

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

This Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedures document supersedes all other policies relating to equal opportunities at work. This document is applicable to all employees of Prescient Healthcare Companies.

This policy is in accordance with our Company values.

The Company is committed to providing equal opportunities for all and promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects. This policy applies to the advertising of jobs, recruitment and selection, learning and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, benefits and facilities and pay, health and safety and conduct at work, grievance and disciplinary procedures and termination of employment, including redundancy to:

- Make full use of our employees' talents
- Provide the same level of opportunity for everyone
- Improve our management practice
- Strengthen our reputation as a good employer
- Attract and retain new employees
- Show our clients that we are a fair Company
- Ensure that our employment and business practices do not infringe the law
- Demonstrate our commitment to be an equal opportunities employer
- Ensure access to learning and development

Scope and Purpose

The Company values diversity and it is in everyone's interests for the environment in which we work to be harmonious and respectful. We aim to provide a creative working environment where everyone has an equal opportunity for success. We will treat all employees fairly and with dignity and we will provide a working environment free from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Each employee has a moral and legal duty not to discriminate against other employees, job applicants, suppliers, clients or any other business contacts. In addition, any employee's conduct outside of work that could have a bearing on their employment or could bring the Company's name or reputation into disrepute will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure.

All employees, trainees and applicants for employment with this Company will be given equal opportunity regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age or any other condition which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

Responsibilities

Our board of directors (the board) has overall responsibility for the effective operation of our equal opportunities policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination.

The Company will fulfil its commitment to equal opportunity by:

- Recognising its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, requiring equal treatment in access to employment, regardless of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation; and also, other associated legislation and appropriate case law
- Ensuring that all future policies and procedures regarding employment issues are developed in strict accordance with this policy on Equal Opportunities
- Distributing and publicising this policy statement throughout the Company

- Providing facilities for any employee who believes that he/she has been unfairly treated to raise the matter through the grievance procedure
- Regarding any deliberate discriminatory action, including harassment, by any employee as a serious disciplinary offence

Managers have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour by:

- Having a duty to act if any member of staff is being harassed and to deal with it promptly and effectively.
- Fully understand this Company policy and be able to offer advice on the procedure when asked.
- Ensuring that their own behaviour is consistent with this policy and the company values, and that they behave in a manner which upholds the dignity and respect of each employee both within their team and within the Company as a whole.
- Drawing this policy to the attention of their team and ensure that any new team members are aware of it and understand it.
- Being sensitive and receptive to the feelings of those who have made a complaint.
- Responding professionally and promptly to complaints in line with the processes laid out within this policy.
- Maintaining complete confidentiality relating to all aspects of cases of harassment. Information should only be shared between those who need to be involved in a complaint. Please see the Company's Grievance Policy for more information.

All employees are responsible for the success of this policy by:

- Ensuring that they familiarise themselves with the policy and acting in accordance with its aims and objectives
- Being responsible for bringing any concerns about the way they are being treated to the attention of their line manager or another manager
- Being responsible for bringing any concerns about the way a colleague is being treated to the attention of their line manager or another manager

Forms of Discrimination

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage for a reason related to their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because it is considered they would not "fit in" could be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for instance, their sex or race. For example, a height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If this criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with sex, it would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of sex.

Discrimination also includes victimisation (less favourable treatment because of action taken to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard) and harassment (unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating the receiver's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for receiver).

Recruitment and Selection

We aim to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed above. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are essential for the effective performance of the job and therefore justified on non-discriminatory grounds.

Learning and Development, Promotion and Conditions of Service

Employee development needs will be identified through regular appraisals. All employees will be given appropriate access to learning and development to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

The composition and movement of employees at different levels will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation.

Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all employees who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Termination of Employment

We will monitor redundancy criteria and procedures to ensure that they are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures are carried out fairly and uniformly for all employees, whether they result in the giving of disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action

Disability Discrimination

If you are disabled or become disabled in the course of your employment with us, you are encouraged to tell us about your condition. This is to enable us to support you as much as possible. You may also wish to advise your line manager of any reasonable adjustments to your working conditions or the duties of your job which you consider to be necessary, or which would assist you in the performance of your duties. Your line manager may wish to consult with you and with your medical adviser(s) about possible reasonable adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where possible and proportionate to the needs of your job. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it will not be reasonable for us to accommodate suggested adjustments and if this situation arises we will ensure that we provide you with information as to the basis of our decision not to make any adjustments.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to others. Where possible and proportionate, we will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

Fixed-term Employees and Agency Workers

We monitor our use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. We will, where relevant, monitor their progress to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

Part-time Workers

We monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, learning and development and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately.

Breaches of the Policy

If you believe that you may have been subject to unfair treatment as a result of a breach of this policy you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. Similarly, if you feel that you have been subject to any bullying or harassment, you are encouraged to raise this through our Bullying and Harassment policy.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Any employee who is found to have committed acts of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

Version	Date	Comment	Owner
2.0	2018-12	Addition of PHG values, reference to Grievance Policy, further explanation of legal obligations	Mackie Adoniadis, Victoria Muir
2.1	2019-07	Reviewed and updated for changes relating to new job titles	Victoria Muir
3.0	2022-11	Reviewed and updated to add additional detail	Victoria Muir, Jess Gill