

# Independent Advocacy Perth and Kinross

## Equality and Diversity Policy

### 1 Policy statement

1.1 IAPK is committed to equality and diversity in all areas of our work and works within the spirit and practice of the Equality Act 2010. Our Equality and Diversity Policy underpins all other policies and procedures and is designed to promote equality of opportunity and protection for our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and advocacy partners.

1.2 The overall aim of this policy is to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Ensure that we treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect
- Promote fairness and equality of opportunity
- Promote equality of access
- Promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.
- Provide a safe, supportive and welcoming environment for employees, volunteers, people using our services, and visitors
- Integrate our values into our work
- Build transparency in the workplace

1.3 This policy applies to every employee, prospective employee, contractor, volunteer, person using our services and to the services we provide.

### 2 Implementing the policy

2.1 We will make our Equality and Diversity Policy effective by

- Actively promoting the policy to all employees, job applicants, advocacy partners and volunteers
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing all our recruitment, training, promotion, discipline and dismissal procedures and criteria and changing them if they result in unfair discrimination
- Taking appropriate action, using agreed procedures, if any employee, volunteer or person acting on our behalf breaches or is affected by a breach of this policy
- Providing training and guidance, particularly for managers involved in recruitment and other decision-making processes to make sure they understand the policy and their legal responsibilities
- Monitoring recruitment and employment statistics and by taking steps, including positive action, to address any issues identified.

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2.2 The active promotion of this policy is aimed at eliminating:

- direct discrimination, including discrimination based on association or perception
- indirect discrimination

on the grounds of:

- gender
- race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
- gender reassignment
- marital status, including civil partnership
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity
- disability
- religion and/or belief
- age.

Discrimination on the basis of work pattern (part-time working, fixed term contract, flexible working); history of ill health; HIV status; responsibility for dependants; unless justifiable, will also not be accepted.

### 3 Equality and Diversity at work

3.1 IAPK is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and demonstrating that we value the diversity of our staff. In order to ensure that equality underpins all aspects of our employment policies and procedures we will:

- Aim to prevent unfair discrimination against any job applicant or employee and, when recruiting, only consider factors which are relevant to someone's ability to perform the job well
- Aim to create a workforce that is as diverse as the community we serve
- Treat all employees and job applicants fairly in relation to all our employment policies and procedures and meet any reasonable and appropriate additional needs they may have
- Value and respect the identities and cultures of our staff, volunteers and people who use our services
- Work towards a workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment and act promptly on any complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation
- Provide a safe working environment
- Make the workplace and information about work as accessible as possible for all our employees and volunteers

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- Provide clear information about job selection and training and encourage all employees to reach their full potential
- Ensure we work according to the relevant employment legislation and statutory codes of practice
- Continue to develop good practice employment policies and procedures
- Apply the Equality and Diversity Policy through our recruitment and selection process, opportunities for training and promotion, and disciplinary procedures and all other employment policies
- Ensure employees, volunteers and job applicants have access to the grievance or complaints procedure if they believe that they have been unfairly treated.

### **4 Commitment to our advocacy partners**

4.1 People who use, or may use, our independent advocacy services can expect IAPK to:

- Design and deliver appropriate, accessible and effective services
- Work in partnership with others to promote equality and diversity
- Ensure we provide services that comply with relevant legislation and statutory codes of practice
- Continue to develop good practice policies and procedures
- Act promptly if we receive complaints about the way we provide our services
- On behalf of our partners we will challenge inequality in institutions, organisations and individuals we may deal with in acting as independent advocates.

### **5 Responsibility for implementing the policy**

5.1 The responsibility for ensuring the full implementation of this policy rests with the Board of Directors, who delegate day to day implementation to the Chief Executive. All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this policy and apply it, individually and collectively, in all areas of their work.

5.2 All employees and volunteers must ensure that they do not:

- Discriminate against anyone
- Persuade or pressure another employee or volunteer to discriminate
- Harass, bully or victimise anyone associated with IAPK , whether they are employees, volunteers or people who use services, members of the public or other stakeholders
- Condone harassment.

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- 5.3 If anyone witnesses a discriminatory incident at work, they have a duty to others to challenge such behaviour and practice.
- 5.4 If an employee does not follow these and other requirements of the Equality and Diversity Policy, it will usually be dealt with under IAPK 's Disciplinary or Anti-bullying, Harassment and Dignity Policy.

### **6 Monitoring**

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is appropriate and responsive to relevant legislation. It should be noted that individual employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, IAPK , for any act of unlawful discrimination.
- 6.2 The roles and responsibilities of individual employees and managers in relation to equality and diversity and IAPK 's corporate responsibilities are set out in the attached appendix.

**Policy dated 18/9/19**

**For Review September 2021 or upon any changes to legislation.**

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Individuals

Employees and volunteers at all levels must understand, recognise and accept individual responsibility for equality and diversity within the organisation. This means not discriminating against others, whether intentional or not, and taking action if the need arises, as well as supporting IAPK's procedures and practices on equality and diversity

#### Managers

Managers have the responsibility to ensure that equality and diversity procedures and practices are upheld. This includes:

- Ensuring fairness and impartiality in selecting, managing and developing employees and volunteers as well as when providing services
- Ensuring the monitoring, evaluation, impact assessment and annual reporting of equality and diversity work is carried out in IAPK .

#### Chief Executive

To ensure that all employees and volunteers

- Know and understand what discrimination is and the legal implications
- Know what their roles and responsibilities are with regard to equality and diversity
- Have equality and diversity procedures and practices in place
- Monitor, evaluate and impact assess for equality and diversity
- Annually report on progress in IAPK

#### Board

- To ensure by oversight that the policy is in place and is being adhered to.