

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUITY POLICY

1. Objective and Scope

- 1.1 Bromley Mytime is fully committed to the principles of equity and equality of opportunity. It is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer, customer, board member, or stakeholder receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religious belief, class or social background, sexual preference or political belief.
- 1.2 Bromley Mytime will ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in all aspects of its services and that they are treated fairly. Bromley Mytime as required by law will not discriminate against its employees and recognises its legal obligations.
- 1.3 Bromley Mytime will seek advice from appropriate legal sources each time the policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to comply with all legislation requirements. Each time the law is changed Bromley Mytime will seek advice and review any other policies that may be affected.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 Every employee, volunteer, board member, customer and all those associated indirectly or directly with Bromley Mytime is required to assist its commitment to provide equal opportunities and avoid discrimination.
- 2.2 Board of Trustees
 - 2.2.1 The Board of Trustees accepts their collective role for ensuring that this Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy is followed and to deal with any actual or potential breaches.
 - 2.2.2 All Board decisions will reflect our commitment to achieving the objectives set out in this policy.
- 2.3 Chief Executive
 - 2.3.1 The Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy.
 - 2.3.2 Must ensure the implementation of the policy and fully support all persons who carry out that policy.
 - 2.3.3 Will have the responsibility of discharging the organisations duty under relevant acts and regulations.
 - 2.3.4 Will cooperate fully in the training of employees /volunteers and arrange for consultation on equality matters as appropriate.
 - 2.3.5 Will include equality performance information in the annual report.
- 2.4 Equality Group
 - 2.4.1 An Equality Group supported by the Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for updating and providing guidance on equity issues, for the formation and implementation and delivery of the Equal Opportunities and Equity Plan.

OPERATING PROCEDURES**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUITY POLICY**

2.5 Employees/Volunteers/Contractors/Partners other personnel working for, or on behalf of Bromley Mytime.

2.5.1 All employees, volunteers, contractors/partners and board members have responsibilities to respect, act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of this policy.

2.5.2 All employees/volunteers will make themselves familiar with Bromley Mytime's policy and identify any training and development requirements.

2.6 Customers

2.6.1 Customers will be encouraged to comply with the spirit of this policy. To report any infringements or failings via Bromley Mytime's customer feedback mechanisms.

3. Purpose of the Policy

3.1 This policy has been produced to prevent/tackle any potential/current discrimination or other unfair treatment against its existing and potential employees, customers, volunteers, board members or volunteers.

4. Our Commitment

4.1 Bromley Mytime will produce and maintain an equal opportunities and equity plan to ensure the intent of this policy is delivered which will feature as part of the overall business delivery plan, itself reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

4.2 Service Delivery

4.2.1 Bromley Mytime's business plan will identify and take account of the needs of individuals from all sectors of the community and consider the likely impact of policies and services on them.

4.2.2 Bromley Mytime will use our Community Engagement strategy to consult as widely as possible with all sectors of the community including customers, relevant partners, stakeholders and representative groups.

4.2.3 Bromley Mytime will monitor and review our services to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background or circumstance, enjoy a fair and equal opportunity to access services and take appropriate action where this is not the case.

4.2.4 Bromley Mytime will inform employees, customers, volunteers, board members, relevant partners about our policies and progress on equality of opportunities.

4.2.5 Bromley Mytime will sample data from selected service users on a basis to be agreed. This data will allow the organisation to monitor profile: ethnicity, gender, disability, age. Appropriate action will be taken to address any issues which may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUITY POLICY

4.3 Employment

- 4.3.1 Bromley Mytime will be an employer of choice to all sections of the community. We are committed to workforce development and recruiting the best person(s), and therefore recruit and support high potential individuals regardless of their background.
- 4.3.2 Bromley Mytime will not lawfully discriminate in the selection of employees for recruitment or progression/promotion. However Bromley Mytime will if appropriate, consider lawful methods, such as positive action, to tackle under representation.
- 4.3.3 Bromley Mytime will ensure that all employees, potential employees and volunteers are treated equally and fairly and will ensure that no applicants for jobs are discriminated against in the recruitment and selection and progression/promotion process.
- 4.3.4 Personal and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are only necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required. Individual circumstances or commitments will not be taken into account, in making employment decisions except where necessary.
- 4.3.5 Bromley Mytime will review the recruitment, promotion and the composition of our workforce, in line with statutory obligations.
- 4.3.6 Bromley Mytime will consult with all employees/volunteers and recognised trade unions on work place issues and listen to their views.
- 4.3.7 Bromley Mytime will inform employees about our policies and progress on equality of opportunities.

4.4 Discrimination

- 4.4.1 Discrimination can take the following forms:

Direct Discrimination. This means treating someone less favourably than you would treat others in the same circumstances.

Indirect Discrimination. This occurs when a job requirement, provision, criterion, condition or practice is applied equally to all, which has a disproportionate and detrimental affect on one sector of society, because fewer from that sector can comply with it and the requirement cannot be justified in relation to the job.

- 4.4.2 When decisions are made about an individual, the only personal characteristics taken into account will be those which, as well as being consistent with relevant legislation, are necessary to the proper performance of the work involved.
- 4.4.3 *Harassment is described as* inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that is objectionable or causes offence to the recipient. It may be directed towards people because of their gender, appearance, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, age, sexual preference, a disability or some other characteristic. Bromley Mytime is committed to ensuring

OPERATING PROCEDURES**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUITY POLICY**

that its employees, customers, board members, participants and volunteers are able to operate free from harassment or intimidation.

4.4.4 The Company has a separate harassment at work policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with. Employees should report any bullying or harassment to their manager who will take appropriate action.

4.4.5 *Victimisation is defined as* when someone is treated less favourably than others because he or she has alleged unlawful discrimination or supported someone to make a complaint under one of the relevant Acts/regulations (as previously outlined) or given evidence provided about discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour.

4.4.6 Bromley Mytime regards any discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation as serious misconduct and any employee, volunteer or member who discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action under Bromley Mytime's disciplinary procedure.

4.5 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

4.5.1 To safeguard individual rights under the policy, an employee, volunteer, customer or board member who believes he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the Company's grievance and/or complaints procedure.

4.5.2 Appropriate action will be taken against any employee, volunteer, customer or board member who violates Bromley Mytime's Equal Opportunities and Equity Policy.

4.5.3 No employee, volunteer, customer or board member will be penalised for raising a grievance, even if it is not upheld, unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.

4.5.4 The final point of appeal relating to this policy is the Chief Executive.

4.5.6 Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation constitutes gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, Bromley Mytime for any act of discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

4.5.7 Bromley Mytime will collect data from the existing workforce on an annual basis and from applicants for jobs (including promotion). This data will allow the organisation to monitor profile of employees and applicants based on: ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religious belief. Appropriate action will be taken to address any issues which may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

4.6 Training

4.6.1 Bromley Mytime will provide training in equal opportunities to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision-making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise. This training will include

- recruitment & selection

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUITY POLICY

- specialist training where necessary.

4.6.2 BMY will also offer Awareness training sessions to all staff.

4.6.3 Bromley Mytime will monitor and review effectiveness of this training through our Performance Appraisal System/training evaluation forms/feedback.

5. Implementation and Operation

5.1 This policy and any future amendments will be implemented immediately following Board agreement and, at a corporate level, will result in the following:

5.2 A full or summarised copy of this document will be available to all staff (both permanent, contract and volunteers), customers, board members of Bromley Mytime.

5.3 Bromley Mytime will review current employment and service delivery practices and take measures to ensure that they are non-discriminatory in line with this policy.

5.4 A planned approach will be adopted to eliminate barriers which discriminate in employment or service provision.

5.5 Ensure that consultants/partners/contractors working with Bromley Mytime can demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equity and that they complement this policy.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

6.1 The policy will be reviewed annually unless any proposal to the Board, or legislation change, requires an interim review and/or amendment.

6.2 The Equality Group shall meet on a quarterly basis with the intention of reviewing the policy and updating the equal opportunities and equity plan.

6.3 The Equal Opportunities and Equity Plan will be reviewed by the Board as part of Bromley Mytime's business planning cycle. Where statistical and qualitative information is available this will be published internally and externally eg via website, to show the impact of this policy.