



# bytes

## The Bytes Project

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

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#### 5.1 Introduction

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the employer to the promotion of equality of opportunity within The Bytes Project.

It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Religious beliefs or political opinion (or any lack thereof)
- Gender
- Age
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Disability
- Race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin or being an Irish Traveller
- Trade Union membership or non-membership.

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All full time and part time employees and job applicants (actual or potential) will be treated fairly and selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

We expect all of our employees to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment, which is its objective. The successful implementation of this policy necessitates a contribution from each employee and all employees have an obligation to report any act of discrimination known to them.

**5.2** To ensure that the Equal Opportunity Policy is implemented effectively, the employer will:

5.2.1 Allocate responsibility for the implementation of the policy.

5.2.2 Make the policy known to all employees.

5.2.3 Maintain a neutral working environment in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated because of his/her religious belief or political opinion, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins or being an Irish Traveller, trade union membership or non-membership, e.g. prohibit the display of flags, emblems, posters, graffiti or the circulation of materials or the articulation of slogans or songs which are likely to give offence or cause apprehension among particular groups of employees.

5.2.4 Provide facilities for any employee who believes they have been discriminated against to raise the matter through the appropriate procedure.

5.2.5 Ensure that the employer's recruitment and selection procedures are consistent, provide equality of opportunity and are seen to be fair by all employees and job applicants. Selection will be based on ability to do the job in question.

5.2.6 Commit itself to keep under review the operation of this Equal Opportunity Policy to take account of changing circumstances.

5.2.7 Carry out the statutory periodic review of employment procedures and practices.

5.2.8 Regard breaches of this policy as misconduct which will lead to disciplinary proceedings.

## **SECTION 6: GENERAL EMPLOYER RULES**

- 6.1** In order to promote and maintain good working relationships, it is essential to have clear and simple rules in place to deal with issues as they arise.

It is every employee's duty to observe the following general rules and to behave in the required way towards fellow employees, the employer, suppliers, clients, and visitors.

- 6.2** Employees and visitors must not smoke within any of the employer's buildings or outbuildings.
- 6.3** Employees have an obligation to ensure that they conform to the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Policy, and must not act in a manner which could be considered to be of an unlawful discriminatory nature. Although we have no political or religious bias, we are not prepared to allow any political or religious activities on our premises.
- 6.4** Employees are expected to achieve and maintain a good standard of work and to show a conscientious approach to the job or to the detail of that job to a standard that may reasonably be expected.
- 6.5** Employees are expected to show the skill or aptitude required for the job, especially where employees have been trained in such at the time employment commenced and on an ongoing basis as outlined in their performance appraisal documentation.
- 6.6** To ensure maximum efficiency, employees are engaged on the basis that they must be prepared to undertake reasonable duties other than those for which they have been specifically engaged.
- 6.7** Personal hygiene and appearance must be of a high standard.
- 6.8** The telephone must not be used for private purposes without prior permission.
- 6.9** An orderly and courteous manner must be maintained in front of clients and service users.
- 6.10** It is not permitted to remove material or equipment of any kind from the employer without prior permission.
- 6.11** Working time and/or the employer's material or equipment must not be used for any unauthorised work.
- 6.12** It is the practice of the employer from time to time to issue memorandums and bulletins containing instructions on matters of policy. All authorised notices displayed are expected to be read and observed, and failure to comply with any published instructions may result in disciplinary action.
- 6.13** Employees are expected to act wholeheartedly in the interests of the employer at all times. Any conduct detrimental to its interests or its relations with its clients, the general public or damaging to its public image shall be considered to be a breach of the employer's rules resulting in disciplinary action. This includes any breaches of the Computer Network, Internet Access & Email, and Social Media Policy.
- 6.14** All employees are required to comply with the employer's policy of not permitting the display of flags, emblems, posters, graffiti, etc, or the circulation of literature which is likely to give offence or cause apprehension among particular groups of employees or service users.
- 6.15** Employees must act in accordance with the employer's Policies and Procedures contained within this handbook.
- 6.16** You are not permitted to buy or sell goods on your own behalf on our premises or during working hours.

- 6.17** If you have been negligent or have caused malicious damage to employer property, we reserve a contractual right to deduct such costs from your pay.
- 6.18** You are expected to abide by and follow the procedures as per the employer's statutory obligations e.g. Health and Safety or other quality accreditation.
- 6.19** Reasonable precautions are taken to safeguard personal property, but the employer does not hold itself responsible for any loss or damage. Any and all personal property (including cash and mobile phones) will remain your responsibility. All personal property is left entirely at the owner's risk. Any loss of personal property should be reported to the Director immediately. Any personal property found should also be reported to the Director immediately.
- 6.20** Any damage or loss which occurs to a visitor's property must be reported immediately to the Director.
- 6.21** Games, play and/or sports activities of a physical nature are not permitted on any occasion on the employer's premises and at all times during working hours.
- 6.22** Gambling is prohibited on the employer's premises.
- 6.23** Any canvassing, including making a collection or selling tickets for organisations or groups of any nature, is not permitted on the employer's premises, nor at any time during working hours, unless express written permission is sought from the Director.
- 6.24** The forming of any social, sports, or other type of organisation within the employment and using the employer's name is not permitted unless prior written permission is given by the Director.
- 6.25** No notices, letters or other literature may be posted or distributed in the employer's premises at any time without the prior written permission of the Director.
- 6.26** Severe Weather and Traffic Disruption

The Company's primary duty is to provide a safe place of work. If severe weather means that this cannot be achieved, then all employees may be sent home or told not to come in. In these circumstances, employees will be paid in full for any working time that they have lost.

If the charity remains open, it is the responsibility of employees to attend work if they possibly can. While the company understands that this is not always possible, additional paid leave will not be provided for employees who are unable, for whatever reason, to travel into work.

Where it is clear that you are not going to be able to get to work, you must contact your line manager as soon as possible to explain the situation. You must make every effort to talk to your manager directly rather than leave a message with colleagues or send an email or text message.

If you are unable to attend work due to severe weather or other travel difficulties, then you will be required to either take time from your annual leave allowance to cover any absence, or to take unpaid time off by agreement with your line manager. There may be circumstances in which employees are able to work at home, but this will depend entirely on the role and feasibility of such an arrangement, and will also be at the sole discretion of the Director.

**6.27** Rest Breaks

The Company encourages all employees to take full advantage of scheduled rest breaks. These are provided not only for comfort, but also to protect the health of employees and prevent excessive fatigue from causing accidents.

A rest break should be taken away from your workstation wherever possible. If you leave the premises you should bear in mind the time that it will take you to return from the break so that you can ensure that you begin work again on time.