**COMPANY NAME**

**Equality Plan**

**January 2021 to January 2024**

1. **Policy Statement**

**COMPANY NAME** is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity in respect of religious belief, political opinion, race, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital and family status.

In line with this commitment we have developed an Equality Plan with the support of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. This Plan is a voluntary initiative designed to ensure that the Company’s employment and service provision policies meet legal requirements across all equality categories.

We will also seek to promote good practice across the range of our policies and in respect of all equality categories. The Plan will build on existing equality work undertaken by the Company and assist in meeting future equality requirements.

It is designed to be flexible and will be reviewed regularly, with the support of the Equality Commission. It is recognised that the timescale of the plan may have to be amended in response to other work priorities and available resources.

**COMPANY NAME** will provide the resources to ensure the implementation of the Plan. Targets resulting from the Plan will be incorporated into our Business Plan and will include reporting mechanisms to ensure that progress will be reviewed by Senior Management on a regular basis.

The Plan will be integrated into our existing corporate planning and performance management processes and objectives relating to equality will be integrated into the personal performance plans of managerial staff.

We will put in place systems to extend our equality monitoring practices so that we monitor employment and access to services on the basis of the following equality groups……………This information will be used to better promote equality of opportunity.

**Aims & Objectives**

2.1 The aim of the Plan is to:

1. Ensure that the Company’s employment and service provision policies meet legal requirements across all groups currently protected by employment equality legislation.
2. Promote good equality practice across our range of policies in respect of all equality categories on a phased basis.
3. Assist the Company to promote equality of opportunity in the workplace.
4. To develop an employability strategy with the support of the Equality Commission.
5. To work with the Equality Commission to develop examples of good practice which can be promoted on the Commission and Company website.
6. Build on existing equality work undertaken by the Company and assist us to meet future equality requirements.

**2.2 COMPANY NAME** will undertake to meet the following objectives over the course of the three-year plan:

1. To develop a review schedule to audit existing employment and service provision policies and practice against the relevant Northern Ireland Equality Codes of Practice and Commission Guidance.
2. To action the implementation of any measures identified during the audit of each employment policy.
3. To co-ordinate ongoing monitoring, review and affirmative action commitments in relation to the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (NI) 1998.
4. To identify and implement appropriate and effective monitoring and review mechanisms for other equality grounds.
5. To develop and implement an action plan for any affirmative action / positive action requirements identified through the equality monitoring and review mechanism.
6. To implement a programme of equality training and awareness across the Company.

**3.0 Three year action plan:**

3.1 **Policy & Practice Review**

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| **Date (by)** | **To have** |
| **Year 1 - 2021** |  |
| Jan | To have revised the Equal Opportunity Policy in relation to all equality grounds. |
| Jan | To develop a Customer Services Policy in respect of our goods, facilities and services |
| Feb | To have revised the Bullying & Harassment Policy in relation to all equality grounds. |
| Feb  | To have developed a Redundancy Policy in line with all equality grounds |
| Mar | To have revised the Recruitment & Selection Policy in relation to all equality grounds including any reasonable adjustments which may need to be made to the recruitment and selection process to accommodate applicants with disabilities |
| Mar | To have revised a Disability Reasonable Adjustment Policy. |
| Mar | To have developed equality based performance objectives for all managerial staff |
| Mar | To have revised the Work-Life Balance Policy in relation to all equality grounds and all employment policies relating to work-life balance in relation to all equality grounds. |
| April | To have developed plans to put in place systems to monitor employment and access to services in relation to equality categories other than community background and sex. |
| May | To develop an employability strategy with Equality Commission support. This will include the consideration of positive action measures with regard to the recruitment of people with disabilities. |
| May | To have revised the Absence and Sickness Policy in relation to all equality grounds. |
| Oct | To have revised the Grievance Policy in relation to all equality grounds. |
| Nov | To have revised the Discipline Policy in relation to all equality grounds. |
| Dec  | To have completed the implementation of any measures identified in the policy audit schedule for the year. This will include the development of a service provision i.e. customer services policy |
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| **Year 2 - 2022** |  |
| April  | To work with the Commission to identify good practice policy work that the company can adopt. |
| April | To review the implementation of Equality Plan. |
| May | To work with the Commission to promote the company’s good practice initiatives. |
| June | To review the effectiveness of the Company’s employability strategy. |
| July | To consider extending the Company’s monitoring strategy. |
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| **Year 3 - 2023** |  |
| April  | To work with the Commission to identify good practice policy work that the company can adopt. |
| April | To review the implementation of Equality Plan. |
| May | To work with the Commission to promote the company’s good practice initiatives. |
| June | To review the effectiveness of the Company’s employability strategy. |
| July | To consider extending the Company’s monitoring strategy. |

**3.2 Monitoring & Review**

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| **Date (by)** | **To have** |
| **Year 1 - 2021** |  |
| Jan | To have completed the annual monitoring return in respect of community background and sex and submit to the Equality Commission. |
| Sep | To have completed an annual review on equal opportunity in the workplace to be considered by the Senior Management Team. |
| Nov | To have met with the Equality Commission to discuss any issues arising from the annual review (if necessary). |
| **Year 2 - 2022** |  |
| Jan | To have completed the annual monitoring return in respect of community background and sex and submit to the Equality Commission. |
| Sep  | To have completed an annual review on equal opportunity in the workplace to be considered by the Senior Management Team. |
| Nov | To have met with the Equality Commission to discuss any issues arising from the annual review (if necessary). |
| **Year 3 - 2023** |  |
| Jan | To have completed the annual monitoring return in respect of community background and sex and submit to the Equality Commission. |
| Sep  | To have completed an annual review on equal opportunity in the work place to be considered by the Senior Management Team. **To include Triennial Article 55 Review.** |
| Nov | To have submitted Triennial Article 55 Review to the Equality Commission (if requested). |
| Nov | To have met with the Equality Commission to discuss any issues arising from the annual/triennial review (if necessary). |

**3.3 Affirmative & Positive Action**

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| **Date (by)** | **To have** |
| **Year 1 - 2021** |  |
| Apr | To have identified any affirmative / positive action measures required following annual review.  |
| May | To have agreed any actions identified with the Equality Commission. |
| July | To have implemented an affirmative / positive action programme. This may include the introduction of positive action measures to increase the number of disabled people in our workforce. |
| **Year 2 – 2022** |  |
| Ongoing | Review any affirmative / positive action measures actioned. |
| May | To have identified any changes to affirmative / positive action measures required following annual review.  |
| July | To have agreed any actions identified with the Equality Commission. |
| **Year 3 - 2023** |  |
| Ongoing | Review any affirmative / positive action measures actioned. |
| May | To have identified any changes to affirmative / positive action measures required following annual review.  |
| July | To have agreed any actions identified with the Equality Commission. |

**3.4 Training & Awareness**

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| **Date (by)** | **To have** |
| **Year 1 - 2021** |  |
| Ongoing | Equal opportunity awareness training for all new starts, to cover employment and access to services. |
| Jan | Fixed date for internal communication to middle/senior management. |
| Feb | Middle/senior management training on age legislation and good practice. |
| Apr | Middle/senior management training on equality awareness including mental ill health amongst employees. |
| May | Middle/senior management training on service provision.  |
| Jun | Middle/senior management training on recruitment & selection taking into account the reasonable adjustment duty for applicants with disabilities. |
| Aug | Middle/senior management training on bullying & harassment.  |
| Oct | Middle/senior management training on general HR policies.  |
| **Year 2 - 2022** |  |
| Ongoing | Equal opportunity awareness training for all new starts. |
| Jan | Fixed date for internal communication to Middle/Senior Management.  |
| Feb | Middle/senior management training - equality update. |
| April | Training update for all staff on equality. |
| **Year 3 - 2023** |  |
| Ongoing | Equal opportunity awareness training for all new starts. |
| Jan | Fixed date for internal communication to Middle/Senior Management. |
| Feb | Middle/senior management training - equality update. |
| April | Training update for all staff on equality. |