

Equal Opportunities Policy

Black Country Radio supports the principle of equal opportunities and opposes discrimination on the basis of age, sex, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and part-time or fixed-term employment (defined as Protected Characteristics).

Being a committed equal opportunities organisation, Black Country Radio will take every possible step to ensure that and volunteers are treated equally and fairly. All policies and practices will conform to the principle of equal opportunities in terms of recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career development, discipline and dismissal.

Black Country Radio monitors this policy on an annual basis.

To whom does this policy apply?

This policy applies to all volunteers.

All volunteers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, to treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against, harass or victimise other volunteers. In some situations, Black Country Radio may be at risk of being held responsible for the acts of individual members of volunteers and will not tolerate any discriminatory practices or behaviour.

Managing Volunteers

Those volunteering at a management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the aims and objectives of Black Country Radio with regard to equal opportunities.

All volunteers are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they familiarise themselves with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives. If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Volunteer Manager.

Forms of discrimination

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

Direct discrimination:

Direct discrimination occurs where:

Someone is treated less favourably because of one or more Protected Characteristics. For example, rejecting an applicant because they would not "fit in" because of their race or sexual orientation would be direct discrimination.

Someone is less favourably treated because of their association with someone who has a Protected Characteristic. For example, an individual may be treated less favourably because they have a disabled child.

Someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic. For example, an individual may be treated less favourably because they are believed to be (but may not actually be) homosexual.

Indirect discrimination:

Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to a provision, criterion or practice, applied to a group of people, which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of a Protected Characteristic, and it cannot be objectively justified. An example might be a minimum height requirement for a job. This is likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If this criterion cannot be objectively justified, because it is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, then it will be indirectly discriminatory on the ground of sex.

Victimisation and harassment:

Discrimination also includes victimisation (suffering a detriment because of action the individual has taken or may take to assert legal rights) against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard (called a Protected Act) and harassment (see Black Country Radio Dignity at Work policy for a more detailed explanation of "harassment").

Recruitment and selection

Black Country Radio seeks to ensure that no volunteer applicant receives less favourable treatment because of a Protected Characteristic. Recruitment procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and that sufficiently diverse sectors of the community are reached. Volunteering recruitment procedures are reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.

Disability discrimination

If you are disabled, or become disabled in the course of your volunteering, you are encouraged to tell us about your condition. This is to enable us to support you as much as possible and to ensure that you are not treated less favourably because of something related to your disability.

Reasonable adjustments:

You may also wish to advise us of any reasonable adjustments to your volunteering conditions or the duties of your role which you consider to be necessary, or which would assist you in the performance of your volunteering duties.

This may involve the provision of an additional piece of equipment or assistance in helping you to perform your role. Black Country Radio may wish to consult with you and with your medical adviser(s) about possible reasonable adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where possible and proportionate to the needs of your role.

Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it will not be reasonable for us to accommodate the suggested adjustments and we will ensure that we provide you with information as to the basis of our decision not to make any adjustments.

Black Country Radio will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether it can make any changes to help remove disadvantages which these may create for disabled users. However, due to current rental arrangements of the Black Country Radio studios, there may be limitations beyond the Station's control. Where possible and proportionate, Black Country Radio will seek to take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises.

Breaches of the policy

If you believe that you may have been disadvantaged because of a Protected Characteristic, you are encouraged to raise the matter through **Black Country Radio Problem Solving Policy**.

If you believe that you may have been harassed because of a Protected Characteristic, you are encouraged to raise the matter identified by Black Country Radio's Dignity at Work Policy (See Appendix 3) and allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with **Black Country Radio's Problem Solving Policy**.

False allegations:

These procedures apply during and after volunteering with Black Country Radio. Volunteers who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result.

False allegations of a breach in this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our **Problem Solving Policy**.

Disciplinary action:

If, after investigation, you are proven to have engaged in any unwanted conduct because of a Protected Characteristic, or otherwise acted in breach of this policy, you will be subject to the Problem Solving procedures.

In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in termination of your volunteering.

Black Country Radio will always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

Black Country Radio Directors (as managed by Waterfront Media CIC) have overall responsibility for this policy.