



---

**Derry City & Strabane**  
District Council

---

Comhairle  
**Chathair Dhoire &  
Cheantar an tSratha Báin**

---

**Derry Cittie & Stràbane**  
Destrìck Cooncil

# **Equal Opportunities** Policy

January 2016



## 1. Introduction

Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality of opportunity in all of its employment practices and activities.

## 2. Context

This policy builds on the foundation of equality and anti-discrimination legislation and strives, not only to comply with legal requirements, but to use these to ensure that the Council endeavours to exemplify best practice.

## 3. Objective

The objective of this policy is to build a fully inclusive organisation. This will be achieved by:

- promoting dignity and respect for all and creating a culture where intimidation, bullying or harassment will not be tolerated
- reviewing employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness
- taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- fulfilling all its legal obligations under the anti-discrimination legislation and the associated codes of practice
- gathering information on the profile of our staff and applicants
- assessing the impact of current and proposed employment policies, practices and services
- identifying priorities and setting equality objectives

The Council will also endeavour to prevent all forms of discrimination and to deal with all forms of discrimination consistently, promptly and effectively through its internal dignity at work, grievance and disciplinary procedures.

## 4. Scope

This policy applies to all job applicants and potential applicants, employees, agency workers, contract workers, trainee workers and students on work experience or placements and volunteer workers.



## 5. Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

Derry City and Strabane District Council recognises that discrimination, harassment and victimisation are unacceptable and it aims to ensure that no job applicant or potential applicant, employee, agency worker, contract worker, trainee worker and student on work experience or placement and volunteer worker, receives less favourable facilities or treatment or is harassed or victimised either directly or indirectly on the grounds of:

- religious belief (or none)
- political opinion (or none)
- racial group (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, including Irish Travellers)
- age
- marital or civil partnership status
- sexual orientation
- gender, including gender reassignment
- disability
- having or not having dependants
- trade union membership/non membership
- record of convictions<sup>1</sup>

This Equal Opportunities Policy is fully supported by Elected Members, the Chief Executive and senior management and has been agreed with trade unions and/or employee representatives.

<sup>1</sup> A person's criminal record will be seen in the context of the post, ability to do the job and the responsibility of employers for child protection, for the care of funds, resources, the public and other employees. Only offences relevant to the post in question will be considered.



## 6. Implementation

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. In order to implement this policy the Lead HR Officer will:

- Advise all employees of their responsibilities in relation to the policy and communicate the policy to employees, job applicants and any other individual engaged by the Council to carry out Council business
- Incorporate specific behaviours in respect of implementing the policy into job specifications
- Provide equal opportunities training and guidance for employees as appropriate, including training on induction and management courses.
- Ensure that those involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory recruitment and selection techniques
- Ensure appropriate resources are in place to ensure the effective implementation of this policy

## 7. Monitoring

Derry City and Strabane District Council is registered with the Equality Commission for the purposes of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 and, as such, is obliged to monitor the community background and sex of its job applicants and workforce. Council is also obliged to review the composition of its workforce and employment policies and practices every three years and, where appropriate, to consider taking affirmative action to promote fair participation between all communities. Council is committed to complying with these duties. Any information disclosed to the Council in relation to equality issues will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with legislative requirements.

## 8. Complaints

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures. A copy of these procedures is available from HR. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. These internal procedures do not replace or detract from the right of employees to pursue complaints under the relevant legislation.

## 9. Review

The policy and any associated training identified will be reviewed regularly in light of changing legislation or where any failure or weakness in this policy is highlighted.