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Charity Registration No. 1056649

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

PURPOSE OF POLICY:

As part of our commitment to fair treatment for staff KFR has developed this policy on equal opportunity, grievance procedures, contact officers, and the role of managers and supervisors. This policy outlines how KFR expect its staff to behave in accordance with discrimination law.

SCOPE OF POLICY:

The policy is to be used to help assess any staff members conduct in line with acceptability. It will be used in conjunction with the disciplinary & grievance procedure should any breaches of this policy occur.

POLICY DETAILS:

KFR is an equal opportunity employer. All staff are treated on their merits, without regard to race, age, sex, relationship status or any other factor not applicable to the position. Staff are valued according to how well they perform their duties, and on their ability to maintain Company standards of service.

KFR believes that all staff should be able to work in an environment free of discrimination, victimisation, sexual harassment and bullying/harassment. We consider these behaviours unacceptable and they will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Discrimination in employment on the following grounds or attributes is against the law under the Equality Act 2010:

- sex
- relationship status
- pregnancy
- parental status
- breastfeeding
- age
- race
- impairment
- religious belief or religious activity
- political belief or activity
- trade union activity
- lawful sexual activity
- gender identity
- sexuality
- family responsibilities
- association with someone with an attribute above

Victimisation because a person has made a complaint, agreed to be a witness or has had a complaint made against them is against the law. In addition to this, any act of harassment or bullying on the grounds of any of the above listed attributes, whether held by the person or not, is also illegal under the Equalities Act 2010.

Vicarious liability

Under anti-discrimination law, KFR can be liable for discrimination, sexual harassment and/or bullying/harassment which happens in the workplace, unless we can show we have taken reasonable steps to prevent it.

Managers and supervisors therefore must ensure that all staff are treated fairly and are not subject to any of these behaviours. They must also ensure that people who make complaints, or who are witnesses, are not victimised in any way.

Any reports of discrimination, victimisation, sexual harassment and bullying/harassment will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially. (See our grievance policy for more information)

Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who discriminates against, victimises, sexually harasses or bullies a co-worker. Discipline may involve a warning, demotion or dismissal, depending on the circumstances.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfavourably because of an attribute under the Act. Discrimination may involve:

- Making offensive 'jokes' about another worker's racial or ethnic background, sex, sexual preference, age or disability.
- Expressing negative stereotypes about particular groups e.g. "married women shouldn't be working".
- Judging someone on their political or religious beliefs rather than their work performance.
- Using selection processes based on irrelevant attributes such as age, race or disability rather than on skills and merit.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is any form of unwelcome sexual attention. It includes unwelcome touching or other physical contact, remarks with sexual connotations, smutty jokes, requests for sex, or the display of offensive materials such as pictures, posters or computer graphics.

Sexual harassment is against the law wherever and whenever it occurs. KFR will not tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace or in any work-related context such as conferences, work functions and business trips.

Sexual harassment has nothing to do with mutual attraction. Such friendships are a private matter.

Sexual harassment can be a single incident - it depends on the circumstances. Obviously some actions or remarks are so offensive that they constitute sexual harassment in themselves, even if they are not repeated. Other single incidents, such as an unwanted invitation out, may not constitute harassment if they are not repeated and are polite and respectful.

There is no onus on the person being harassed to say he/she finds the conduct objectionable. Many people find it difficult to speak up. All staff are responsible for their own behaviour. If you think the behaviour may offend, then don't do it!

What is bullying/harassment?

Bullying/harassment is behaviour that:

- (a) happens in a public place; and
- (b) Incites others to hate, to have serious contempt for or to severely ridicule individuals or groups because of their race, religion, sexuality or gender identity.

Workplaces can be considered public places. This means that any conduct which can possibly be observed by the public or any sort of communication either verbal or in writing to the public can be considered to have happened in a public place.

Some examples of bullying/harassment are:

- Placing a poster or sticker on the customer service counter which incites others to hate people because of their race, religion, sexuality or gender identity.
- Hate graffiti written on work toilet walls which incites hatred because of race, religion, sexuality or gender identity.
- Wearing of symbols, badges or clothing in the workplace with slogans that incite hatred.
- An employee abusing a person because of their race, religion, sexuality or gender identity in the workplace which encourages others to hate people of that race, religion, sexuality or gender identity.
- A work colleague making a speech in the work cafeteria that incites hatred of people because of their race, religion, sexuality or gender identity.

What to do if you are discriminated against, sexually harassed or bullied

There are a number of options. Choose the course of action you feel most comfortable with. Don't ignore discrimination, sexual harassment or bullying/harassment, thinking it will go away - often it just gets worse.

1. Speak to a paid member of staff within KFR who you feel comfortable approaching and give information to them on the incident/incidences (If it is a paid member of staff making the complaint, please approach a manager or Trustee)
2. Speak to a manager within KFR who can investigate complaints (and see our policy on grievance procedures):
3. Contact your trade union for advice. (if you are a member)

All policies will be reviewed yearly, and be distributed to staff regularly. Should the need arise, the policies will be translated into appropriate languages.

This Company is committed to providing an environment which is safe for all staff. You will not be disadvantaged in your employment conditions or opportunities as a result of lodging a complaint.