

# **Railway Housing Association**

## **Policy Statement**

### **Recruitment and Employment**

#### **1. Statement of Intent**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage and civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity.

The policy will be made available to all employees and applicants for employment, and communicated to all contractors reminding them of their responsibilities towards equal opportunities.

Implementation of the policy will be in accordance with appropriate statutory requirements, and full account will be taken of all available guidance, and in particular any relevant Code of Practice.

#### **2. Implementation**

##### **2.1 Recruitment and Selection**

The Association will endeavour, through appropriate training, to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate whether consciously or unconsciously in making these decisions.

When recruiting staff, the Association will only request specific qualifications or experience where they are relevant to the job.

A consistent, non discriminatory approach will be adopted in the advertising of vacancies. Advertising will be carried out in such a way as to ensure the broadest range of applicants, and we will not confine our recruitment advertising to areas or media sources which provide only or mainly for applicants of a particular group.

In addition, all posts will be advertised internally. All applicants who apply for jobs will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

Equality monitoring information and details of applicants' names and addresses will be removed from applications prior to short listing.

All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements, and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person and will be based on objective and job related criteria.

Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job, and will not be of a discriminatory nature. Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

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Full and fair consideration will be given to people with disabilities. The Association undertakes to interview any applicant with a disability who meets the essential criteria of the person specification for the post.

References will be sought from all of the applicant's employers over the two years prior to interview, one of whom must be the applicant's current or most recent employer.

If within six months of appointment a post becomes vacant again, applicants for the original vacancy may be re-considered without re-advertising.

The Association considers that in principle the staff profile at all levels should reflect the population of the areas we work in, and will set targets for recruitment and promotion accordingly. A staff profile in respect of age, gender, ethnicity and disability is in place and will be used when considering where to advertise vacancies to encourage applications from under represented groups within the Association.

An Action Plan detailing action to be taken by the Association in aiming to meet its targets is in place and reviewed annually. This includes registration with positive action schemes including 'Positive About Disabled', 'BME Spark', 'Cofem' and being champions of the 'Age Positive' initiative.

The Association will consider applications for vacancies from applicants who are closely connected to Board members and current employees: -

1. 'Closely connected' would include a relative, spouse or partner, and a close friend.
2. All applicants will be asked to declare any close connection on their application form. Their application will be considered on its merits along with all the other applications. However, the person(s) to whom they have a close connection will not take any part in the recruitment process.
3. Any offer of employment to an applicant who is closely connected to a Board member or current employee must be approved by the Board of Trustees. The person(s) to whom they are closely connected will take no part in the decision making process.

The Association will not consider applications for employment from anyone who is currently, or has been within the preceding twelve months, a Member of the Board of Trustees.

## **2.2 Criminal Records Bureau**

The Association meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

The following posts will be subject to a satisfactory criminal record check (Enhanced Disclosure):

Chief Executive  
Director of Housing Services  
Director of Asset Management  
Housing Manager  
Asset Manager  
Project Manager  
Maintenance Surveyors

Housing Officers  
Tenancy Services Officers  
Scheme Manager  
Gas Servicing Engineer

All checks will be carried out in accordance with the Association's Criminal Records Bureau Policy.

### **2.3 Training and Promotion**

All staff will receive equality and diversity awareness training. Refresher training will be arranged as appropriate.

The Association aims to develop the potential of all staff, enabling them to acquire the skills necessary to compete for jobs at all levels, by means of a comprehensive training programme. Training needs will be identified through supervision, appraisals and requests from members of staff. All staff have equal access to training.

Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

### **2.4 Working Environment**

The Association aims to provide a neutral working environment, in which no employee feels under threat or intimidated.

Where reasonably practicable, the special needs of staff with disabilities will be met, including the provision of adapted equipment and changes in working methods to help meet those needs.

We will endeavour to ensure that a supportive work environment is created for all staff, and every member of staff has a responsibility under the policy not to discriminate against, harass or victimise anyone at work either directly or indirectly. Training will be given to all staff in this area.

The Association will take all incidents of discrimination and harassment seriously, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the procedures set down in the Association's Terms and Conditions of Employment and could, if founded, result in dismissal.

Training will be made available for all staff, managers and Board members to enable them to identify all forms of discrimination and harassment.

It is recognised that discrimination can take different forms;

#### **Direct Discrimination**

Direct Discrimination is treating one person less favourable than another, because of, for example, race or gender.

#### **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect Discrimination is creating a condition or requirement of employment which cannot be shown to be justifiable and which in practice precludes people from certain groups from, for example, getting a job.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is where staff are harassed or abused because of, for example, race, gender, or disability. This would result in less favourable treatment by creating a working environment likely to have a detrimental effect on the work and personal well-being of staff.

### **Victimisation**

Victimisation is where a person is treated less favourably because they have pursued or it is suspected they will pursue their rights under the equal opportunities policy via the grievance and/or legal proceedings.

## **3. Monitoring**

The employment records of all employees and relevant details of all applicants will be maintained and reviewed in order to monitor the progress of this policy.

Monitoring will include:

- The collection and classification of information regarding the ethnic origin, gender, age and disability of all applicants and current employees.
- The examination by ethnic origin, gender, age and disability of the distribution of employees and the success rate of applicants.
- The examination of advertising methods to monitor their success in reaching the broadest range of potential applicants.
- The recording of recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees.

The results of the monitoring procedure will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team on an annual basis to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given to adjusting this policy if necessary to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.

## **4. Responsibility**

The Chief Executive is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

## **5. Review**

This policy will be reviewed biennially, in consultation with staff.

**February 2011**

**This policy can be made available on request in other languages, large type, Braille or in audio format.**