



## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY DOCUMENT

### Signed & Dated

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Equal opportunities in the workplace is about ensuring that everyone has equal access to employment and training opportunities and it has largely been driven by legislative developments focusing in outlawing unfair discrimination. Managing equality and diversity is regarded as a more positive or proactive approach because it places more of an emphasis on valuing differences between individuals and recognising that the engagement of employees from a range of backgrounds can bring positive benefits to an organisation.

### 1.1 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

SoftSkan Limited is committed to providing equal opportunities and avoiding unlawful discrimination in the employment of staff and provision of services to our clients. This will ensure that we are free of discrimination, harassment and bullying and everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

The equality and diversity legislation currently covers the eight equality and diversity strands outlined below:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Human Rights
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

## 2. POLICY AIMS

SoftSkan Limited is an Equal Opportunities employer and is committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and the implementation of employment practices which will ensure that no potential or current employee is treated less favourably on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief or any other grounds, which cannot be justified.

We aim to ensure that no employee (that includes permanent employees, bank employees, part time workers, agency workers or Fixed Term contract [FTC] employees), prospective employee or recipient of the service experiences direct or indirect discrimination. It is our policy to promote an environment void of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to build a culture that is open, fair and transparent.

The objectives of this policy are:

- I. To ensure that no-one receives less favourable treatment, on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, disability or is disadvantaged by any conditions, requirements, provisions, criteria, procedure or practices that cannot be justified.

- II. To ensure that no employee is victimised for taking action against discrimination or harassment, or instructed or put under pressure to discriminate against , or harass someone.
- III. To ensure that SoftSkan Limited is free of unwanted conduct that violates the dignity of employee or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, offensive or humiliating environment.
- IV. To ensure that opportunities for employment, training and promotion are equally open to candidates
- V. To ensure that selection for employment, promotion, transfer and training, and access to benefits, facilities and services, will be fair, equitable and be based solely on merit or needs.
- VI. SoftSkan Limited is fully committed to establishing and maintaining a working environment in which recruitment and promotion is based upon merit. We value the differences that a diverse workforce brings to the organisation and strive to make full use of the talents, skills, experience and different cultural perspectives available in a multi-ethnic society, and where people feel they are respected and valued, and can achieve their potential in both employment and service provision.

### 3. PRINCIPLES

SoftSkan Limited aims to ensure that no employee, prospective employee or recipient of our services experiences direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, ethnic origin, colour, religion, dependent responsibility or any other unjustified conditions.

Policies, procedures and practices will be in accordance with all equal opportunities legislation and good employment practice.

SoftSkan Limited will take action to challenge and stop any direct and indirect acts of discrimination in employment requirements and practices.

Access to SoftSkan's management, procedures and guidelines, and opportunities to develop abilities and realise expectations will be fair and non-discriminatory across the company.

SoftSkan Limited will monitor this policy on an annual basis

The following areas will be of primary concern to the SoftSkan Limited:

- Recruitment, selection and retention
- Training and development
- Career progression-promotion and transfers
- Employee Relations information i.e. Disciplinary, Grievances, Bullying and Harassment, Capability cases
- Redundancy selection and redeployment.

All employees will be encouraged to develop their skills and qualifications and to take advantage of promotion and development opportunities in the company.

In addition, SoftSkan Limited expects its employees, contractors, to act in accordance with this policy. SoftSkan Limited also emphasises that employees have a right to expect similar fair and non-discriminatory treatment from contractors, and members of the general public.

All employees will have access to training and development with support following appraisals and review of personal development plan with their line manager.

Information on the age, gender, ethnicity and disability status of employee and applicants for employment, promotions and training will be collated and analysed and monitored by SoftSkan Limited. The information will be held in the strictest confidence and will only be used to promote equality of opportunity and prevent unlawful discrimination. If the data show that people from particular groups are under-represented in particular areas of work, lawful positive action such as training provided for employees and to improve their chances of applying successfully for vacancies in the company.

Opportunities for employment and promotions will be advertised widely externally and all applicants will be welcomed.

Requirements, conditions, provisions, criteria and practices will be reviewed regularly, in the light of the monitoring results, and revising, if they have been found to, or might, discriminate unlawfully.

All Contracts between SoftSkan Limited and contractors to supply goods, materials or services will include a clause prohibiting unlawful discrimination or harassment by contractors to provide equality of opportunity in their employment practices.

The advice of the Human Resources Department will be sought in any matters relating to equal opportunities in employment.

#### **4. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees working for SoftSkan Limited in the European Union and the United States of America. SoftSkan Limited will ensure that no user of our services, i.e. present employees or job applicant, receives less attention (as appropriate to the prevailing circumstance) on the grounds of:

- Gender and Gender Identity
- Marital status
- Civil Partnerships
- Parental/Guardian/Carer Status
- Race
- Creed
- Religion or Belief
- Physical, Mental or learning Disability
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Trade Union Membership, or non-Membership, or Activity

## 5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY VALUE STATEMENT

### **Equality**

Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. It is backed by legislation designed to address unfair discrimination based on membership of a particular group in the provision and access to service and employment.

### **Diversity**

Diversity is about recognition and valuing of difference in the broadest sense. It is about creating a working culture and practices that recognise, respect, value and harness difference for the benefit of the organisation and individuals.

### **“We value and promote diversity”**

SoftSkan Limited is committed to eliminating discrimination where identified in all our functions, services, policies and practices, as well as being committed to taking positive action to promote diversity in the workplace.

All employees and managers of SoftSkan Limited will value differences and be sensitive to the needs of the individual patient or employee, treating each other fairly.

SoftSkan Limited places a positive value on employee diversity and we believe that differences in the workforce can add value to the organisation and make it stronger, more flexible and ultimately more capable of delivering high quality consultancy services that meet the needs of our customers.

SoftSkan Limited aims to protect and enhance the dignity of employees and customers by employing good management practices.

SoftSkan Limited aims to make services sensitive and appropriate to the diverse cultures, languages and individual needs of all clients.

The company will secure the best possible outcomes for all, without detriment to particular groups within the available resources.