

DEMO

Tenants Management Organisation

Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedures

Statement

DEMO TMO wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities in all areas of its service delivery and employment and opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of color, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status or disability. The organisation believes that it is in the best interest of the organisation that services are delivered fairly and equally and that all applicants are treated fairly when employment opportunities arise. To this end and within the framework of the law, we are committed to achieving and maintaining within the organisation representations which reflect the community. We will be pro-active in ensuring that individuals are treated fairly and equally within the organisation and that no individual, be they employees, potential employees, members or residents suffer direct or indirect decimation.

1. Statutory obligations and equal opportunities aims

1.1 Equal opportunities legislation governing activities of the organisation

DEMO TMO will meet their obligations under the following legislation:

Race Relations Act 2000 & 1976; Sex Decimation Act 1975; Equal Pay Act 1970; Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944 and 1953; Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; Health & Safety at Work Act 1974; Employment Protection Act 1975; Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 Disability Discrimination Act 1996.
Commission for Racial Equality (Code of Practice in Rented Housing)

1.2 Aims and objectives of equal opportunities policy including the equal opportunity target groups the policy will seek to address.

The Organisation's aims are:

To deliver a fair and equal service to all residents living at Downs Estate;

To ensure that the composition of the Board reflects that of the population in the above;

To encourage active participation from all persons or groups of persons living in the above;

To ensure that all tenants have equal access to meetings and information concerning the activities of the organisation;

To increase awareness within the organisation of the needs of disadvantaged groups;

To ensure that no member of staff, the Board or tenants/user of service provided by the Organisation, suffers discrimination.

The Organisation will take positive action to overcome the results of unfair discrimination by encouraging and helping the following groups to participate in the Organisation's decision-making process and to receive fair and equal treatment in respect of service delivery and employment opportunities.

The Groups Include:

- People with sensory or physical disabilities
- Gay men and lesbian women, bisexual and transgender people black and other ethnic minority groups
- Religious groups
- People without formal qualifications
- People whose first language is not English
- Women
- Single parents
- People with parental and other care responsibility
- People who are affected by HIV and Aids
- Ex-offenders
- People who do shift work/work nights
- People with mental health or learning issues
- People with other health issues
- Young people
- Elderly people
- The unemployed/those on low incomes

2. Achieving Equal Opportunities Objectives

- 2.1 Procedure for ensuring that the Organisation is representative, democratic and accountable. All residents of the Downs Estate are eligible to become a member of the Organisation, attend general meetings and put their name forward for election to the Board.

The Board of the Organisation has delegated responsibilities and resources for ensuring that the equal opportunities policy is implemented monitored and updated every 65 months.

The Board will review and monitor procedures for informing and involving new and existing members.

The TMO manager will make regular reports to the Board on membership levels and participation.

Any proposed change in the Organisation's policy and procedures must be referred to a general meeting of the organisation's membership.

2.2 **Procedures for promoting and encouraging active membership of the organisation from all individuals and sections of the community.**

The TMO manager will ensure that all new residents are informed of the opportunities to become a member and participate in the organisation's affairs.

All new residents will be given a copy of the Organisation's handbook and sign up to DEMO TMO's equal opportunities Policy.

All communications will be written in 'plain English' and available in alternate formats such as large print, audio tapes etc where requested. Downs TMO will also arrange training program.

All members and employees of DEMO TMO will be expected to comply with the principles set out in this policy.

The Board will ensure that no person or groups of persons are restricted from participating directly or indirectly. To this end, the Board will regularly review its practice in respect of the

venue where meetings are held, to ensure that access is suitable for disabled people and the time those meetings are held, to give tenants equal opportunity to participate. The Board will assess any special needs such as child care facilities, translations, escorts to and from meetings that groups of persons may require in order to assist them in participating in the activities of the Association.

All residents of Downs Estate may attend both meetings of their Board and general meetings except where confidential business is being discussed.

2.3 Obligations to provide information about the Organisation and its activities

Details of annual general meetings (AGM) and events organized by the Organisation will be sent to all residents of Downs Estate. All residents will receive the regular newsletter and the Organisation's annual report.

All communications will be written in plain English.

All residents' members will receive minutes of general meetings. Summaries of the main points to arise from Board meetings will be included in the regular newsletter and sent to all residents.

2.4 Commitments to consultation and participation

The TMO manager will ensure that all members are informed and consulted about the activities of the Organisation.

The Downs TMO manager will provide all members with assistance in obtaining information they require about the Organisation's activities.

The TMO manager is responsible for advising the Board where policies, procedures and practices require further consultation with residents.

The Board will undertake an annual self-completion questionnaire of all residents to measure resident's satisfaction with the range of services provided by the Organisation and the Council and residents' views about how services might be improved. The TMO manager will ensure that assistance will be given to all those who require it in completing the questionnaire. A summary of all consultations will be sent to all residents or included in the newsletter.

The Board will ensure that no body or group of persons are restricted from participating in the meetings directly or indirectly.

All those who attend and participate in any meeting organized by the Organisation will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that respects the rights of all other persons, in particular, persons belonging to the groups included in this policy.

2.5 Board Composition and Equal Opportunities Obligations

The manager of the Organisation is responsible for ensuring that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and nominations for election to the Board are published according to the constitution.

The Board is authorized to co-opt two non-elected members on the basis that they belong to a group or groups of persons underrepresented on the Board.

All the new Board members must undertake a program of induction training which includes knowledge of the aims and objectives, policy and procedures of the organisation.

All Board members are responsible for ensuring that the aims and objectives of the organisation are implemented in a fair equal manner and that the special needs of disadvantaged groups are taken in account.

The organisation will liaise with other groups/agencies/organisation to further the organisation's equal opportunity policies.

2.6 How breaches of policies and procedures will be handled

Any breach or complaint concerning the organisation's equal opportunities policy or negligence in rectifying faults which have been brought to their attention will render any employee, officer or Board member liable to disciplinary action.

2.7 How the organisation intends to ensure that it achieves its equal opportunities objectives in delivering its services.

Repairs and maintenance

The circumstances of individuals will be taken into account when considering whether or not a repair is urgent. Priority will be given at the discretion of organisatin staff to those households where there are young children, people who are elderly or housebound, or affected by an illness or disability.

The circumstances of individuals will be taken into account in respect of recharging for repairs due to negligence or abuse or undertaking repairs or redecoration which are the residents' responsibility. Any repair defect due to racial harassment will be will be treated as an emergency.

All employees and contractors will be required to conduct themselves in accordance with DEMO TMO's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Office Opening Times

The organisation will ensure that office opening times are published and that an adequate after-office hour's service is available.

Consultation and participation

The organisation will undertake an annual self-completion survey

The organisation will ensure that the views of a representative range of households' types are taken into account if new policies are being considered.

2.8 Details of actions to be taken by organisation to ensure that the organisation fulfils its equal opportunities objectives in respect of the recruitment and employment of staff.

Downs TMO is committed to ensuring a work place free from discrimination and harassment and will regularly monitor employment issues, policies and procedures in such a way that certain target audiences will be reached.

Advertising

All vacant posts will be advertised.

A copy of the job description, person specification, equal opportunities policy, background information about organisation and application form will be sent to each applicant.

All applicants who meet the essential requirements required in the person specification will be selected for interview.

Interview panels will consist of 3-5 people appointed by the Board. The panel will be representative of the organisation's membership but may include people with special expertise.

No persons may be appointed to serve on the panel that is related in any way to any applicant.

Failure on the part of a panel member or applicant to disclose a known relationship constitutes grounds for dismissal should the applicant is appointed.

Access to Training

DEMO TMO will develop a program of induction and on-going training for all staff and organize training on its equalities policy.

All staff will be encouraged to participate in training for career and personal development.

All aspects of recruitment procedure will not discriminate directly against individuals or groups of individuals.

Grievance and Disciplinary Proceedings

The organisation's policy will be included in the contract of employment. These proceedings will normally be conducted in the same manner as the Management Complaints Procedure.

2.9 Details of actions to be taken by the organisation to ensure that it fulfils its equal opportunity in respect of hiring contractors and other agencies.

Advertising/tendering contracts

The organisation will maintain a list of approved building contractors. The list will be reviewed each year on the basis of an assessment of those builders included. Builders will be assessed according to reliability, standard of work, cost, safe working and equal opportunities.

Equal opportunities consideration will include the behavior of contractors towards residents and the allocation of contracts which reflect the ethnicity of the area. All contractors included on the approved list must have clear policies and evidence in respect of equal opportunities and health and safety at work.

3. Monitoring

3.1 Details of monitoring and review of equal opportunities policies and procedures.

The organisation's equal opportunities policy will be monitored to ensure that:

The organisation aims and objectives are being fulfilled;

Information is up to date

The following areas will be monitored:

- The standard of repairs service provided to each household;
- The standard of service provided generally to each household;
- The representativeness of the Board and membership
- The needs of disadvantage groups and the appropriateness of the organisation's policies and procedures;
- Inclusion of contractors on approved list and compliance with equal opportunities.

Information will be collected in the following ways:

- Resident satisfaction list;
- Management complaints;
- The annual self completion questionnaire survey;
- Regular reports to the board;
- Regular updating of household database.

Information will be collected about each household and updated at least once a year concerning the following areas;

- Race and ethnic origin;
- Age;
- Gender;
- Household type;
- Physical disability;
- Main language spoken
- Special needs.

All reports to the Board will comment on the implications for the organisation's equal opportunities policy. An equal opportunities monitoring report will be made to the organisation's AGM meetings, which will identify a range of plans to deal with key issues/failure in meetings the aims and objectives of equal opportunities policy. This annual report will identify issues and make recommendations.