

ETHOS

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy

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Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy

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Purpose

Ethos is proud to be a diverse organisation made up of individuals from a wide range of cultural and personal backgrounds. We value the unique perspectives, experiences and contributions that each person brings to our team

As part of our ongoing commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion, we believe in creating a workplace where everyone feels respected, included and empowered to contribute their best. Fostering diversity, ensuring equality and promoting inclusion is not only the right thing to do, it also strengthens our team and leads to better outcomes for our clients and communities.

We are committed to treating all individuals with fairness, dignity and respect, regardless of background, identity or personal circumstances. This commitment is at the heart of how we operate. It is embedded in our culture, and we remain focused on continuously improving to ensure our workplace remains inclusive and supportive for everyone.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all employees, those engaged by Ethos as a contractor for services, leadership team, board, agents acting on behalf of Ethos, and to any external stakeholders that are supported by or engaged with the company.

This Policy ensures that our statutory equality duties outlined in the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 (as amended) is met.

Key Principles and Concepts

Diversity goes beyond simply recognising differences. It involves valuing and embracing the wide range of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives that people bring. It encourages a culture of mutual respect and learning from one another.

Equality means ensuring that no individual or group is treated unfairly or less favourably based on characteristics such as age, gender, race, disability, or any other protected ground. It is about creating fair access to opportunities, whether in employment, training, or development, and removing barriers that might lead to either direct or indirect discrimination, including unconscious bias.

Inclusion is about creating an environment where everyone feels they belong, are respected, and can contribute fully. It means feeling supported and recognised as a valued part of the team, enabling people to do their best and reach their potential.

Role and Responsibilities

All members of the staff at Ethos have a role under the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy, in that they are responsible for their own behaviour but also responsible for ensuring that they carry out their role in line with this policy. Individuals therefore are:

- Responsible for making themselves aware of Ethos Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy.
- Expected to participate in training which supports Ethos Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy, as appropriate.
- Responsible for their behaviour and expected to treat others with dignity and respect and to challenge inappropriate behaviour or discrimination.
- Responsible for compliance with this Policy. Non-compliance may result in complaints under the Dignity at work policy or other relevant policies and potential disciplinary action.

The Management Team (every staff member with leadership responsibility) will ensure that:

- They promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy through day-to-day management activities.
- Attend training on equality and diversity related matters, when requested.
- Be reasonable and take in consideration any requests that may be made in regard to family friendly policies.
- They treat others with dignity and respect, regardless of their gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race (including race, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origin), or membership of the Traveller community.
- Be fair and transparent in recognising and rewarding employee performance.
- Make reasonable accommodation for employees with a disability or who acquire a disability and consider flexibility, where practicable, to reflect the diverse needs of our workforce.

The People & Talent Team have a responsibility to:

- Develop, review, and update EDI policies to align with legislative requirements such as the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015, Equal Status Acts 2000–2012, and other relevant laws.
- Ensure, (in conjunction with Leadership) equal access to training, development opportunities, and career progression for all employees.
- Manage (in conjunction with Leadership) unacceptable behaviour in accordance with relevant policies. The company will take prompt action over alleged discrimination or harassment.
- Provide reasonable accommodation for applicants with disabilities during the recruitment process.
- Make available to all staff and the public the Ethos Gender Pay Gap on an annual basis.

Recruitment, Promotion and Retention

Ethos is an equal opportunities employer; therefore, we recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and although equality of opportunity has been a longstanding feature of our employment practices and procedures, we have made the decision to adopt a formal equal opportunities policy. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.

The company will ensure no job applicant or employee is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the nine discriminatory grounds that are defined under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 (as amended) as being:

- Gender
- Civil status
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race (includes race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins)
- Membership of the Traveller Community

Policy Guidelines

1. Candidates will be selected on the basis of merit and ability, consistent with the operational requirements of the role.

2. Employees involved in the recruitment process, and in the management of staff, may be required to attend appropriate training to ensure they recognise when they are making stereotypical assumptions or judgements about people, and avoid any discriminatory practices in the way in which they shortlist, recruit, or manage staff.

3. We regard discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of staff, clients or of others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as serious misconduct. Condoning such behaviour could also be treated as a disciplinary offence under Ethos' Disciplinary Policy.

4. Our terms and conditions of employment allow for family friendly policies in accordance with current legislation. Allowance is also made for compassionate, and dependants' leave to deal with domestic emergencies.

5. We recognise that Ethos has a duty, under the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 (as amended), to make reasonable accommodations to support individuals with disabilities, ensuring they can carry out their work without unnecessary difficulty, as long as such accommodations are practical and sustainable for the business.

6. We are committed to ensuring employees do not experience discrimination (or less favourable opportunities or treatment) on the basis of their race, religion, or belief by:

    - Allowing time and, if possible, a place for prayers during the working day and at the workplace as appropriate.
    - Considering employee's dietary requirements in events organised by the company.
    - Allowing staff of particular faiths, where possible, to take their holidays for religious festivals and other religious observances in accordance with the Annual Leave policy.
    - Not imposing, where possible, a dress code with which people of a particular religion cannot comply.

7. We are committed to promoting an inclusive and respectful workplace for LGBTQ+ employees. Ethos recognises the importance of respecting diverse gender identities and expressions. Our commitment is fostering a supportive environment for transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals that includes:

    - Respecting employees' chosen names and pronouns in all workplace interactions, systems, and documentation.
    - Supporting employees undergoing gender transition through appropriate confidentiality and, where possible, flexibility arrangements.
    - Promoting training to staff and managers on LGBTQ+ awareness and inclusive behaviour, dignity and respect in the workplace.

Support

Any individual who believes they have been treated in a manner that contravenes this policy should report the incident following the process outlined in the Ethos Grievance policy.

Any employee found to have breached the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy may be subject to action under the Disciplinary Policy and/or Dignity at Work Policy.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, and remains in alignment with current legislation.

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