

STOCKPORT WOMENS AID EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE

PURPOSE:

To set out the approach of Stockport Women's Aid in relation to ensuring equality of opportunity for staff and service users in terms of employment and access to services and to provide guidance on anti-discriminatory practice.

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

- All other policies and procedures of Stockport Women's Aid

INTRODUCTION

This document contains a policy statement (Part One) and procedural guidance (Part Two). The functions of each are set out briefly below.

Part One – Policy Statement. The policy statement sets out the broad framework of principles within which the particular area of work will be carried out. It sets out the organisation's broad style and approach to the issue, including any aims and guiding principles.

Part Two – Procedural Guidance. The procedural guidance sets out the details that staff will require to carry out their duties in this particular area of work. It also sets out the specific tasks involved in undertaking this area of work and identifies who is responsible for carrying them out.

PART ONE – POLICY STATEMENT

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

1. Stockport Women's Aid is committed to striving for equality in the provision of its services and the employment of the staff, volunteers and management committee members who provide these services and contribute to the organisation.
2. Stockport Women's Aid recognises that certain groups in society continue to be discriminated against. Our practices, however, will seek to ensure that women and children will not be discriminated against on the basis of their:

- race
 - age
 - disability
 - sexuality
 - nationality
 - religion
 - cultural beliefs
3. Stockport Women's Aid's commitment to anti-discriminatory practice relates to both direct and indirect discrimination, as set out below:
- Direct discrimination - where someone is treated less favourably than another on any of the grounds set out above.
 - Indirect discrimination - when a requirement or condition is applied which has a detrimental effect on a particular group as set out above. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.
4. Stockport Women's Aid will adhere to the requirements and guidance contained in the following pieces of legislation (and any subsequent amendments to them) in all of its work:
- The Race Relations Act 1976
 - The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
5. Stockport Women's Aid will also adhere to the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice.

EMPLOYMENT

6. Stockport Women's Aid's approach to equality of opportunity with regard to employment is as follows:
- As a women's organisation, Stockport Women's Aid will only employ women as per section 7(2)e of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.
 - Stockport Women's Aid will strive to achieve representation of all sections of the community at all levels within the organisation and within all types of work carried out.

- Applicants for paid staff posts, women seeking to volunteer and women seeking a place on the management committee will receive equal treatment regardless of their race, age, disability, sexuality, nationality, religion or cultural beliefs.
- Conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable will not disadvantage applicants.
- Selection criteria and procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are selected on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.
- All employees will be receiving equal treatment regardless of their race, age, disability, sexuality, nationality, religion or cultural beliefs. This applies to all other aspects of employment including, induction, probationary period, training and development, support and supervision, appraisal, promotion, remuneration, redundancy, re-deployment disciplinary action and dismissal.

ACCESS TO AND RECEIPT OF SERVICES

7. Stockport Women's Aid's approach to equality of opportunity with regard to access to and receipt of services is as follows:

- Stockport Women's Aid will take practical steps to ensure that its services are accessible to all women and children who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence regardless of their race, age, disability, sexuality, nationality, religion or cultural beliefs.
- Women and children seeking to access Stockport Women's Aid's services will be treated equally regardless of their race, age, disability, sexuality, nationality, religion or cultural beliefs.
- Neither will women and children seeking to access Stockport Women's Aid's services be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- Women and children receiving Stockport Women's Aid's services will be treated equally regardless of their race, age, disability, sexuality, nationality, religion or cultural beliefs. This applies to all aspects of receiving services, including application, referral, acceptance into refuge or floating support, needs assessment, individual support planning, risk assessment, consultation, involvement, move-on and after-care.

PART TWO – PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

1. The Recruitment and selection policy and procedure sets out the process in detail. The main elements in terms of anti-discriminatory practice are set out below.
2. **Advertisement of posts:**
 - All posts will be advertised both internally and externally in the local (and where appropriate National and/or specialist) press.
 - Regular liaison will be undertaken with local race equality and disability organisations to ensure that people from ethnic minority groups and disabled groups are encouraged to apply.
3. **Wording of advertisements:**
 - Job descriptions and supporting information will not contain any unnecessary stereotypes or expectations about the future post holder.
 - In line with our responsibility under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Stockport Women's Aid
 - will make any 'reasonable' adjustment to overcome any factor which puts a disabled employee or job applicant at a disadvantage.
4. **Ethnic monitoring of applicants and recruits:**
 - Recruitment packs will include an ethnic monitoring form that asks for details such as age, sex, ethnic origin and disability. This will be separated from the main form for monitoring purposes before the form is sent to those responsible for short listing.
 - The details on the monitoring sheet will be collected and analysed against the profile of people actually obtaining jobs. Where people from under represented groups do not appear to be applying for, or gaining particular posts, action to redress the imbalance will be taken by encouraging applications from those groups.
5. **Short listing:**

- Short listing will always be carried out by at least two members of staff.

6. Selection:

- Selection will be on the basis of job experience, qualifications and supporting details provided by the applicant on her reasons for applying for the job.

7. Interviews:

- Interviews will always be conducted by at least two members of staff/management committee members who have been trained in interviewing techniques, and in the application of the equal opportunities policy.
- Where appropriate, interviews will be backed up by practical tests of ability - e.g. a typing test.
- The decision on whom to appoint must be agreed by a majority of the interviewers and be in accordance with the Recruitment and selection policy and procedure.

OTHER ASPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

8. The following policies and procedures cover other aspects of employment and staff are expected to follow these conscientiously:

- Training and development
- Support and supervision
- Staff appraisal
- Capability
- Disciplinary and grievance

9. Anyone who feels they have been discriminated against in any of the above areas should discuss this with their line manager. If this does not resolve the concern, the staff member may raise a formal grievance as per the Grievance policy and procedure.

ACCESS TO AND RECEIPT OF SERVICES

10. The following policies and procedures cover all aspects of accessing and receiving services and staff are expected to follow these conscientiously to ensure that women and children seeking and using Stockport WA's services are not discriminated against:

- Access and referral
- Needs assessment and individual support planning

- Risk assessment
11. Stockport Women's Aid will take action against any member of staff, volunteer, management committee member, service user or visitor who commits any form of discrimination based on race, age, disability, sexuality, nationality, religion or cultural beliefs.