

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENT

VEST Construction (LIVECO Ltd) is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our workforce and the wide community to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

VEST Construction in providing services is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers, suppliers, sub-contractors, public or any other third party.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

VEST Construction commits to:

- encourage equality and diversity in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued
- This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination
- All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public

- take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal/suspension without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence

- make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation
- decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)
- review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law
- monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality policy

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The equality policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with employee representatives from throughout the company.

Overall every possible steps will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion, and career management are based solely on objective and job-related criteria. LIVECO Ltd will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation of employees or third parties.

Signed:



Gavin Vest BSc (Hons)
Managing Director
22nd November 2024

NOTES AND STATEMENT OF POLICY

THE LAW

Our policy is governed by the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly, in recruitment or employment because of a protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender (or sex)
- gender reassignment
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage and civil partnership

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

1. The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any equal opportunities policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.
2. Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.
3. Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.
4. We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.
5. We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.
6. All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.
7. All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.
8. Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible.

9. Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.
10. We will not disqualify any applicant because he/she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.
11. Where applicants are of equal standing and merit the company may evoke “positive action” to make the final decision on which of the application to employ to balance our workforce.
12. Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

TRAINING AND PROMOTION

1. Senior staff will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.
2. All decisions on internal promotions, training and upskilling will be in line with this policy.

OUR COMMITMENTS

We will:

1. We will treat everyone fairly, with dignity and respect.
2. We will not treat everyone less favourably because you belong to one of the protected groups.
3. We will not tolerate intimidation, discrimination or harassment against anyone based on any protected characteristic and will take action against staff or customers who behave in this way.
4. We will collect information and data to help us to develop and tailor our services to meet different needs.
5. Where appropriate we will make information available on request in a format that meets your needs, for example, larger print, audio or Braille.
6. Where appropriate and possible we will communicate with you in the language you prefer. This may involve the use of a third party interpreter.
7. Where possible we will try to communicate with you in ways which are sensitive to the needs of different protected groups. Examples include the option to choose an interview with a staff member of the same sex, or with a staff member who has personal experience and understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans issues.
8. We will involve and consult with customers and others who reflect the diversity of the communities we serve and will make changes to our services when their feedback tells us this is necessary.

9. We will carry out “equality assessments” of our policies to make sure they are inclusive and do not have potential to discriminate against any group.
10. We will provide our staff with training and guidance so they understand their responsibilities and the standards we expect;
11. We will require those working with us or for us to support our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and will challenge those who don't.

MONITORING

1. We will maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.
2. Monitoring may involve:-
 - a. the collection and classification of information regarding the race in terms of ethnic/national origin and sex of all applicants and current employees;
 - b. the examination by ethnic/national origin and sex of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants; and
 - c. recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.
 - d. data on underrepresented groups within our workforce, which maybe used when recruiting or upskilling.
3. The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.