

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Summary

This policy sets out DEBRA's commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion including standards and responsibilities which ensure that we meet our legal duties and promote good practice.

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Introduction

At DEBRA we recognise that there are significant benefits for our employees, volunteers and members of being part of a community that celebrates difference, has respect for all and promotes inclusion within everything that it does. It is the responsibility of every individual that is connected to DEBRA to support and act on our equality, diversity and inclusion commitments thereby ensuring that we are a safe, welcoming and enabling organisation for all.

Purpose

This policy reflects that we see equality, diversity and inclusion are an integral part of DEBRA. It sets out how we will treat all volunteers, employees, members and other stakeholders with dignity, fairness and respect. This is regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Scope

This policy applies to-

- all elements and stages of our work and volunteering, and to all stages of the provision of our services and income generation. At each stage, the rights, expectations, and obligations set out in this policy apply equally.
- Anyone working for us. This includes all our staff, contractors, volunteers, and apprentices. The policy also relates to job applicants.

Legislation

The key law which informs our approach is the UK Equality Act 2010 which has harmonised and brought together many previous pieces of legislation. It has widened the scope of discrimination law beyond the area of employment and into the provision of education and training in the broadest sense and the wider supply of goods and/or services.

Principle statement

'We celebrate our differences, we include everyone and we have respect for each other. We celebrate our inclusive culture to empower a sense of belonging and connection, collectively supporting each other to grow. Our connected workforce reflects the communities we serve and helps us to meet the needs of members from all walks of life'.

Our Promises

- We are fully committed to enabling an inclusive culture in DEBRA where people can thrive by bringing their whole selves to work.
- We strive for a truly diverse workforce connected by a sense of belonging and a collective drive to support each other's growth.
- We will Ensure that our recruitment, selection, development, and succession processes are transparent, merit based, fair and accessible to all and remove barriers to progression and proactively widen diversity across senior leadership
- We will provide support and take complaints of discrimination, unequal, unlawful, or offensive treatment seriously. Including, ensuring those who witness, or experience it know how, and where, to make complaints and seek support.

Responsibilities

- The Board of Trustees is responsible for championing equality, diversity and inclusion and ensuring that the policy is consistent with the fundamental principles and that resources, support and leadership is provided to ensure this policy can be meaningfully implemented
- The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for championing this policy on behalf of the Board of Trustees and ensuring compliance with policy and the effective development, implementation and monitoring of equality and diversity objectives and related action.
- The Director of People is the policy owner and is responsible for ensuring that this policy is fit for purpose and up to date.
- Heads of Department, Regional Managers and Area Managers are responsible for implementing the policy and role modelling inclusive behaviour and providing support to their staff and volunteers

- Our employees and volunteers are responsible for championing equality, diversity and inclusion, understanding how the policy relates to their role, and reporting cases of discrimination, harassment, and unfair treatment

Standards

- No discrimination shall occur in the support and management of our people and delivery of our services to our members, and all decisions shall be objective and fair with individual circumstances taken into account.
- Our activities will take an individual approach, and diversity considerations will be incorporated into processes and delivery to ensure that all our services are accessible to all; we prevent discrimination.
- We expect all our people will use appropriately inclusive language and behave in a way that will uphold the dignity of colleagues, volunteers, members, and stakeholders.
- We commit to providing and supporting channels for our people to have their voices heard. For example, the Employee Engagement Survey, the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion steering group and the diversity networks.
- We will monitor the make-up of our employees, volunteers and members, 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 promises set out in this policy.
- We commit to having in place a remuneration strategy that complies with equal pay regulations and rewards our employees fairly and equitably.
- Where reasonable we will make tailored adjustments to accommodate the needs of our people, including those seeking to join the DEBRA as staff or volunteers.
- We will create a working environment that values difference and is free from prohibited discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment. Any individual who experiences or witnesses discrimination or harassment is encouraged to report it. All complaints will be taken seriously, promptly and thoroughly investigated, and dealt with in a sensitive and affect manner.
- All of our written and digital communications will follow Digital Accessibility guidelines and communication accessibility standards and be available in alternative formats on request.
- We will maintain clear policies in place to ensure that fundraising practices do not put pressure on or take advantage of people in vulnerable circumstances. This could include, for example, speakers of English as an additional language, older persons or people with disabilities.

Complaints

It is hoped that matters relating to complaints can be handled informally, at least in the first instance, and indeed can be resolved informally. Staff who have a complaint may wish to contact a member of the Human Resource team. All complaints will be handled in confidence. Any member of staff or Volunteer who feels that the treatment they have received is not in keeping with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has a right to register a complaint under the Grievance Policy or through the complaints procedure as set out in the Complaints and Compliance Policy. Staff must not be intimidated, discriminated against or treated differently for raising a concern, complaining or assisting in an investigation. If this happens it could amount to victimisation which is unlawful within the terms of the relevant legislation.

Sign-off

Name	Date	Signature
SLT	January 2024	

