

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

### **1. GENERAL STATEMENT.**

1.1. Co-operative Assistance Network Ltd. believes that Equal Opportunity is a fundamental Co-operative Principle. The Company is also mindful of Acts of Parliament which have been passed to uphold certain principles of equality.

1.2. We undertake to apply the following policy as an employer and in our dealings with all other organisations and individuals.

1.3. We call upon all members of the Co-operative and all associates working in partnership with us from time to time to consider the implementation of this policy as a personal responsibility of the highest priority.

1.4. CAN will be mindful of disadvantage faced by people with whom the co-operative works.

1.5. We are aware that passive implementation of such a policy would be inadequate and contrary to the spirit of co-operation. We will take active steps to ensure that there is engendered a confidence among those who might face discrimination as an everyday experience that they will receive equal opportunity in their dealings with CAN.

1.6. The Co-operative shall review the implementation of the policy annually. Where a need for expert guidance or training is identified this shall receive the highest priority in setting of time and financial budgets for the following year.

### **2. EMPLOYMENT.**

2.1. It is the intention of CAN to act as an employer with due regard to section 1 of this statement and with due regard to the law.

2.2. All vacancies will be advertised with the object of encouraging applications from all those to whom the post may be of interest.

2.3. All advertisements shall indicate that CAN endeavours to operate an Equal Opportunities Policy.

2.4. Care shall be taken to ensure that there shall be no indirect discrimination which may result from stating or suggesting any requirement not necessary for the performance of the work.

2.5. CAN shall use a standard application form which shall be reviewed annually and which shall explain the Equal Opportunities Policy. The co-op will monitor all applications with regard to EOP Clause 1.4

2.6. Interview procedures and setting shall be organised so as to minimize discomfort and disadvantage on the part of any applicant. Due regard shall be paid by interview panels to cultural bias and the effect that it can have on such proceedings.

2.7. CAN will ensure that all necessary adaptations are carried out to premises and equipment to optimise their use by staff with due regard to any disability they may have, irrespective of whether this disability was present at the time of recruitment.

### **3. TRAINING.**

3.1. Equal opportunities Training shall be an integral part of the training programme of all staff.

### **4. HARASSMENT.**

4.1. CAN recognises that it is the responsibility of the employer to protect employees from harassment especially of a racial or sexual nature.

4.2. Complaints may be dealt with through the grievance procedure attached to the Contract of Employment. Any employee having difficulty with this process may alternatively raise the issue through their Trade Union or directly to a meeting of the Co-operative.

4.3. It is important that any such matter be dealt with promptly in order to minimise suffering.

4.4. Where a grievance is upheld the perpetrator shall automatically be subject to disciplinary action.

### **5. FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES.**

5.1. CAN recognises that there is a balance between a persons responsibilities as a worker and their responsibilities as a citizen and as family members.

5.2. CAN will actively seek flexible working practices and encourage mutual support so that employees can meet all these responsibilities with the minimum of stress.

### **6. MEMBERSHIP.**

6.1. All employees of CAN are able to take up full membership of the Cooperative after satisfactory completion of the probationary period detailed in the Contract of Employment. This must be made known to all employees who should be actively encouraged to take up membership.

6.2. New members shall be provided with sufficient training and induction to enable them to play a full part in the democratic processes of the Cooperative.

6.3. The contribution of all members of the Co-operative to its governance and development should be recognised. All should be provided with sufficient information to be able to fully participate. No member should ever be made to feel undervalued, unwelcome, excluded, belittled or disenfranchised. Policy matters should be discussed in a way which facilitates contributions from all.

### **7. CLIENTS AND PROJECT PARTNERS.**

7.1. CAN should encourage all organisations with which it works or to which it supplies services to act in a manner which is supportive of Equal Opportunity.

7.2. Where any organisation with whom CAN works acts in a manner contrary to good Equal Opportunities practice CAN will write to the organisation disassociating itself from those practices and offer assistance with remedial

and improvement action. CAN will maintain and publicise systems for reporting activities contrary to good Equal Opportunities practice.

7.3. In all its work in training, consultancy etcetera and in all its published material CAN will exercise care to act in a manner which displays respect for all people.

7.4. CAN will evaluate delivery of its services with due regard to potential disadvantage and barriers that may be faced by clients or customers. CAN will establish systems for alternative delivery of its services to ensure that disadvantage and barriers do not adversely affect access to services

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Co-operative Assistance Network Limited