Equality Act 2010*. Available:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents> .

NHS England. (2012). Equality Delivery System. Available:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/eds/>

Human Rights Commission
: <https://www.gov.uk/.../organisations/equality-and-human-rights-commission>

APPENDIX 1: DETAILS OF THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Age – where the Act refers to the protected characteristics of age, it means a person belonging to a particular age or age group. An age group includes people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages.

Disability – a person has a disability if the person has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender Reassignment – a person has this protected characteristic if they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purposes of reassigning their sex, by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Marriage and Civil Partnership – people who have or share the common characteristics of being married or of being a civil partner can be described as being in a marriage or civil partnership. A married man and a woman in a civil partnership both share the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership. People who are not married or civil partners do not have this characteristic.

Pregnancy and maternity – relates to women that are pregnant or within their allocated maternity period. Women that are not pregnant nor within their maternity period do not share this characteristic.

Race – for the purpose of the Act, 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. People who have or share characteristics of colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins can be described as belonging to a particular racial group. A racial group can be made up of two or more different racial groups.

Religion or belief – the protected characteristic of religion or religious or philosophical belief, is also stated to include a lack of religion or belief. It is a broad definition in line with the freedom of thought, conscience and religion guaranteed by Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights. For example, Baha'i faith, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Rastafarianism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism are all religions for the purposes of this provision. Beliefs such as humanism and atheism would be beliefs for the purposes of this provision but adherence to a particular football team would not be.

Sex- people having the protected characteristic of sex refers to being a man or a woman, and that men share this characteristic with other men, and women with other women.

Sexual orientation – the protected characteristic of sexual orientation relates to a person's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex as him or her (in other words the person is a gay man or a lesbian) ; people of the opposite sex from him or her (the person is heterosexual) ; people of both sexes (the person is bisexual).

APPENDIX 2: TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION COVERED BY THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perceptive discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Associative Discrimination

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perceptive Discrimination

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted reasonably in managing your business, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. A legitimate aim might be any lawful decision you make in running your business or organisation, but if there is a discriminatory effect, the sole aim of reducing costs is likely to be unlawful. Being proportionate really means being fair and reasonable, including showing that you have looked at 'less discriminatory' alternatives to any decision you make.

Harassment

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for that individual".

Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. Employees will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves. Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

The Equality Act protects people of all ages. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if you can justify it, i.e. if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.