Equal Employment Opportunities

HR/Corporate Operations/Mental Health Commission

Policy Name:	Equal Employment Opportunities
Policy No:	MHC-HR-0026
Owner (Division):	HR/Corporate Operations
Date Implemented:	11/06/2024
Date Reviewed:	11/06/2026
Revision Date:	11/06/2028
To be reviewed:	2 years from implementation or as required by law/public sector policy
Approved by:	SLT

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1. Policy statement

The purpose of this policy is to confirm the Mental Health Commission's (MHC's) commitment to equality of opportunity for existing and potential employees, by promoting a work environment free from discrimination in the following areas: gender, civil status, family status, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age and membership of the Traveller community.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the MHC, and all past employees for twelve months after termination.

3. Policy

The MHC is committed to equal opportunity of employment, and all employment decisions will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. Employment related decisions will not be influenced or affected by an employee's race, colour, nationality, religion, sex, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, age or membership of the Traveller community.

The MHC fully endorses a working environment free from discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment. The MHC will comply with its obligations under the Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2015.

Training, experience, and promotional opportunities are open to all employees of the MHC, subject to the relevant approvals from the MHC and/or the relevant Government Departments. All decisions made will be based on an employee's existing skills, knowledge and aptitude required to perform the job effectively and efficiently, to the standards required by the MHC both now and for the future.

It is the responsibility of every employee who has direct reports in the MHC to support and communicate the equality legislation. Such employees must encourage open discussion with their reports to identify and resolve problem areas. All reporting employees in turn must accept their personal responsibility to comply with this policy. This includes maintaining acceptable standards of behaviour at all times towards all colleagues.

Employees are encouraged to raise questions or concerns about any decision or conduct in the workplace they believe conflicts with this policy. Employees are advised to bring these issues to the attention of their Line Manager or a member of the HR Department. The MHC assures its employees that any concerns or reports made will be dealt with without fear of reprisal. Any employee, who is acting/behaving in a manner contrary to this policy, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The MHC will take appropriate disciplinary action towards an employee who fails to follow the MHC's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Any employee who believes that they have been treated unfairly in terms of access to employment, conditions of employment, training, work experience or promotion, re-grading or reclassification of posts should raise the matter under the MHC's Grievance Procedure or Dignity at Work Policy.

The MHC will ensure that all employees involved in making employment related decisions will be provided with training and guidance to ensure that they understand their position, the MHC's policy and legal requirements. When recruiting, full job specifications will be prepared, outlining requirements that are absolutely essential for the job in question. Non-essential qualifications/qualities will be described as "desirable".

Should you believe the MHC is not meeting its legal obligations, please contact a member of the HR Department.

4. Change control

The following table details changes made to this policy.

This is the heading for the table		
Date	Description	Approved by