



CHESS Homeless
Opening doors to independence

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

1. Introduction

At CHESS Homeless, our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is integral to our work, both in supporting homeless individuals and in our staff and volunteer recruitment and management. This comprehensive policy outlines our dedication to creating an inclusive and respectful environment for all, irrespective of backgrounds and circumstances.

2. Policy Statement

2.1. Equal Opportunities

We firmly believe in providing equal opportunities for homeless individuals seeking our support and for our staff members. Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, colour, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or any other protected characteristic, as defined by relevant laws and regulations, has no place within our organisation. Our commitment extends to transparent and bias-free staff recruitment and management practices, ensuring that everyone has an equitable chance to contribute and prosper. We also recognise indirect discrimination by association and are committed to preventing it.

2.2. Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity enriches our organisation and the services we offer. We actively seek to include homeless individuals and staff from various backgrounds, cultures, genders, sexual orientations, ages, abilities, and religious beliefs. We explicitly recognise and support individuals of all gender identities, including non-binary people. By embracing diversity, we foster innovation, creativity, and a broad range of perspectives, enabling us to better serve our beneficiaries and create a vibrant work environment where everyone is empowered to reach their potential.

2.3. Respectful and Inclusive Environment

We maintain an environment that honours the dignity, autonomy, and cultural identities of all, be they beneficiaries or team members. Discrimination, harassment, and any form of disrespectful behaviour are strictly prohibited. Our culture encourages safety, value, and open dialogue.

3. Responsibilities

3.1. Leadership Commitment

The managers at CHESS Homeless, promote equality, diversity, and inclusion across the organisation. They set an example by actively championing these principles, incorporating them into policies, practices, and decisions, and inspiring staff members to do the same. Their leadership ensures that diversity, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity are core values of our organisation.

3.2. Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

All individuals associated with CHESS Homeless, including staff, volunteers, and stakeholders, play a crucial role in upholding this EDI policy. They are expected to treat each other and the homeless individuals we serve with respect, empathy, and fairness, regardless of backgrounds. CHESS staff are



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encouraged to challenge biases, contribute to an inclusive workplace, and actively support our mission.

4. Implementation

4.1. Staff Recruitment and Development

Our commitment to equality and diversity starts with staff recruitment. We proactively attract diverse candidates for employment, ensuring fairness, transparency, and absence of bias in our selection processes. We offer training to enhance staff members' understanding of EDI, enabling them to provide culturally sensitive support to beneficiaries and colleagues. We believe that our staff's diverse backgrounds strengthen our collective capabilities. CHESS have a full staff EDI policy available in the staff handbook. We also support the day-one right to flexible working and will offer reasonable accommodations to pregnant employees.

4.2. Volunteer Recruitment and Development

CHESS is committed to giving volunteers equal opportunities and will appoint into roles based on the requirements of each role and person specification.

Recruitment will be open and fair and will conform to the requirements of this policy and the CHESS volunteer recruitment policy.

4.3. Service Delivery and Support

Our services to homeless individuals are provided in a manner that acknowledges their unique needs, cultural backgrounds, and identities. We constantly review and enhance our programs to ensure they cater to the diverse communities we serve. Our staff is equipped with the necessary training and support to offer culturally sensitive assistance to our beneficiaries.

4.4 Agency Staff and Contractors

Agency staff and contractors will be made aware of this policy on engagement and will be expected to conform with the contractor's handbook and code of conduct. Contractors and freelancers are also protected under our harassment policies and are expected to uphold the same standards of equality and inclusion as employees.

4.5. Staff Training on EDI

To ensure that our commitment to EDI remains steadfast, we provide training to all staff members. Initial training occurs during staff induction. Additionally, ongoing training will be conducted every three years to keep staff updated on best practices, emerging trends, and their role in upholding our inclusive culture.

4.6. Reporting Mechanisms

Transparent and confidential reporting mechanisms are established for staff and beneficiaries to report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, or concerns related to equality, diversity, and inclusion. These reports will be treated seriously, and we are committed to taking swift and fair



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action to address and resolve any issues. We recognise our legal duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment, including from third parties such as clients or service users.

No one will be treated less favourably for making a complaint or for acting as a witness. Any form of retaliation against a complainant is a disciplinary offence.

5. Access to Information

CHESS is committed to making information about our services accessible by :

- Using plain English.
- Providing appropriate translation and interpretation where requested or where demand indicated a need.
- Providing appropriate options and facilities for people with disabilities.

CHESS will ensure information is available to staff and service users through regular publications.

CHESS is committed to ensuring that all of its communications both internal and external will use images and language, which promote equality of opportunity and good community and race relations and eliminate any unlawful discrimination.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

6.1. Monitoring and Evaluation

We continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our EDI policy. Through data collection and analysis, we assess our progress in promoting equality, embracing diversity, and fostering inclusion. This includes regular evaluations of diversity metrics, staff feedback, and incident resolution. Such assessments guide our improvements and decisions.

6.2. Review Periods

Our EDI policy undergoes periodic reviews to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness. These reviews occur at least once every two years, or as necessitated by changes in legislation or organisational requirements. Staff, beneficiaries, and stakeholders contribute their feedback during these reviews to enhance our approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

6.3. Next Review Date

The next review of this EDI policy is scheduled as below. However, we remain committed to continuous improvement and will make necessary updates in response to significant changes in legislation or organisational needs before the next scheduled review.

By consistently reviewing, evaluating, and adapting our EDI policy, we aim to ensure its alignment with best practices, responsiveness to evolving needs, and unwavering commitment to inclusivity.



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Document Information

Version Number	Version 4
Dated	August 25
Author / Lead	Lis Gutteridge, Rob Saggs and Amy Cozins
Date of Last Review Date	14 October 2025
Date of Next Formal Review	14 October 2026
Contact	

Revision History

Version Number	Date Version	Nature of Change	Date Approved
1	Aug 23	New Policy	Aug 23
2	Oct 23	Addition of contractor's information/expectations	Oct 23
3	Oct 24	No changes	Oct 24
4	Oct 25	Updates to sections- 2.1, 2.2, 4.1, 4.4 and 4.6	14 Oct 25