

Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) believes that an equal society protects and promotes real freedom and equal opportunity for people to live in a way they value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish.

CVA further asserts that an equal society recognises people's different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be.

Underpinning this policy are 3 key principles:

- Equality is an important issue for us all and we must follow and uphold it at all times
- We don't all start from the same place
- To create a fairer society we need to recognise different needs and requirements

- 1.2 Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) recognises that various people in our society can suffer unfair discrimination on the grounds of:

- Class
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnic background
- Physical disability, learning disability or mental health need
- Age
- Gender or marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Religious belief
- Unrelated criminal record
- Trade Union activities

CVA is committed to incorporating an equality of opportunity in all areas of its influence; in employment, volunteering, service delivery and relationships with all its contacts and stakeholders within Croydon and surrounding areas.

Croydon Voluntary Action recognises the diversity of people who live in, work in, are educated in and visit Croydon.

- 1.3 CVA is committed to challenging disadvantage and inequality, and aims to promote and achieve equal opportunities in all its activities and encourages Board members, staff, volunteers, service users and members to do likewise equally commit to the same principles.
- 1.4 CVA aims to ensure that no employee, volunteer, job applicant, member, agency worker, consultant, contractor or service user receives more or less

favourable treatment or access to services as a result of unfair discrimination for any reason. CVA is committed to taking positive action to redress what it deems to be imbalances of equality.

- 1.5 CVA will continue to implement, monitor and review its policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they promote equality of opportunity and access and prevent and deter discrimination in all areas.

2. AIMS

In CVA's relationships and work with Croydon's communities we aim to:

- 2.1 Ensure that an equal opportunities practice is followed in all areas of Croydon Voluntary Action's work
- 2.2 Encourage, enable and provide advice on the development of equal opportunity policies throughout Croydon's voluntary and community sector
- 2.3 Strengthen links with people facing disadvantages in any area
- 2.4 Work pro-actively with partners across all sectors (statutory, private, public and voluntary) to jointly promote the implementation and retention of equal opportunities in service provision to local people

3. OBJECTIVES

CVA will:

- 3.1 Work towards a representative composition of the CVA Board - including any sub-committees - to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve
- 3.2 Work towards a representative composition of the CVA paid and unpaid staff team to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve
- 3.3 Incorporate equal opportunities into all CVA procedures
- 3.4 Ensure that recruitment and selection of staff always follows both CVA procedure and current legislation and that monitoring information is used to further develop these procedures in a transparent and positive way
- 3.5 Provide training and support to enable the CVA Board, staff and volunteers to understand, challenge and manage, with confidence, discriminatory behaviour; or actions and their consequences both mentally and physically
- 3.6 Ensure that any incidents of discrimination involving any CVA Board member, employee, volunteer, service user or member are dealt in accordance with the relevant CVA procedures and current legislation

3.7 Monitor, evaluate and adopt equal opportunities in all Human Resources and service delivery

3.8 As far as is reasonably practicable, ensure premises, equipment and materials are adapted to ensure that they are accessible to all and at any time

3.9 Develop more relevant services by continuing to improve knowledge and awareness of the needs of excluded and under represented groups of people

4 LEGISLATION

This policy has been developed using existing legislations, including:

- Equalities Act (2010)
- Sex Discrimination Act (1975 and amendment 1986)
- Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- Human Rights Act (1988)
- Protection From Harassment Act (1997)
- Employment Relations Act (1999)
- Equal Pay Act (1970) and National Minimum Wage Act (1998)
- Employment Rights Act (1996)
- Maternity & Parental Leave Regulations (1998 and 2002)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Health & Safety at Work Act (1974)

5 COMPLAINTS

All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Employees

- 5.1 In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an Employment Tribunal under current | anti-discrimination legislation and/or any subsequent additions or amendments to such.
- 5.2 Employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under CVA's internal Grievance Procedures first.
- 5.3 Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised or themselves discriminated against. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation may result in disciplinary action and may lead to dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.

Others

- 5.4 Volunteers, members and service users who believe they have been treated unfairly within any of Croydon Voluntary Action's work areas should bring this matter to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team, who will investigate the matter further according to the CVA Complaints Procedure. The Chair of the Trustees or other Honorary Officer will investigate complaints against members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 5.5 In addition to these internal procedures, volunteers, members and service users have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination in relation to goods, facilities and services under current anti-discrimination legislation and any subsequent new legislation or amendments to such.
- 5.6 A copy of CVA's internal and external Grievance / Complaints Procedures is available from the Manager responsible for Human Resources & Governance at CVA's Headquarters.

6 MONITORING AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY

- 5.1 It is ultimately the responsibility of CVA's Board of Trustees to uphold and apply the principles of equality and diversity and to ensure that CVA follows good equal opportunities practice in all aspects of its operations. The CVA Board has the responsibility to review, amend and agree this policy.
- 5.2 The Chief Executive Officer has specific responsibility for the implementation of this policy. Each CVA Manager, employee and volunteer is expected to abide by this policy.
- 5.3 The policy will be reviewed every three years or in line with any significant and subsequent change in legislation.
- 5.4 Recruitment practice will be monitored on an ongoing basis.
- 5.5 The training needs of the CVA Board, staff, volunteers and service users will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- 5.6 The policy will be referred to in all relevant documents and reports, including: advertisements, job descriptions, person specifications and employment contracts.
- 5.7 All CVA staff members, volunteers, and service users have a personal responsibility to co-operate with, adopt and apply the practical requirements of this policy.

Reviewed July 2021

Approved for CVA:

Position:

(Please PRINT)

Signature:

Date:

Date for Review: July 2022

The CVA Equal Opportunities Policy Statement can be made available in large print, electronic form, audio, community languages and in Braille on request

For further information is available for advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/workplace-bullying-and-harassment>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/discrimination-at-work/common-situations/discrimination-at-work-bullying-and-harassment/>

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=797>

Related CVA Policies and Procedures

1. CVA Complaints Procedure
2. CVA Membership Procedure
3. CVA staff handbook, Contract and HR policies
4. CVA Staff Grievance Procedure
5. CVA Training & Development Policy
6. CVA Volunteer Policy
7. CVA Licence Agreements
8. CVA Terms of Reference for Networks and Forums
9. CVA Safeguarding Policy
10. CVA Participation Policy