

Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI

Equality in Sport Policy

Date of Approval	Approved 16 th November 2021
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1 Equality Statement

Disability Sport NI and its community interest company (CIC) Live Active NI are equity organisations whose aim is to promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities in Northern Ireland to take part in sport and active recreation and to help improve their standard of performance and enjoyment at a level of their choice.

In working towards this aim Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI are mindful of the need to carry out their functions in a manner which not only promotes equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without but also between:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation.
- Between men and women generally.
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

2 Statement of Intent

Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI are fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and aim to ensure that everyone has the right to participate in the organisations' operations, programmes and services, irrespective of their religious beliefs, political opinion, race, age, marital status or sexual orientation; and that the organisations' services are open to men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; persons with dependants and persons without. This includes employees, volunteers and participants.

Sports Equality is about fairness in sport; equality of access; recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It involves changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to all members of society and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to realise their talent and full potential.

3 Purpose

Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI recognise the organisation's legal and moral obligations to protect all individuals from unfair discrimination and harassment and where necessary it will take positive steps to ensure that equality of opportunity is afforded to all.

This Policy has been produced to try and prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against its employees, volunteers and participants.

4 Legal Requirements

Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI are required by law not to discriminate against its employees, volunteers or participants and recognises its legal obligations under the following legislation:

- Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970 (as amended)
- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 (as amended)
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (as amended)
- Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (as amended)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003
- Northern Ireland Act 1998

5 Discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying

Discrimination can take the following forms:

Direct Discrimination results from treating a person less favourably on grounds such as disability, gender, and marital status, sexual orientation, religious belief, political opinion, race or cultural origin, domestic or caring responsibility, trade union membership, or age.

Indirect Discrimination arises where a condition or requirement although equally applied to all, has the effect of excluding, personalising or treating less favourably any group whether intentionally or not, and where the actions cannot be shown to be justifiable and will be to the detriment of those who cannot comply with it.

Victimisation occurs when a person is given less favourable treatment than others because they have exercised their statutory rights, it is suspected that they might exercise these rights, or they have assisted others to exercise these rights.

Harassment is defined as any unwanted conduct or behaviour, deliberate or otherwise, directed at an individual that is found to be unreasonable, unwelcome or offensive to the recipient and which threatens an employee's security or creates an intimidating environment.

Bullying has been defined as the persistent, demeaning and downgrading of employees through words and actions that gradually erode self-confidence and undermine self-esteem.

Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI regard discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying as described above, as serious misconduct and any employee, volunteer or participant who discriminate against, harass, victimise or bully any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action.

6. Implementation and Equality Action Plan

Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI will ensure it meets its commitment to equality in sport by:

- Publishing this policy on the Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI websites
- Making all new staff and board members aware of the policy as part of their induction process.
- Ensuring that equality is a standing item at each board meeting.
- Implementing an annual equality action plan concerned with ensuring that:
 - Appropriate equality training is provided to all employees and volunteers.
 - The equality profile of staff, board members, volunteers and participants is regularly monitored and assessed.
 - Positive actions are taken to address identified areas of inequality or underrepresentation.

7 Responsibility

The Board of Directors of Disability Sport NI and Live Active NI will be responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and will deal with any actual or potential breaches.

All employees, volunteers and participants have a responsibility to respect and act in accordance with the spirit and intentions of the policy.

8 Complaints and Disciplinary

To safeguard an individual's rights under the policy, any employee, volunteer or participants who believe that they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, volunteer or participant, who violate this policy. Where the violation of the equality in sport policy by way of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying amounts to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.