

Appendix D

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT – EQUIPPERS CHURCH

1. Equippers Church is a Christian organisation committed to social justice and resolutely opposed to discrimination in society. We are committed to providing services on a fair and equitable basis, regardless of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. No person requesting services from Equippers Church will be treated less favourably than any other person on any of the above grounds.
2. In employment we actively seek to recruit with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, promoting equality for all, and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates. We select all candidates for an interview based on their skills, qualifications, experience and commitment to the values and purposes of the organisation.
3. As an organisation seeking to deliver services within a Christian context, some posts can only be filled by practicing Christians. The nature of these posts or the context in which they are carried out, and their link to the ethos of the organisation, give rise to a genuine occupational requirement (GOR) for the post-holders to be practicing Christians. All staff in these posts are required to demonstrate a clear personal commitment to the Christian faith. This policy is implemented under Employment and Race Directives issued by the government and ACAS¹ guidance.
4. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Equippers Church undertakes to comply fully with DBS guidance and to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any applicant on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
5. A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.
6. Where a Disclosure is to form part of a recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of any criminal record relevant to working with children and young people at an early stage in the application process.
7. Unless the nature of the position allows Equippers Church lawfully to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
8. We ensure that all those in the organisation who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance of circumstances of offences. We will also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

¹ Arbitration, Conciliation and Advisory Service
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9. At interview, or in separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer or contract of employment or voluntary work.
10. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking a position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Note: having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. It will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offence(s).

OUR COMMITMENT

Equippers is committed to promoting diversity and equality. One of our values is “Honour” and our desire is that everyone who comes into contact with Equippers feels honoured regardless of any characteristic. Our commitment is:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.
- Every employee and volunteer is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of this Equal Opportunities statement will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly.

GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINE

Employees and volunteers have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Grievance and Bullying and Harassment Procedures.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedures.