



Forest Churches Emergency Night Shelter (FCENS)

Equality & Diversity Policy

June 2014

To be next reviewed in June 2015

Introduction

FCENS is a Christian organisation that is passionate about living out God's kingdom values of love, hope, justice and transformation. It's what inspires us and drives us. FCENS will therefore, reflect this Christian ethos through its staff, workers and in all of its developments.

FCENS is an equal opportunities employer and service provider and believes in the intrinsic value of every person and as such, that everyone should be treated fairly and without discrimination or favour regardless of age, gender, race, colour, language, religion or belief, political persuasion, social origin, disability or sexuality.

We will not tolerate processes, attitudes or behaviour that amount to any form of discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, stereotyping or any other reason.

FCENS is committed to taking positive action to identify any unlawful discrimination in every aspect of its work and works in accordance with all current legislation and codes of practice including:

- EU Anti-Discrimination Directives (which currently include the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003, Religion and Belief Regulation 2003 and Sexual Orientation Regulation 2003)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Rights in Education Act 2001
- Equal Pay Act 1970 and Amendment 1983
- Race Relations Act 1976 and Amendment 2000
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975-85
- Equality Act 2010

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all.

Recruitment

1. We believe that our activities should be open to all. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with us have an equal chance to do so.
2. A written job description and person specification is prepared for every vacancy that arises or every new post that is created. It is checked by Directors for areas of discrimination before the recruitment procedures start. Applicants are made aware that life experiences, as well as voluntary and paid work, are valued.
3. All paid positions are advertised externally to our organisation.
4. Recruitment panels consist of a broad range of backgrounds.
5. Discriminatory questions are prohibited.
6. Applicants with a disability are invited to discuss their specific needs and requirements.
7. The applicant who best meets the criteria laid down is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Criminal Records Bureau. This ensures fairness in the selection process. All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications.
8. FCENS will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the specific needs of disabled employees are met.
9. Job descriptions and related advertising indicate that FCENS is an equal opportunities employer.
10. We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

Service Delivery

FCENS is committed to ensuring equality of access to all of its services. It does this by ensuring that:

1. Services are based on consultation with service users and steps are taken to include hard-to-reach groups.
2. Services are flexible and responsive to the changing needs in the community.
3. Information on services is widely available and targeted to ensure maximum awareness of provisions.
4. Systems are in place to monitor service delivery and consumer satisfaction.
5. There is an accessible complaints procedure to ensure against discrimination in service allocation and delivery.

Access to our activities

1. FCENS is open to all members of the community.
2. We advertise our services widely
3. We reflect the diversity of members of our society in our publicity and promotional materials.
4. We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form.
5. We do not discriminate against anyone with a disability or refuse entry because of any disability.
6. We ensure that all are made aware of our equal opportunities policy.
7. We ensure that people with disabilities can participate successfully in our activities, and provide special facilities for the disabled including access ramps and purpose built toilet facilities.

Training

New and existing employees and volunteers are aware of the training opportunities available to them and are positively encouraged to take them up.

Support

New and existing staff and volunteers have access to support. If a worker feels isolated, provision is made to support them from within the organisation or externally.

Discipline & Grievance

It is made clear to all employees and volunteers that discrimination, abuse or harassment on the grounds of race, age, gender, disability or sexuality – if proven – is a dismissible offence (see Disciplinary procedure.)

Scope of policy

This policy applies to

- All staff employed by FCENS irrespective of funding agent.
- All volunteers of FCENS
- All campaigning and promotional functions of FCENS
- Members of FCENS.

The effectiveness of this policy is subject to review, monitoring and revision every 12 months (or sooner if work activity or legislation changes.)

Signed:



Position: Trustee

Date: 25 May 2013 See next page for updated signature

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Signed: 

Position: TRUSTEE - CHAIR FCENS

Date: 18 JUNE 2014