

Equal Opportunities Policy for Step To Shelter Merseyside CIC

Reviewed Date: Friday 24th October 2025

1. Policy Statement

Step To Shelter Merseyside CIC is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all areas of our work. We believe that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect, and we aim to create an environment where all individuals feel valued, supported, and able to reach their full potential.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and are committed to ensuring that no one is treated less favourably on the grounds of:

- **Age**
- **Disability**
- **Gender reassignment**
- **Marriage or civil partnership**
- **Pregnancy or maternity**
- **Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)**
- **Religion or belief**
- **Sex**
- **Sexual orientation**

These are known as protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- **All staff, volunteers and contractors**
- **All service users and members of the public who engage with our organisation**
- **All aspects of our operations, including recruitment, service delivery, partnerships, and governance**

3. Our Commitments

We will:

- **Promote equality of opportunity in all areas of our work**
- **Foster a culture of respect, inclusion, and fairness**
- **Ensure our services are accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of our community**
- **Challenge discriminatory behaviour or practices**
- **Provide training and guidance to staff and volunteers on equality and diversity**
- **Monitor and review our practices to ensure continuous improvement**

4. Responsibilities

Board of Directors: Responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed regularly.

Managers and Supervisors: Responsible for promoting equality in their teams and addressing any issues that arise.

All Staff and Volunteers: Expected to uphold the principles of this policy and treat others with dignity and respect.

5. Recruitment and Employment

We are committed to fair and inclusive recruitment practices.

- Job descriptions and person specifications will be clear and relevant to the role
- Selection will be based on merit, skills, and experience
- Reasonable adjustments will be made for applicants and employees with disabilities
- We will monitor diversity data to identify and address any barriers to inclusion

6. Service Delivery

We aim to ensure that our services are inclusive and accessible to all.

- We will consult with service users to understand and meet diverse needs
- We will provide information in accessible formats where possible
- We will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or victimisation in any form

7. Complaints and Concerns

Any concerns about discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment should be reported to a manager or the designated complaints contact.

- All complaints will be taken seriously and handled confidentially
- We will investigate and take appropriate action where necessary
- No one will be victimised for raising a concern in good faith

8. Monitoring and Review

We will regularly review this policy and our practices to ensure they remain effective and compliant with current legislation.

- Feedback from staff, volunteers, and service users will inform improvements
- Equality data will be collected and analysed to monitor progress

Approval of this policy:

Approved by: Dylan Williams

Position: Head of Service

Date Approved: Friday 24th October 2025