



**Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedure**  
**Two Rivers Housing Group**

*for you – for your community – not for profit*

## **TWO RIVERS HOUSING GROUP**

### **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy and Procedure**

#### **1. Policy**

##### **1.1 Who this policy applies to:**

This policy applies to all Two Rivers Group employees and to associated persons such as secondees, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service.

##### **1.1.1 Policy Statement**

1.2 This policy sets out Two Rivers Housing Group's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I). Two Rivers Housing Group is committed to promoting ED&I and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

1.3 We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.

1.4 Two Rivers Housing Group aims to be an inclusive organisation, committed to providing equal opportunities throughout employment including in the recruitment, training and development of employees, and to pro-actively tackling and eliminating discrimination.

1.5 Two Rivers Housing Group considers that equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups both in employment and in the services we provide.

1.6 It is considered that diversity is to celebrate difference and value everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for Two Rivers Housing Group.

1.7 The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all employees, whether part time or full time on a permanent or fixed-term contract, and to associated persons such as secondees, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service.

1.8 All employees have personal responsibility for the application of this policy. As part of our employee induction, employees are expected to read and familiarise themselves with this policy, ensure that this policy is properly observed and fully

complied with and to complete the equality and declaration on the HR System Myzone or the declaration at Appendix 1.

1.9 This policy is of particular relevance to Directors, line managers and other employees concerned with recruitment, training and promotion procedures and employment decisions which affect others.

1.10 Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality and respect for all. Two Rivers housing Group will not tolerate any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against an employee, contractor, job applicant or visitor because of a protected characteristic:

- Sex;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality, and national origin;)
- Disability;
- Sexual orientation;
- Religion and or belief; and
- Age.

1.11 Discrimination on the basis of work pattern (part-time working, fixed term contract, flexible working) which is unjustifiable will also not be tolerated.

1.12 All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development and progression opportunities in Two Rivers Housing Group. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

1.13 No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If an employee believes that they have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, they should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with their line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority. The employee may decide in the alternative to raise the matter through the Two Rivers Housing Group Harassment and Bullying Policy or Grievance Policy.

1.14 Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. Two Rivers Housing Group will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably by Two Rivers Housing Group as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under the Two Rivers Housing Group Discipline Policy.

1.15 A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under the Two Rivers Housing Group Disciplinary Policy.

1.16 Employees may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.

1.17 This policy and procedure is adopted on a non-contractual basis and do not make up part of the employees' contractual terms and conditions. The organisation reserves the right to amend any provision of this procedure.

1.18 At the point of recruitment, colleagues will be asked to provide their ED&I data, confidentially through the My Zone platform. This data will be kept in accordance with the requirements of Data Protection 2018. The purpose of gathering data is to allow Two Rivers Housing Group to report on staff diversity to necessary, mandatory and legislative bodies, as well as other organisations who the Group identify as potential partners to assist our journey of ED&I.

1.19 Periodically, colleagues will be asked to review the ED&I data held about them on the MyZone HR system to update their personal information.

1.20 In providing such information colleagues are agreeing to it being shared anonymously for the purposes as detailed in 1.18.

## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Procedure**

### **2. Procedure**

#### **2.1 Who this procedure applies to:**

This procedure applies to all Two Rivers Group employees and to associated persons such as secondees, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service.

##### **2.1.1 Procedure statement**

2.1.2 This procedure applies to all conduct in the workplace and also to conduct outside of the workplace that is related to your work (e.g at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues) or which may impact on Two Rivers Housing Group's reputation (e.g the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to Two Rivers Housing Group).

We set out below some specific areas of application:

## 2.2 Recruitment

2.2.1 Selection for employment at Two Rivers Housing Group will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. Further detail is set out in Two River Housing Group Recruitment and Selection Policy.

## 2.3 Training

2.3.1 Employees may be required to participate in training and development activities from time to time, to encourage the promotion of the principles of this policy.

## 2.4 Promotion

2.4.1 All promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit, and will not be influenced by any of the protected characteristics listed above. Promotion opportunities will be monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers to promotion.

## 2.5 During employment

2.5.1 The benefits, terms and conditions of employment and facilities available to Two Rivers Housing Group employees will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that access is not restricted by unlawful means and to provide appropriate conditions to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

## 2.6 Types of Discrimination

There are various types of discrimination prohibited by this policy. The main types are :

### 2.6.1 Direct discrimination

2.6.1.2 Direct discrimination occurs where one person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic set out in this policy (Policy 1.10). By way of example, refusing to promote a pregnant employee on the basis that she is shortly due to go on maternity leave would be direct discrimination. Other types of direct discrimination are :

- **Discrimination by association-** this is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. For example, an employee is discriminated against because his/her son is disabled.
- **Discrimination by perception -** this is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. For example, where co-workers believe the individual is gay. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

## **2.6.2 Indirect discrimination**

2.6.2.1 Indirect discrimination occurs when an unjustifiable requirement or condition is applied, which appears to be the same for all, but which has a disproportionate, adverse effect on one group of people. This is discrimination even though there was no intention to discriminate. For example, a requirement for UK based qualifications could disadvantage applicants who have obtained equivalent qualifications outside of the UK; this could amount to indirect discrimination on the grounds of race.

## **2.7. Victimisation**

2.7.1 Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated less favourably than others because they have asserted legal rights against Two Rivers Housing Group or assisted a colleague in doing so. For example, victimisation may occur where an employee has raised a genuine grievance against Two Rivers Housing Group such as unfavourable treatment for a disability.

## **2.8 Harassment**

2.8.1 Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”. It is important to remember that it is not the intention of the harasser but how the recipient perceives their behaviour, which determines whether harassment has occurred. Please see the Two Rivers Housing Group Harassment and Bullying Policy for further details of how Two Rivers Housing will deal with bullying and harassment.

## **2.9 Review**

2.9.1 This procedure will be reviewed every three years; however, it may also be reviewed to ensure compliance with legislation and to amend in line with best practice and or to reflect changes in the organisation.

**Annex A**

**EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION DECLARATION:**

I have read and understood Two Rivers Housing Group's **Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedure** and agree to work to the expected standards. Regardless of my background and circumstances, I agree to treat all colleagues and visitors with respect and dignity while carrying the duties and responsibilities of my role in Two Rivers Housing Group.

Signature.....

Date.....

Print name.....

PLEASE RETURN TO PEOPLE TEAM

**Control box :**

<b>Document owner:</b>	<b>AD People &amp; Culture</b>		
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