

Volunteering equal opportunities policy

Introduction

West Berks food bank is committed to encouraging and promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of a volunteer's time with us, including recruitment, selection, and training.

We believe everyone has the right to volunteer and we will always seek to encourage and recruit volunteers from wide and varied backgrounds. Where possible we will make suitable adaptations to our processes and procedures to facilitate this.

We are committed to non-discriminatory procedures and practices across all our activities, and everyone will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity status, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (these are protected characteristics).

Discrimination

We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment on any grounds. This includes physical, verbal, or psychological discrimination, either face to face or online.

Direct discrimination: treating someone differently or worse than someone else based on any of the protected characteristics listed above.

Indirect discrimination: when a practice, policy, or rule applies to everyone in the same way but, due to a protected characteristic, it has a worse effect on some people than others, putting them at a particular disadvantage.

Disability discrimination: the failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Bullying or harassment: unwanted conduct or behaviour that makes someone feel that their dignity has been violated or that an offensive, intimidating, hostile, degrading, or humiliating environment has been created.

Victimisation: treating someone badly or putting them at a disadvantage because they have complained about discrimination or have helped someone who has been the victim of discrimination.

The food bank commits to:

- encouraging equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of its activities
- promoting dignity and respect for all
- recognising individual differences and valuing the contributions of everyone
- training managers of volunteers and all volunteers about their rights and responsibilities within this policy
- creating an environment free of discrimination
- taking seriously complaints of discrimination
- reviewing and updating volunteering policies, practices, and procedures to ensure fairness and take account of changes in the law
- ensuring equality monitoring is in place
- regularly reviewing the implementation of this policy and making changes as necessary.

Responsibility of this Policy

Implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy is the responsibility of everyone. The overall strategy, administration, and general application of the policy throughout the charity is the responsibility of the Chair of Trustees. Anyone who witnesses or experiences behaviour or decisions that seem contrary to this policy, is encouraged to challenge this, or raise the issues with their main contact / manager.

Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously and will be investigated using our problem-solving procedures. Serious breaches, including gross misconduct, could lead to ending your volunteering.

Reviewed: July 2024.