

JESSOPS CONSTRUCTION LTD

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to produce a framework to enable:

- Equal treatment for all employees or potential employees irrespective of race, creed, colour, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic origins, religion, disability, age, gender, trade union membership or marital status.
- A work environment which is free from any intimidation, hostility, humiliation and any other form of harassment.

2. Scope

The provisions of this policy relate to:

- All temporary and permanent employees.
- Job applicants for any position.

All staff of Jessops Construction Ltd regardless of their status, are required to observe the provisions of the Policy.

The policy applies to all aspects of employment including:

- Job Design
- Advertisements
- Recruitment, Transfers and Promotions.
- Training and Development
- Redundancy and Redeployment
- Disciplinary / Capability
- Grievance / Disputes.

3. Policy Statement

Jessops Construction Ltd is committed to equality of opportunity and treatment in all its employment practices, policies and procedures.

To this end, within the framework of the law and best practice, we are committed wherever practicable, to recruiting and maintaining a work force which broadly reflects the local catchment area within which we operate and creating a work environment which is free from all forms of harassment and unlawful and unfair discrimination.

4. Provisions of the policy

The Equality of Opportunity Policy covers discrimination and harassment in the areas of:

- Age
- Bullying at Work
- Disability
- Equal Pay
- Ex-offenders
- Sexual Orientation
- Race
- Religion
- Sex Discrimination
- Sexual Harassment
- Trade Union Status

The following sections of the policy provide more detail on each of the areas. In addition further information can be found in the detailed guidance notes relating to Bullying at Work, Disability, Race, Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment.

4.1 Age

Jessops Construction Ltd believes that a person's age does not determine their job performance or their ability to learn and therefore will not apply any age constraints on employees' opportunities.

Age will only be a consideration where the investment that is to be placed in a person e.g. training, is in excess of the contribution that the employee will be able to make prior to retirement.

4.2 Bullying at Work

Jessops Construction Ltd regards bullying as harassment and therefore it is covered under the provisions of this policy.

4.3 Disability

Disability is defined as:

'A physical or mental impairment which has long term effects i.e. it has lasted for at least 12 months, or it can be expected to last at least 12 months.'

The detailed guidance notes on 'Recruitment, Development and Retention of Disabled Workers' should be referred to for this area of the Policy.

4.4 Equal Pay

Jessops Construction Ltd will ensure that where men and women are doing 'like work' and the jobs are rated as equivalent, that equal remuneration and benefits are available.

A job evaluation system is used to evaluate all posts within the organisation. This system is free from both direct and indirect discrimination.

4.5 Ex-Offenders

When a person is imprisoned for a criminal offence, the length of the prison sentence determines when that person has to declare their conviction.

Where a person has a criminal record which is 'spent', this information will not be utilised by Jessops Construction Ltd and it will be viewed that the person has not committed, been charged with, prosecuted for, convicted of or sentenced for the offence.

As any criminal sentences of two and a half years or more are never spent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, this information will be taken into account by Jessops Construction Ltd.

Under the Financial Services Act there are some exceptions that override the legislation. In these cases this information will be utilised by Jessops Construction Ltd in terms of recruitment and dismissal of staff.

4.6 Sexual Orientation

Jessops Construction Ltd recognises that a person's sexual orientation does not determine their job performance.

Therefore, a person's sexual orientation, if known, will not be a consideration during recruitment, or the course of employment. Neither will it be a principle reason for dismissal.

4.7 Race

No person will be treated less favourably on the grounds of their race, nationality, creed or colour, during their application for employment with Jessops Construction Ltd or during the course of their employment. Neither will it determine their dismissal from Jessops Construction Ltd's employment.

Jessops Construction Ltd will endeavour to ensure that the percentage of staff employed at locations around the country is representative of the ethnic residential population and will take appropriate action to facilitate this.

Staff will not be treated less favourably because they have brought proceedings or given evidence or information under the Race Relations Act.

All staff will conduct themselves in a manner and use language which is not racially offensive to any person.

Jessops Construction Ltd will take very seriously any racially offensive behaviour and will treat it as a disciplinary matter which may result in dismissal of the offender.

4.8 Religion

Jessops Construction Ltd will comply the legislation in Northern Ireland in that no person will be treated less favourably on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion.

In addition, whenever reasonably practicable Jessops Construction Ltd will be flexible on all of its sites of operation, to accommodate requests for time off from staff which related to their religious observance.

4.9 Sex Discrimination

No person will be treated less favourably on the grounds of their sex, during their application for employment with Jessops Construction Ltd or during the course of their employment. Nor will their sex determine their dismissal from Jessops Construction Ltd's employment.

No staff will be treated less favourably because they have brought proceedings, or given evidence or information under the Sex Discrimination Act.

Procedures regarding the avoidance of sexual discrimination and promotion of equality are detailed separately.

4.10 Sexual Harassment

All staff will conduct themselves in a manner and use language which is not sexually offensive to any person.

4.11 Trade Union Status

No person will be treated less favourably on the grounds of their trade union status, during an application for employment with Jessops Construction Ltd, during the course of their employment or in determining their dismissal from Jessops Construction Ltd's employment.

5. Responsibilities

The Managing Director is charged with the overall responsibility for implementing the policy.

The Office Manager is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness and operation of the policy.

Managers and Supervisors have a responsibility to give their full commitment and support in the practical application of this policy.

All employees must:

- Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices.

6. Redress

Any member of staff who feels they have been discriminated against under the terms of this policy has the right and is encouraged to pursue their grievance through the Grievance Procedure.

If staff prefer they can raise their grievance, in the first instance, with the Managing Director in the strictest confidence.

In addition, staff may seek confidential advice from the Office Manager.

Any breach of this Equal Opportunity Policy will be classed as gross misconduct, which will be dealt with via the Disciplinary Procedure and may result in dismissal.

Signed.....

Position: Managing Director

Date.....