

Community Transport Waltham Forest  
Equal Opportunities Policy

**Statement**

Community Transport Waltham Forest is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. CTWF will strive to develop a business culture that reflects and embraces equal opportunity and diversity in the workplace and its service provision in line with the current legislative framework and codes of practice.

All decisions regarding the prioritization of resources/services and benefits of CTWF will be made in accordance with equal opportunities principles. All members of CTWF will have equal access and the opportunity to make use of all services and benefits offered by CTWF.

In implementing the Equal Opportunity Policy CTWF accepts the statutory requirements laid down in the Race Relations Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, Employment Equality (Age) Regulations, Equal Pay Act and the Disability Discrimination Act.

CTWF management will ensure that recruitment, selection, training, development and promotion procedures result in no job applicant or employee receiving less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, trade union membership or non-membership, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, or being a part-time or fixed term worker. WFCT's objective is to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and otherwise treated solely on the basis of their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities.

## Employment Practices

- a) CTWF aims to be an equal opportunities employer and to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of any factors irrelevant to a person's ability to do a job.
- b) CTWF regards discrimination, harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of staff, clients or of others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as gross misconduct. Condoning such behavior could also be treated as a disciplinary offence. As well as disciplining the perpetrator(s), we will give appropriate support to people who complain of harassment of themselves or others.
- c) Selection, recruitment, training, promotion and employment practices generally will be subject to regular review to ensure they comply with the equal opportunities policy.
- d) CTWF will accommodate staff request to work flexibly, whether part time or some other working arrangement, for what ever reason as long as it is possible to agree this and is consistent with the needs of the organisation.
- e) We recognise that organisations are obliged under the Disability Discrimination Act to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled people and enable them to do their job without unnecessary difficulty. We will make adjustments which are reasonable, whether or not we are obliged to do so by law, and whether or not a disabled applicant or employee is covered by the definition of disabled under the DDA.
- f) We accept our obligation not to discriminate against applicants and employees on the basis of their religion. We also respect the beliefs of all staff. We will try and accommodate employee's religious beliefs by:
  - o Allowing time for prayers during the working day
  - o Consider employees/management committee dietary requirements when catering for staff and when providing facilities to store food.
  - o Where possible allow staff of particular faiths to take their holidays for religious festivals and other religious observance.
  - o Trying to arrange job interviews or other important work meetings at times when they do not clash with important religious festivals.
  - o Not imposing dress code with which people of a particular religion cannot comply.

<b>Service Delivery</b>
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**CTWF seeks to ensure that its services are accessible to all sections of the community**

**In particular:**

- a) CTWF makes public its commitment to combating discriminatory attitudes where these are encountered.
- b) CTWF will attempt to ensure that none of its policies discriminate directly or indirectly against any group or individual.
- c) CTWF attempts to find ways of making our services accessible to everyone including people with English as a second language, people with visual or hearing impairments, mobility problems and people who cannot easily travel on public transport.
- d) CTWF will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all its activities are carried out in premises which are accessible.
- e) CTWF will take all reasonable steps to ensure the transport it provides offers opportunity for people with mobility difficulties to both use the service and enable them to access the services they require in accordance with our booking procedure.
- f) CTWF will be sensitive to the particular needs of members and service users by trying to provide support such as translations, personal assistance, and have regard for the individuals religious and other dietary requirements.

## Definitions

CTWF understands **discrimination** to be unfavourable treatment of an individual or group of individuals on the grounds irrelevant

- to that person or group's abilities to perform work required of them by CTWF
- Or
- to that person or groups entitlements to receive services from CTWF

**Direct discrimination** is any less favourable treatment which cannot be objectively justified of a person or group of people because of a personal attribute or condition including but not limited to gender, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, or sexuality or age.

A person subjects another to **harassment** ....where, on grounds (such as) race, gender etc s/he engages in unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of

- a) violating that other persons dignity or
- b) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for him/her.

*(Definition from Race Relations Act as amended in July 2003)*

Unlawful harassment can be on grounds of the race, religion, sexuality etc of the person being harassed, or because of whom they associate with, are friends with, live with or are married to.

**Victimisation** takes place where a person is treated less favourably because they have taken action against unlawful discrimination in their workplace. For instance, if a person alleges that sex discrimination has taken place, or supports a colleague who has made that assertion, for instance by giving evidence at a grievance or disciplinary hearing or at an employment tribunal, they are protected under the various anti-discrimination Acts.

## Policy Management and delivery mechanisms

### 1. Responsibility for implementation

CTWF management committee has ultimate responsibility for the equal opportunities policy, however it is the responsibility of the Director of CTWF to implement, monitor and evaluate the equal opportunities policy and delivery. The Director has a duty to ensure that the management committee is informed of the policies implementation and the implications of management committee decisions and policies for equal opportunities.

### 2. Structure for implementing the policy

All employees and management committee members will be informed that an equal opportunities policy is in operation and will be bound to comply with its requirements. The policy will also be drawn to the attention of CTWF members, funding agencies, job applicants and where appropriate clients.

The Equal Opportunities Statement will be displayed in our offices, visible to staff and visitors. Workers and management committee members will be given a copy of the whole policy upon appointment/election and when ever the policy is modified.

CTWF will keep abreast of developments in equal opportunities practice.

We will regularly provide training for paid and voluntary staff and management committee members on equal opportunities issues.

### 3. Obligations of Staff

#### Management Team

The Management Team has the primary responsibility for successfully meeting these objectives by:

- not discriminating in the course of employment against employees or job applicants
- not inducing or attempting to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination; and
- bringing to the attention of employees that they will be subject to action under the Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure for discrimination of any kind.

Staff can contribute by:

- not discriminating against fellow employees, clients, suppliers or members of the public with whom they come into contact during the course of their duties
- not inducing or attempting to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination; and
- reporting any discriminatory action to the Director.

#### **4. Procedure for dealing with complaints of discrimination.**

Our grievance and disciplinary procedures will be used to deal with complaints about discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying involving staff.

Complaints from members/clients are covered by Community Transport Waltham Forest complaints policy and procedure. Complaints involving management committee members should be through whichever of the above procedures is most relevant. We will treat any complaints that we have failed to follow our Equal Opportunities Policy seriously.

#### **5. Personal Data**

CTWF may ask clients using services, job applicants, volunteers and committee members for information about their ethnic origin, disability, marital status, age or other personal information but will only do this for a specific defined purpose such as collecting statistical data for funders, for research, or our own monitoring to evaluate the impact of our Equal Opportunities Policy.

#### **6. Monitoring and Review**

This policy is subject to review and improvement. It will be reviewed annually by the Director with the staff team and management committee. Any suggestions for changes should be made, in the first instance, to the Director.