

	<b>Title</b>	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion		
	<b>Reference</b>	ED&I policy	<b>Owner</b>	Assistant Director People
	<b>Approved by</b>	JUNG	<b>Approval date</b>	April 2023
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	<b>Location</b>	Igloo/Working at NCHA/Colleague Handbook		
	<b>Advice</b>	Read changes in red		

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## **1. Purpose and scope**

- 1.1 NCHA is committed to promoting and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in all of its practices and aims to establish an inclusive culture that celebrates diversity, is free from discrimination and based on dignity and respect. NCHA recognises its duties under all relevant legislation and includes Human Rights, the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010, related Codes of Practice and regulatory requirements.
- 1.2 NCHA recognises that it has the power to reduce discrimination and the disadvantages that people experience by making its services more accessible and responsive to the needs of the communities with whom we work, and individuals using our services as customers, colleagues, contractors or consultants. We want our services and resources to be accessible regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect a person's opportunities in life.
- 1.3 This policy applies equally in the following areas:
- Provision of and access to housing and all NCHA's services
  - Recruitment, employment and training
  - Housing development, contractors and consultants
  - Shareholders and Board of Management

## **2. Responsibilities and risk**

- 2.1 NCHA requires every colleague, volunteer and Board member to recognise and discharge their own responsibility for contributing to the success of this policy and as such a copy of the policy is provided to each new starter when they join NCHA.
- 2.2 Risks: Failure to comply with this policy and the legislative requirements could result in a financial penalty, reputational damage, loss of contracts within Care and Support. It could also result in loss of engagement among NCHA colleagues reflecting in higher turnover, increased sickness and poor morale and poor employee relations.

## **3. Policy details and guidance**

- 3.1 We recognise that our ability to meet diverse needs is improved by having a diverse workforce that generally reflects the local population and which has the skills and understanding to achieve our service objectives. We are committed to valuing diversity in our workforce and training and developing colleagues to improve their ability to meet the association's group corporate strategic plan within a culture that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 3.2 NCHA is committed to and is working towards being an organisation that:
- Accepts that everyone has a right to their distinctive and diverse identities
  - Has a workforce generally reflecting the population we serve
  - Understands how valuing diversity can improve our ability to deliver better services, and so reduce disadvantage
  - Provides services which are responsive to the diverse needs of different individuals and communities
  - Provides all colleagues with the training and development they need

- Provides a supportive, open environment where all colleagues have the opportunity to reach their full potential

3.3 NCHA believes that our colleagues, Board members, volunteers, customers and stakeholders have an important part to play in making this happen. We are committed to listening to our customers and involving them in the development of services which recognise and value their diversity.

3.4 This policy is supported by:

- NCHA's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which is reviewed annually and agreed by Board. The Strategy is delivered through departmental operational plans and linked to the Chartered Institute of Housing's Equality and Diversity Charter which NCHA has signed up to, all of which contributes to delivering the general duties outlined in the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- The *Dignity at work policy* which outlines our commitment to creating a work environment free of unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. This is a detailed policy which outlines examples of behaviour that are not acceptable in our workplace and what all colleagues can do to help prevent and stop bullying and harassment.

3.5 NCHA takes breaches to this policy seriously. If an NCHA colleague feel that this policy has been breached they can address the matter informally with the individual or use the grievance procedure or if appropriate the Whistleblowing policy. Volunteers should raise the issue with HR. In the event that service users, tenants or stakeholders feel that we have not lived up to this policy they should make a complaint via our complaints procedure more information is available on our website [www.ncha.org.uk](http://www.ncha.org.uk). If a worker (engaged via an employment agency) considers this policy has been breached, they should raise this with their employer.

3.6 If an NCHA colleague experiences abuse, harassment from customers, their families or contractors in the course of role at NCHA related to their identity (protected characteristic) they should report this to their manager. They can expect to be supported in how to take the matter forward. See Dignity at work policy for more information.

#### **4. Supporting documentation and key legislation**

4.1 Forms:

n/a

4.2 Guidance:

n/a

4.3 Legislation:

Equality Act 2010

4.4. Related policies:

Dignity at work, sickness absence policy, Code of Conduct

**5. Monitoring and reporting**

5.1 Progress on the delivery of the EDI strategy is shared annually with the Board. KPIs, particularly those around workforce representation, are monitored in quarterly MI data to ET/STL. Other targets in the delivery plan are reviewed by the owners of actions and EDI panel. Highlights of achievements are published to colleagues as part of the EDI strategy.

**6. Definitions:**

n/a

**7. Equality and diversity**

7.1 This policy/procedure has been written in line with NCHAs Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Equality Statement. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed where applicable.

**8. Appendices**

n/a

**9. Policy approval**

9.1 This policy/procedure has been approved prior to issue by JUNG