

Equality and diversity policy

The Masonic Charitable Foundation (“the Foundation”) (Registered charity number 1164703, Company number 09751836) is committed to equal opportunities and diversity. This commitment extends to Visiting Volunteers.

The Foundation will not discriminate against Visiting Volunteers or those applying to be Visiting Volunteers on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

Furthermore, the Foundation value difference, and recognise the value that the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of our Visiting Volunteers bring to the organisation. The Foundation will take all reasonable practicable steps to accommodate any individual access requirements for Visiting Volunteers and individuals applying to be Visiting Volunteers.

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which Visiting Volunteers are expected to treat other volunteers, staff, visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former volunteers and staff members.

The Foundation will not tolerate behaviour that contradicts the letter or spirit of this policy.

Forms of discrimination

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. Indirect discrimination occurs when someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone’s dignity or

creating an intimidating, hostile degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

People can suffer discrimination by association and by perception.

Associative discrimination is direct discrimination or harassment against a person because they have an association with someone with a particular protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination is discrimination against a person because the discriminator thinks the person possesses that characteristic, even if they do not in fact do so.

Breaches of this policy

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter with the Masonic Support Programme Lead. If this is not possible or the matter concerns the Masonic Support Programme Lead then contact the Chief Operating Officer at the Foundation.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated. Visiting Volunteers who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with seriously.

The Foundation will end their relationship with any Visiting Volunteer who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment.

Last updated/reviewed: August 2017

Next review due: August 2020