

WARD SECURITY

P9. Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy

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1. PURPOSE

Ward Security is committed to being an equal opportunities employer and to avoid unlawful discrimination in employment or to customers. This is done not only to conform to current employment law but also to harness the full potential of the workforce to make sure all people are treated fairly and with dignity.

In keeping with this aim, and to assist the Company to put this commitment into practice, this policy also provides staff with clear guidelines as to what is acceptable behaviour. Adherence to this policy will ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

The right not to be discriminated against is an implied term within the contract of employment and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

This Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure all aspects are in line with current legislation. We reserve the right to amend or issue a replacement policy at any time.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

In accordance with the above aim, Ward Security recognises the need for and supports wholeheartedly a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of its work and responsibilities. Ward Security endeavours to ensure that no employees, client or participant receives less favourable treatment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or is a civil partner or any other grounds which are unjustifiable in terms of equality of opportunity.

Ward Security endeavours not to discriminate in the areas of recruitment and selection, discipline, transfer, training, promotion, access to benefits and services and dismissal.

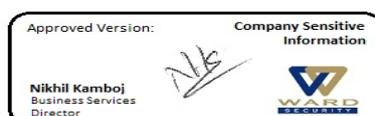
3. THE LAW

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or is a civil partner. These are known as “protected characteristics”.

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, eg refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

Subject to limited exceptions in some circumstances for religion or belief and sexual orientation, it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly, harass or victimise a member of the public based on any of the protected characteristics in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

4. IMPLEMENTATION



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The person with ultimate responsibility for implementing this policy is the HR Director who will co-ordinate the policy's implementation and can deal with any queries relating to it.

5. DIGNITY AT WORK

The Company is committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Some harassment is unlawful discrimination and serious harassment may be a criminal offence.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behavior, an abuse or misuse of power which is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end. Examples of bullying would include picking on someone or setting him or her up to fail or making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to relevant protected characteristics, which are sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age, that:

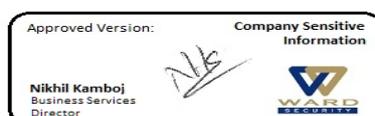
- has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his/her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Examples of harassment would include: physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault; unwelcome sexual advances; demeaning comments about a person's appearance; unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature or about an individual's age; excluding an individual because they are associated or connected with someone with a protected characteristic, eg their child is gay, spouse is black or parent is disabled; repeated name calling related to an individual's religion or belief, ignoring an individual because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic (whether or not they do, in fact, have that protected characteristic), eg an employee is thought to be Jewish, or is perceived to be a transsexual; the use of obscene gestures; and the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person, eg magazines, calendars or pin-ups.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a "joke" may offend another person. Everyone has the right to decide what behavior is acceptable to them and to have their feelings respected by others. Behavior that any reasonable person would realise would be likely to offend will be harassment without the recipient having to make it clear in advance that behavior of that type is not acceptable to them, eg sexual touching. It may not be so clear in advance that some other forms of behavior would be unwelcome to, or could offend, a particular person, eg certain "banter", flirting or asking someone for a private drink after work. In these cases, first-time conduct that unintentionally causes offence will not be harassment but it will become harassment if the conduct continues after the recipient has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behavior is unacceptable to them.

A single incident can be harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

6. RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL STAFF



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It is recognised by Ward Security that reaching our aim involves a great deal of work from both employees and from management and that it will be an ongoing process. All managers and employees, whether full-time, part-time or temporary, have an individual responsibility to adhere to the policy and to assist the Company to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. It is also imperative that fellow employees and any third parties with whom employees deal on behalf of the organisation are treated with dignity and respect.

Managers and supervisors also have the responsibility to ensure protection and support for an employee who may be considering or have brought a complaint informally or formally or who have given evidence at any disciplinary hearing brought as a result of any breach of this policy.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Company for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT

The Company will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

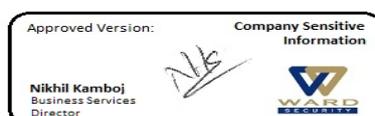
Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

The Company will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the Company considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any prohibited ground of discrimination, for doing so. The Company will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations.

The Company will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

The Company will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs. We also monitor the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems which may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

The Company cannot lawfully discriminate in the selection of employees for recruitment or promotion, but the Company may use appropriate lawful methods, including lawful positive action, to address the under-representation of any group which the Company identifies as being underrepresented in particular types of job.



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8. RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

Most vacancies are advertised internally as well as externally. Recruitment methods include use of national press, job centers, schools and colleges. All job advertisements state that Ward Security is committed to being an Equal Opportunities employer.

All potential employees are provided with the option of completing an equal opportunities section within the application form to help us monitor the effectiveness of our Equal Opportunities Policy.

At the selection stage, job descriptions are used to identify key criteria relevant to the job performance. All personnel involved in the recruitment process will receive training in equal opportunities and will be clearly advised of the selection criteria and the need for the consistent application.

9. PROMOTION & TRAINING

Training and promotional opportunities are available to all employees and under-represented groups are encouraged to apply. Wherever possible, special training will be provided for such groups to prepare them to compete on genuinely equal terms for jobs and promotion. All personnel involved in this process are informed of the need to apply the selection criteria without unlawful discrimination.

10. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

All employees receive 12-monthly appraisals. Personnel responsible for conducting these performance meetings are instructed not to discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or is a civil partner or any other grounds which are unjustifiable in terms of equality of opportunity. In line with the training and promotion opportunities, assessment criteria at the performance meeting are applied fairly to all applicants.

11. CUSTOMERS, SUPPLIERS AND OTHER PEOPLE NOT EMPLOYED BY THE COMPANY

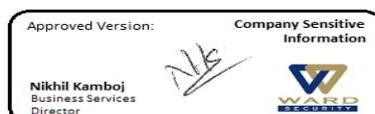
The Company will not discriminate unlawfully against customers using or seeking to use goods, facilities or services provided by the Company.

Employees should report any bullying or harassment by customers, suppliers, visitors or others to their manager who will take appropriate action.

12. GRIEVANCES, DISCIPLINARIES, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

If any employee is subjected to discrimination or harassment on grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or is a civil partner then initially they may use the Company's grievance procedure to make a complaint.

They may attempt to resolve the problem informally by explaining clearly to the person engaging in the unwanted conduct that the behaviour is not welcome, that it offends them and interferes with their work or in the case of discrimination that the behaviour is illegal. If an employee would find this too difficult or embarrassing, then they should seek confidential support from their manager or if they wish from a member of the HR Department of the Company. The employee should feel free to approach whichever member of staff they wish and may be accompanied at all times by a fellow employee.



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All complaints will be investigated promptly and, if appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser. An individual will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative of their choice at any meeting dealing with their grievance. The individual will be kept informed of the general progress of the process of investigation and the outcome of any disciplinary proceedings.

All allegations will be dealt with as soon as possible and confidentially and employees will be protected from victimisation. The Company will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance which it upholds. An employee will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if the grievance is not upheld, unless the complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Where a complaint is not upheld for instance because the evidence is regarded as inconclusive, consideration will be given to transferring or re-scheduling the duties of the complainant or the alleged harasser if at all possible and depending on operational and staffing requirements. It will also be considered a disciplinary offence to victimise an employee for bringing a complaint of harassment or discrimination in good faith.

If appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken and this may include summary termination of employment of the harasser or discriminator or transfer to different duties or location.

Use of the Company's grievance procedure does not affect an employee's right to make a complaint to an employment tribunal. Complaints to an employment tribunal must normally be made within three months beginning with the act of discrimination complained of.

The Company will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible.

The HR Department can provide support, advice, training and guidance in all aspects of Equal Opportunities.

13. MONITORING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The Equal Opportunities Policy is monitored on a regular basis to ensure fairness and consistency in our approach with reference to recruitment, selection, training and promotional opportunities, dismissal, disputes and disciplinary procedures.

14. LEGISLATION

This policy reflects, but is not limited to, legislation from the following Acts: -

Equality Act 2010

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/3242)