

Equality & Diversity Policy Statement

GW Highways is committed to the principles of equality and equal opportunities.

GW Highways believe in treating all individuals with dignity and respect, and oppose to any form of less favourable treatment or financial reward through direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation to employees or job applicants on the grounds of age, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability.

The Company recognises its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and The Codes of Practice published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the European Commission for the elimination of discrimination.

The following are kinds of discrimination for which GW Highways has a zero-tolerance policy. Any act of discrimination or harassment on unlawful grounds or failure to comply with this policy will lead to a thorough investigation which may lead to disciplinary action.

Victimisation – treating someone unfairly because they have, or are thought to have, made a complaint about discrimination or harassment, or helped someone else make a claim of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

Direct discrimination – treating someone with a protected characteristic or different circumstances less favourably than others.

Indirect discrimination - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic or different circumstance at an unfair disadvantage.

Harassment - unwanted behaviour that intentionally or unintentionally violates a colleague's dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment for them

There are 9 "protected characteristics" covered by the Equality Act 2010. These are;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

Our Commitments

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognized and valued.
- Provide equal access to training and career development opportunities.
- Take seriously any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimization and unlawful discrimination.
- Ensure recruitment procedures are reviewed and updated where necessary to ensure fairness.
- Ensuring promotions, salary increases and benefits are based on objective criteria such as performance, qualifications and experience.
- Provide clear reporting for individuals who experience or witness discrimination or harassment with a commitment to address any complaints in a fair and timely manner.
- Take prompt and appropriate action when a complaint is received.
- Make reasonable adjustments in the workplace to accommodate employees with disabilities or specific needs.

Definitions

Age: refers to a person or people who have a particular age, range of ages, or age group.

Disability: A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment **has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities**

Gender reassignment: A person or people have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Race:

Includes:

- Colour
- Nationality
- Ethnic or national origins
- Ethical and Racial groups

Religion or belief:

- Religion means any religion and a reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion
- Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief.
- Association means being connected to someone who has a religion or belief.

Sex: Refers to a person who was assigned as male or female at birth

Sexual orientation: means a person's sexual orientation towards:

- People of the same sex
- People of the opposite sex
- People of either sex

Marriage and civil partnership: A person or people have the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if they are married or have a civil partner and are married or are civil partners

Pregnancy and Maternity: A person who is pregnant, has pregnancy related illness, breastfeeding or recently given birth.

The protected period begins when the pregnancy begins and ends when returning from maternity leave. If you do not have a right to maternity leave, this period ends two weeks after giving birth.

Monitoring

The company will examine all its workplaces from time to time to ensure that no materials of a racial nature are in evidence. It should be determined during meetings of the workforce whether they have suffered any racial discrimination from other members of staff or if they believe that any work delegation or instructions have been influenced by racial discrimination. All personnel are to be made aware that contravention of these procedures will lead to disciplinary action being taken against them.

Recruitment

Equal opportunities at work principles should always be applied when recruiting staff. This includes the wording of the advertisement, where the position is advertised, and the selection criteria used. The advert should include that the company is an "Equal opportunities Employer" and encourage everyone who meets the job requirements to apply.

Criteria for selection, training, conditions of service, pay, career development and every other aspect of employment should be objective and justified for the requirements of the position.

Promotion

When selecting staff for promotion the same principles should be considered as for recruitment. All employees, whether full-time or part-time, should be given the same opportunities.

Bullying

Bullying is a gradual wearing down process comprising a sustained form of psychological and/or physical abuse that makes victims feel demeaned and inadequate. Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power, which has the purpose, or effect of intimidating, belittling and humiliating the recipient, leading to loss of self-esteem for the victim and ultimately self-questioning his or her worth in the workplace and society as a whole. Workplace bullying can range from extreme forms such as violence and intimidation to less obvious actions, like deliberately ignoring someone at work.

Any harassment or bullying will be classed as gross misconduct, for which employees may be summarily dismissed.

GW Highways Ltd recognise the sensitive nature of harassment and bullying. Employees who believe they are being harassed or bullied may wish to discuss their situation before deciding what action to take. The Company operate an open-door policy to discuss workplace problems and employees can discuss the matter with their manager on an informal basis.

Employees can choose to solve the matter themselves by approaching the harasser/ bully, telling him or her that their behaviour is unwelcome and that it must stop. Otherwise, a formal complaint will be made using the procedure outlined below.

Where informal solutions fail, or serious harassment/bullying occurs, employees can bring a formal complaint in the form of a grievance, with the procedure adapted to take account of the sensitivities of such situations.

Where a complaint is blatantly untrue and has been brought out of spite, or for some other unacceptable motive, the complainant will be subject to our disciplinary procedure, as will any witnesses who have deliberately misled us during our investigations.

Harassment at work by third parties

If Employees are ever subjected to harassment by anyone that they encounter in the course of their work, it is very important that it is brought to the GW Highways attention as soon as possible because action cannot be taken to prevent this occurring unless we are made aware of it. GW Highways Ltd will take all reasonable steps to prevent employees being subjected to any harassment in the course of their work.

Armed Forces & Veterans

GW Highways Ltd have signed the Armed forces covenant and are recognised as a Bronze Award holder from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS). GW Highways Ltd are committed to supporting those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces and their families.

Policy Authorised By



David Gibbins, Director



Luke Wenham, Director



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