Chapter 2.12 - Equal Opportunities/Equality Act 2010

Equal opportunities policy

Introduction

Highways England is committed to providing services that embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity.

We will not tolerate discrimination against anyone due to their gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, religion, age, disability, HIV status, working pattern, care responsibilities, trade union membership or activity, political beliefs, or on any other grounds.

Scope of policy

This policy applies to all staff.

Policy principles

Irrespective of your race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion or belief, colour, sex, gender identity (transgender), marital status, disability, sexual orientation, working pattern, employment status, caring responsibility, trade union membership, union office or union activity, all staff and job applicants have the right to:

a. equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment including advancement and training

b. a working environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation (refer to this section and Highways England's procedures and guidance for dealing with Dignity in the workplace (see Chapters 2B and 2C Section 2.15)

c. a complaints and grievances procedure for dealing with discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation in the workplace - see the grievance policy.

In this section the term "gender identity" concerns those who have undergone, are in the process of undergoing or are considering undergoing gender reassignment.

You have the statutory right to make a complaint to an Employment Tribunal under the Equality act 2010 as appropriate and to seek the assistance of your trade union, the Equal opportunities commission, Commission for racial equality or the Advisory,

conciliation and arbitration service (ACAS) in doing so. You should take advice on any time limits that might be applicable to the exercise of these statutory rights.

You have the right to pursue a complaint through internal procedures as well as making a complaint to a Tribunal. You have the right and are encouraged to involve ACAS before or after making a complaint to an Employment Tribunal.

You must not discriminate against, harass, bully or victimise any other employee because of that employee's race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion or belief, sex, gender identity (transgender), marital status, disability, sexual orientation, working pattern, employment status, caring responsibility, trade union membership, union office or union activity. Similarly, you will not cause such discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation to take place. You may be liable to disciplinary action if you fail to comply with the requirements set out in this paragraph.

You must be aware of and comply with the law relating to Equal Opportunities and discrimination. Further information and guidance is available from the HR Advice Service.