

## **Equal Opportunities Policy for Step to Shelter Merseyside**

### **1. Introduction**

Step to Shelter Merseyside is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of its work. We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with respect, dignity, and fairness, and we strive to create an environment where individuals feel valued and supported.

### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote equal opportunities in employment, volunteering, and service delivery.
- Prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.
- Foster a culture of inclusivity and respect within the Organisation.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All trustees, staff, volunteers, and contractors of the Organisation.
- All aspects of employment, volunteering, service delivery, and interactions with the public.

### **4. Principles**

- **Equality:** All individuals will be treated equally, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- **Diversity:** The Organisation values the unique contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
- **Inclusion:** Steps will be taken to remove barriers and create opportunities for all individuals to participate fully in our activities.
- **Respect:** All interactions will be conducted in a respectful and professional manner.

### **5. Legal Framework**

This policy is guided by the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

### **6. Implementation**

#### **6.1 Recruitment and Selection**

- Job and volunteer opportunities will be advertised widely to attract a diverse range of candidates.
- Selection criteria will be based on objective criteria relevant to the role.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made for applicants with disabilities.

## **6.2 Training and Development**

- All staff, trustees, and volunteers will receive training on equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Opportunities for development and progression will be made available to all individuals based on merit.

## **6.3 Service Delivery**

- Services will be designed and delivered to meet the diverse needs of our beneficiaries.
- Feedback will be sought regularly to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

## **6.4 Complaints and Grievances**

- Any concerns about discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment can be raised through the Organisation's grievance procedure.
- Complaints will be investigated promptly and fairly, and appropriate action will be taken.

## **7. Responsibilities**

### **7.1 Trustees**

- Ensure that the Organisation complies with its legal obligations and promotes equality and diversity in all activities.

### **7.2 Staff and Volunteers**

- Uphold the principles of this policy in their daily work and interactions.
- Report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

### **7.3 Managers and Leaders**

- Lead by example in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Ensure that policies and procedures are implemented effectively.

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

The Organisation will:

- Regularly review this policy to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with current legislation.
- Monitor recruitment, training, and service delivery practices to identify and address any inequalities.
- Consult with staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries to gather feedback and improve practices.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.

#### **9. Approval**

This Equal Opportunities Policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of Step to Shelter Merseyside on 03/02/25 and is effective immediately.