

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

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1. Equality and Diversity Overview

1.1. Scope

Parc Supplies is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Parc Supplies upholds the Equality Act 2010. This act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The nine protected characteristics covered under the act are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

Parc Supplies is committed to valuing and promoting equal opportunities in all areas of recruitment, employment, training and promotion.

The core values incorporate honesty, dignity, respect and responsibility for our actions in an environment where we expect supportive and inclusive teamwork within our organisation and in partnership with others. We require all our people to treat each other, the public, and our customers with respect, and we want to maintain a working atmosphere in which everyone delivers a high quality service.

This policy reinforces the behaviours that Parc Supplies expects to see in every employee.

Parc Supplies recognises the contribution of a diverse labour force. Equality legislation sets minimum standards and the organisation wants to go beyond ticking boxes. In promoting equality, the organisation wants everyone to have access to jobs, training and development opportunities and for all people to be treated fairly.

Embracing diversity means that the organisation acknowledges the full breadth of people who work for Parc Supplies and that variety is reflected within our staffing complement.

Inclusion means that everyone that works for Parc Supplies has a contribution to make, and the organisation will work to create the kind of environment that will be receptive, welcoming and inclusive of all its employees.

By making sure Parc Supplies promotes equality, diversity and inclusion it will be helping everyone to perform at their best and realise their potential.

1.2. Our Commitment

The organisation will take all reasonable steps to:

- Recruit and retain people from diverse backgrounds.
- Provide fair and open access to development opportunities in order to fully utilise the talent of all employees.
- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity, and protected from discrimination, bullying or harassment and to take appropriate steps when complaints arise.

1.3. Demonstration of Commitment

The organisation will ensure that this policy is put into practice by developing an overarching equality, diversity and inclusion strategy, linked to our business objectives and corporate strategies. The organisation will take the following steps:

- Provide regular communication about equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Establish monitoring systems that enable the business to understand where it is making progress and where it needs to improve.
- Provide ongoing training and development on the positive impact of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Create an environment where people can challenge any potentially discriminatory behaviours.
- Managers and key decision makers will be trained about equality legislation and its key implication on the business.
- Opportunities for employment, promotion, transfer and training will be advertised widely. All applicants will be welcomed, irrespective of gender or marital/family status, race colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, belief or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Complaints about discrimination, harassment or bullying will be regarded seriously and investigated, which may result in disciplinary sanctions, and even dismissal.
- Training and development opportunities will be provided in a non-discriminatory way.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

2. Organisation Commitments

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public

- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

3. Managing Workplace Diversity

'Managing Workplace Diversity' is a more effective way of dealing with equal opportunities issues. It emphasises the business and personal benefits that accrue from valuing the differences between people, rather than just complying with the law.

Organisations that grasp the additional business opportunities generated by managing diversity effectively are far more likely to enjoy sustained competitive advantage than those who do not.

3.1. Why is it important?

- It is against the law to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of a protected characteristic.
- It is essential that we attract and retain the most talented people to continue to compete successfully in the security and logistics support services market. Skills and ability are not, for example, the preserve of one particular ethnic group or one gender; by recognising this we can widen our recruitment pool and maximise the potential of our existing employees.
- We are committed to providing service excellence to all our customers and we believe that this can be better achieved by a workforce that values and reflects the diversity of our society.
- We operate in an increasingly diverse society. In order to enhance business opportunities we should reflect and value that diversity in our advertising, marketing and sales strategies.
- It has been established that employees' motivation and commitment increase if people feel valued and perceive that they are being treated fairly. Evidence from a range of sources also indicates that diversity results in more creativity and higher productivity.
- Finally, but not least, there are a number of laws that set out how employers and individuals should act. The most important one is the: Equality Act 2010.

4.1. Recruitment, advertising and selection

The recruitment process will result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in terms of relevant experience, abilities and qualifications. The Organisation is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy statement at all stages of recruitment and selection.

Advertisements will aim to positively encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people. When advertising job vacancies, in order to attract applications from all sections of the community, the organisation will, as far as reasonably practicable:

1. Ensure advertisements are not confined to those areas or publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants with a particular protected characteristic.

2. Avoid setting any unnecessary provisions or criteria which would exclude a higher proportion of applicants with a particular protected characteristic.
3. Where possible every effort will be made to recruit from areas which are underrepresented within Parc Supplies.

Where vacancies may be filled by promotion or transfer, they will be published to all eligible employees in such a way that they do not restrict applications from employees with a particular protected characteristic.

The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. All applications will be processed in the same way.

The staff responsible for short-listing, interviewing and selecting candidates will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and of the need for their consistent application. Person specifications and job descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Wherever possible, all applicants will be interviewed by at least two interviewers and all questions asked of the applicants will relate to the requirements of the job. The selection of new staff will be based on the job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do, or to train for, the job in question.

With job applicants, who may be regarded as disabled the Organisation will have regard to its duty to make reasonable adjustments to work provisions, criteria and practices or to physical features of work premises or to provide aids or services in order to ensure that the disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

If it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect the performance of the job (for example, if the job involves unsociable hours or extensive travel), this will be discussed objectively, without detailed questions based on assumptions about any of the protected characteristics.

4.2. Promotion and Career Development

When making decisions on promotions and career development, managers should focus on the employee as an individual, with particular talents and experiences, rather than make assumptions based on their age, race, gender, marital status or disability. Where, for example, jobs have been undertaken mainly by one gender or race in the past, efforts should be made to encourage others to apply for these posts.

4.3. Training and Development

The role of training and development is to improve performance in the job, to develop skills, and to prepare individuals for other roles and responsibilities. As with promotion and career development, managers should focus on the development needs of individuals. For example, priority should not be given to training a man in preference to a woman, and it should not be assumed that family commitments of either men or women will limit their career ambitions.

All training materials should be checked to ensure that the language and images used in them reflect the diversity of our employees and customers. Every effort will be made to accommodate the specific needs of disabled employees. A range of training options and media will be offered to ensure that all employees have equal access to training irrespective of location or hours of work.

4.4. Flexible Working

Flexible working, such as job-sharing, can also assist the Organisation to retain the skills of valued employee who wish to continue their careers but who may have, for example, caring responsibilities outside of work.

5. Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when, because of one of the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation), a job applicant or an employee is treated less favourably than other job applicants or employees are treated or would be treated.

The treatment will still amount to direct discrimination even if it is based on the protected characteristic of a third party with whom the job applicant or employee is associated and not on the job applicant's or employee's own protected characteristic. In addition, it can include cases where it is perceived that a job applicant or an employee has a particular protected characteristic when in fact they do not.

The Organisation will take all reasonable steps to eliminate direct discrimination in all aspects of employment.

5.1. Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination is treatment that may be equal in the sense that it applies to all job applicants or employees but which is discriminatory in its effect on, for example, one particular sex or racial group.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice (PCP), is applied to the job applicant or employee which is discriminatory in relation to a protected characteristic. A PCP is discriminatory if:

- it puts, or would put, the job applicant or employee at that disadvantage, and ;
- it cannot be shown by the organisation to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The Organisation will take all reasonable steps to eliminate indirect discrimination in all aspects of employment.

6. Genuine Occupational Requirement

In some instances there may be a genuine occupational requirement or qualification which may be applied for a specific position e.g. female search officers.

When applying a genuine occupational requirement in a job advert Parc Supplies must be wary to ensure there is clear justification for its inclusion otherwise they could be liable for a discrimination claim.

The Organisation must decide whether a genuine Occupational requirement may apply before advertising the job. In very limited circumstances if the organisation can show that someone with a protected characteristic (on grounds of age, gender, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation) is central to a particular job then it can insist that only someone with that protected characteristic is suitable for the job. For example if a security officer is required to complete searches on an female then there would be a genuine occupational requirement for female security officers.

7. Bullying and Harassment

This policy covers bullying and harassment in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, for example, during business trips and at work-related social events where an action detrimentally affects the organisation, colleagues or the client. Bullying can be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

An employee harasses another employee if they engage in unwanted conduct related to an anti-harassment protected characteristic, and the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the other employee's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other employee. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as demeaning or unacceptable.

The unwanted conduct will still amount to harassment if it is based on the anti-harassment protected characteristic of a third party with whom the employee is associated and not on the employee's own protected characteristic, or if it was directed at someone other than the employee, or even at nobody in particular, but they witnessed it. In addition, harassment can include cases where the unwanted conduct occurs because it is perceived that an employee has a particular protected characteristic, when in fact they do not.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person intended to offend. Something intended as a "joke" or as "office banter" may offend another person. This is because different employees find different levels of behaviour acceptable and everyone has the right to decide for themselves what behaviour they find acceptable to them.

Behaviour which a reasonable person would recognise as likely to offend an employee will always constitute harassment without the need for the employee having to make it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable, for example, touching someone in a sexual way. With other forms of behaviour, it may not always be clear in advance that it will offend a particular employee, for example, office banter and jokes. In these cases, the behaviour will constitute harassment if the conduct continues after the employee has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to him or her. A single incident can amount to harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

7.1. Examples

Bullying and harassment may be verbal, non-verbal, written or physical. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, other conduct of a sexual nature.
- Subjection to obscene or other sexually suggestive or racist comments or gestures, or other derogatory comments or gestures related to a protected characteristic.
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances or threats for rejecting sexual advances.
- Jokes or pictures of a sexual, sexist or racial nature or which are otherwise derogatory in relation to an anti-harassment protected characteristic.
- Demeaning comments about an employee's appearance.
- Questions about an employee's sex life.
- The use of nick names/picking on related to an anti-harassment protected characteristic.
- Isolating an employee or excluding him or her from social activities or relevant work-related matters because of a protected characteristic.

8. Responsibilities

Managers shall:

- Lead by example and promote an organisational culture that is supportive of the benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ensure that this policy is implemented and communicated to all existing employees and new employees when they begin working for the organisation.
- Promote a professional and positive work environment by being inclusive and open, and challenging behaviour or decisions that breach this policy.
- Actively promote equal opportunities within the departments for which they are responsible.
- Identify the various behaviours and barriers that discrimination can take, and understand the negative effect these can have on the organisation and its employees and customers.
- Dispel the myth that only certain types of people are suitable for certain types of jobs or training.
- Monitor the application of the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and work towards eliminating any discriminatory practices which may be limiting the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives, thereby maintaining our reputation as a fair and responsible employer in the eyes of the organisation's employees, shareholders, customers, and the public.
- Take accountability for the timely and appropriate action to address and resolve bullying and harassment, and discrimination in their work area, in line with the Employee Relation's Policy.

Employees shall:

- Comply with the letter and spirit of this policy.
- Treat all colleagues, the public and our customers with fairness, respect, dignity and honesty
- Understand the values and benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion and be aware of the various behaviours and barriers that discrimination can take, understanding the negative impact these can have on the Organisation, customers and colleagues.
- To be sensitive to the potential impact of their own behaviour on colleagues, customers and job applicants.
- Tell their line manager about any instances of discrimination, or any perceived problems in relation to employment, or potential discrimination in the way that we provide our services.
- To co-operate with management in the elimination of any discriminatory practices that may be identified.

9. Grievance and Discipline

If any employee believes that they have been unfairly discriminated against they should make a complaint using the organisation's grievance procedure.

Likewise, if any employee is found to have breached this policy they may be subject to disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure, which in serious cases may result in dismissal.

10. Monitoring

Human Resources will maintain records of the age, race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, and disability of job applicants and existing employees. However, it is the responsibility of managers to apply this policy at local level.

Any patterns of under representation (for example, where one gender or race appears to have a consistently reduced chance of promotion) should be fully investigated in conjunction with human resources, and any discriminatory practices identified and eliminated.

The organisation will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome substantial disadvantages caused by disability.

11. Compliance

Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of every Parc Supplies employee.

12. Further Guidance

For further guidance please contact the Human Resources department.

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management and is available for agreement with trade unions and/or employee representatives.

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found within the Parc Supplies Employee Handbook. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed on behalf of Parc Supplies Limited:



Max Armstrong

Director – April 2021