



**FourNet<sup>®</sup>**

# Equal Opportunities And Discrimination Policy

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## Document Control

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## Authorisation

Document Prepared by:

David O'Brien  
Head of Compliance

Verified and Authorised by:



Richard Pennington  
Chief Executive Officer

## 1. Introduction

Equality is about ensuring everybody has an equal opportunity and is not treated differently or discriminated against because of their characteristics, e.g., sex, race, religion, age. Diversity is about taking account of the differences between people and groups of people and placing a positive value on those differences.

Harassment, bullying, racialism are discriminatory acts and also criminal offences. It is very difficult to define as it can take many forms, but in the main it takes the form of unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another.

## 2. Purpose

FourNet's Equal Opportunities and Discrimination Policy ensures compliance with our statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and ensures that our practice does not treat one group of people less favourably than another because of their colour, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability in relation to decisions to recruit, train or promote employees.

The aim is for FourNet's workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

FourNet, in providing services and solutions, is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

This policy's purpose is to:

- Provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time, full-time, contractor or agency;
- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation; and
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.

### 3. Our Commitment

- FourNet will endeavour, through appropriate training, to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.
- Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.
- Job descriptions, where used, will be in line with FourNet's Equal Opportunities and Discrimination Policy.
- Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.
- FourNet have a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies and do not confine recruitment to areas or media sources that provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.
- All applicants who apply for jobs with FourNet receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.
- All employees involved in the recruitment process periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.
- Short listing and interviews are carried out by more than one person where possible and interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.
- FourNet do not disqualify any applicant because he/she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.
- Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other employees.
- Senior staff will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.
- All training and promotion will be in line with our policy.
- Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
- 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 recognised and valued.
- This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination.
- All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public, and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- Make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

## 4. Responsibility

FourNet's Managing Director has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant codes of practice.

## 5. Monitoring

FourNet maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.

Monitoring may involve:

- The collection and classification of information regarding the race in terms of ethnic/national origin, the sex, age, and disability of all current employees;
- The examination by ethnic/national origin, sex, age, and disability of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants;
- Recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions;
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy;
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues; and.
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and employees.

## 6. Breaches

Discrimination is unacceptable and breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action. FourNet will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying and will provide a neutral working environment in which no one feels threatened or intimidated.

## 7. Enforcement

Any member of staff found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In certain circumstance, investigation by regulatory bodies and or the police may apply.

## 8. Communicating FourNet's Policies

Relevant training, bulletins, education materials, policies, procedures, and processes are provided on an ongoing basis to all employees to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities and are kept up-to-date of any new requirements. These are communicated in a number of ways, including, but not limited to:

- Induction sessions;
- PDR meetings;
- Company meetings;
- Atlas/Citation portal; and
- Regular company bulletins via Microsoft Teams.

## 9. Review and Ownership of This Policy

This policy will be reviewed and amended as required, and at least annually by Head of People & Talent or the Head of Compliance. This document is managed by the ISO review process and, as such any revisions will be authorised at Board Level prior to general release.

This policy document is ISO controlled and as such, the source document will be stored in the secure area of the FourNet ISO SharePoint<sup>®</sup> and a PDF version in FourNet Open Access ISO Documents PDFs folder, sub-folder 002 Policies.

## 10. Questions

If you have any questions on this policy, please speak to your manager or People Operations.