



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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1.0 Introduction and Background

Arrow County Supplies is committed to promoting equal opportunities and values diversity, fairness and justice resulting in equality for everyone throughout the organisation enabling them to work free from discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

We will combat any form of discrimination and will use the Company's position of influence, wherever possible, to help overcome discriminatory barriers and actively promote good relations, conditions and procedures that result in a discrimination free environment.

This Policy will be extended, but is not restricted to race, gender and disability and is applied to the following processes as a minimum:

- Recruitment and Selection of all staff.
- Company Training.
- Promotion and career development.
- Human Resource Activities including Disciplinary and Dismissal activities.

Arrow County Supplies aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences and to secure genuine equality of opportunity in all aspects of its commercial activities. This Policy contains measures required under the Equalities act 2010 and the 1998 Human Rights Act. The company recognises different types of discrimination and individuals with protected characteristics.

This applies to job applicants, employees, casual/temporary workers and customers of the organisation's cleaning products. This policy will set out how we aim to achieve this, the responsibilities of staff, suppliers and customers, and what processes will be put in place to monitor our success in achieving greater equality in the workplace.

This policy will extend to all aspects within the business and is firmly driven and overseen by the Managing Director and delivered and communicated by a designated Director throughout as an integral part of company training. A formal review of this Policy will be carried out as an integral part of annual Management Review

Arrow County Supplies treats any incidents of victimisation, discrimination or harassment as a disciplinary offence and any employee found in breach of this policy will be subject to the company's full disciplinary investigation process.

Communicating the policy



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All employees, suppliers and customers will be made aware of the organisation's commitment to diversity and equality of opportunity, and of the legal commitments of the organisation on our website. The Company Newsletter will incorporate information on the measures taken by the company and its commitment to share these values with the supply chain.

All staff and suppliers will be informed of revisions to the policy, and ongoing training will be used to increase understanding of the issues through Shropshire Council and to support managers and supply chain in implementing the policy and action plan.

Arrow County Supplies will promote good practice in the cleaning supplies sector and with stakeholders, and amongst other partner organisations through publicity, training, individual support and through setting a good example. The principles of equality and diversity will be embedded into partnership working through revision and updating of the Arrow County Supplies supply chain appraisal questionnaire.

Publicity and documentation

Information on key cleaning products will be made available in a variety of formats on request, which may include electronic communication, the use of interpreters, written signs in the appropriate language, the use of pictures or diagrams or audio tapes if required to ensure the correct and safe use of our products.

Contracts and Service Delivery

All janitorial and cleaning products supplied by Arrow County Supplies and the supply chain are covered by this policy commitment

We will strive to provide quality cleaning products to all service customers equally and fairly and to ensure that our policies and procedures do not discriminate against any group or individual on the grounds of age, race, religion or belief, creed, colour, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, marital / parental status, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation or HIV status.

Training will be provided to staff and suppliers involved in the delivery of cleaning products to provide an appropriate and informed response to all service customers without unlawful discrimination

Responsibilities: Director Level Leadership

A nominated Lead Director (Bruce Blackledge) will have responsibility for ongoing review of the policy and action plan, and will make recommendations to the board on company and supply chain compliance with the legislation following the supplier appraisal process.



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All employees, suppliers and customers of the organisation's cleaning products are expected to accept their personal responsibility for the practical application of the policy, and must ensure that they do not discriminate in any way against employees, suppliers or members of the public with whom their work may bring them into contact.

All complaints and grievances will be investigated and acted upon in accordance with this policy.

Recruitment

The Lead Director will ensure that the application forms and guidance for prospective employees contains a statement as an equal opportunities employer. The company will use local Job Centres, local newspapers and/or Employment Agencies. All vacancies will be identified on the company website and will contain information that communicates our commitment as an equal opportunities employer.

Appendix 1: Definition of key terms used in the policy

Discrimination occurs when a condition, or requirement is applied which cannot be justified.

- Direct discrimination is treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others solely because they are, for example, a lesbian, a gay man or because they have a disability or illness.
- Indirect discrimination occurs where there is a requirement or condition which applies equally to everyone but which, in practice, has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be justified. For example an unnecessary physical or age requirement can discriminate against women or disabled people.
- Abuse and/or harassment – Discrimination also covers actions which amount to abuse and/or harassment of people or groups of people because for example they are a member of a national, racial or ethnic minority group, a woman, a lesbian, a gay man or have a disability or illness.
- Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because she/he has pursued or intends to pursue their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.

The last two definitions can be applied to other forms of discrimination e.g. institutional ageism, homophobic or anti-gay incident.



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Discrimination in any of the forms stated above is unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

Race Equality Legislation

The Race Relations Act 1976 (RRA) makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, or ethnic or national origin in employment, education, housing and the provision of goods, facilities and cleaning products.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA) places enforceable duties on specified public bodies, including a responsibility to comply even if functions have been contracted out to cleaning products and stakeholders sector organisations.

It places a general duty on all public bodies to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between persons of different ethnic groups.

The act also places specific duties on certain public bodies, including the need to monitor, review and consult on policies and cleaning products.

The Race Regulations 2003 (The Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003) incorporate the EU Race Directive into domestic law and include new definitions, protections and a new exception from the prohibition to discriminate in employment where it can be shown that there is a genuine requirement for someone from a particular race or ethnic or national origin. It also abolishes previous exceptions against discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic or national origins for charities in their role as employers.

We are committed to work as far as possible to the Commission for Race Equality's Code of Practice for Employment

Religion or Belief Equality Legislation

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and Amendment prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the employment field, including in occupational pension schemes.

Gender Equality Legislation

The Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975 and Amendments (Latest amendment 2003) make it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex in employment, education, housing and the provision of goods, facilities and cleaning products, or to discriminate against married people in employment or recruitment. The provisions of the Sex Discrimination Act apply to both Men and Women. There are exceptions allowed under specific circumstances.

The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 extend the provisions of the SDA to make it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of gender reassignment in employment and vocational training.

The Equal Pay Act (EPA) 1975 and Amendments (Latest amendment 2003) makes it unlawful to discriminate between women and men in their contracts of employment, including pay and all other contractual benefits.

Disability discrimination legislation

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in the areas of employment, the provision of goods, facilities, cleaning products and premises, education and public transport. This law is being implemented in stages, and since October 2004 the employment regulations were extended to include, amongst others, organisations with less than 15 staff. October 2004 was also the deadline for organisations to have made reasonable adjustments to premises remove physical barriers to cleaning products. In 2006 there will be a statutory requirement of public bodies to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

Sexual Orientation Equality Legislation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and Amendment prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the employment field, including in occupational pension schemes.

Age Equality Legislation

Legislation against discrimination in the field of employment on the grounds of age should be in effect by 2006.

Legislation supporting diversity and equality

The Employment Relations Act 1999 gives working parents of young children or children with disabilities the right to unpaid parental leave and time off to deal with emergencies.

The Employment Act 2002 (Flexible Working Regulations) is a wide ranging package. The provisions concerning maternity leave and pay, paternity leave and the right to request flexible working are implemented through Regulations effective from April 2003.

The Equalities Act 2010 consolidates previous legislation and expands the classification of "Protected Characteristics" and the types of discrimination.



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The company is fully committed to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's codes of practice for employment, equal pay and services, public functions and associations.

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the company's compliance processes.

Bruce Blackledge

Bruce Blackledge
Director

CHANGE DETAILS & NOTES	DATE	NEW ISS
First Issue and Reviewed in Management Review	Jan 09	1
Second Issue and Reviewed in Management Review	Jan 2010	2
Third Issue and Reviewed in Management Review	April 2011	3
Fourth Issue and Reviewed in Management Review	Mar 2012	4