

Rationale

Fencing Ireland believes that in a civil society discrimination and harassment are unacceptable and, furthermore, that staff and patrons can be adversely affected by incidents of discrimination and harassment in facilities. Staff have a responsibility to provide an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination in all forms, including those based on race, ethnicity, gender, ability, disability, sexuality and religion.

This policy is intended as a framework document, allowing Fencing Ireland the flexibility to accommodate local needs and circumstances. However, the policy directs that Fencing Ireland take responsibility for establishing mechanisms and procedures to actively counter discrimination and harassment. This recognizes the increasing involvement of management to local level.

This Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy is further supported by a range of legislation.

Definitions

1. Discrimination

- Refers to any behaviour or practice which reflects an assumption of superiority of one group over another;
- Is behaviour which disadvantages people on the basis of their real or perceived membership of a particular group; and
- Includes such behaviour as less favourable treatment, unfair exclusion, and asking discriminatory questions.

1.1 Direct discrimination takes place when a person treats another person, on the basis of an attribute or characteristic, less favourably than a person without that attribute or characteristic. These attributes or characteristics could include gender, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, family responsibilities, sexuality, ethnicity, age or disability.

1.2 Indirect discrimination takes place when a person imposes a condition, requirement or practice which is unreasonable or disadvantages a member of a group who shares or is believed to share an attribute on the basis of gender, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, family responsibilities, sexuality, ethnicity, age or disability. Indirect discrimination can also occur when groups or individuals are treated as being the same, although they are different. By not taking differences into account, one group or individual benefits at the expense of the others.

2. Harassment:

- Is the exercise of power by one person over another, which often presents as bullying behaviour
- Involves physical, verbal or psychological behaviour which makes another person feel embarrassed, offended, upset, devalued, degraded, afraid, frustrated or angry.
- Includes insulting, demeaning, humiliating, offensive, vilifying or intimidatory behaviour or behaviour which incites hatred.
- Includes a wide range of conduct that causes another person to feel offended, humiliated, insulted, or ridiculed.
- Is behaviour which is unwelcome, unreciprocated, uninvited and usually repeated
- May cause damaging stereotypes to be maintained
- Is a breach of proper standards of conduct and professional behaviour
- May be based on misunderstanding or be a deliberate act based on a subjective perspective.

Goal - It is intended that Fencing Ireland will provide a supportive environment which is free from discriminatory practices and harassment and which promotes personal respect and physical and emotional safety.

3. Requirements:

Fencing Ireland Management will be responsible for:

- Implementing this policy within all Clubs affiliated to it
- Being aware of the legislative requirements relating to discrimination and harassment
- Ensuring that the preparation and review of plans and grievance procedures involve consultation with all Clubs affiliated to Fencing Ireland and include the range of discriminatory behaviours.
- Ensuring that patrons, club members are familiar with Fencing Ireland's approach, and understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to it
- Promoting this policy within all Clubs affiliated to Fencing Ireland.
- Monitoring Fencing Ireland's plans to counter discrimination and harassment, including documenting reported grievances, and initiating reviews of the approaches at regular intervals.
- Ensuring sensitivity and confidentiality, and the protection of the rights of all individuals, and
- Practising non-discriminatory behaviours

Affiliated Clubs will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that activities are congruent with and support this policy.
- Helping people to develop competencies to challenge discriminatory attitudes and behaviours in themselves and others.
- Being aware of the legislative requirements relating to discrimination and harassment
- Ensuring that claims of discrimination and harassment are speedily and constructively addressed according to Fencing Ireland's strategies; and
- Practising non-discriminatory behaviours
- Providing advice and support materials for the enactment of this policy
- Assisting with professional development