

1. Hillsolve has an Equal Opportunities Policy for the following reasons:

- The company is committed to and support the principal of equal opportunity to all.
- Hillsolve oppose all forms of unlawful, unfair, direct and indirect discrimination.
- To ensure that all its employees and prospective employees are treated fairly with integrity, respect and consideration.
- To gain the fullest use of the talent and potential of its workforce by means of recruitment, selection, training and promotion on the ability, job requirements, skills, aptitudes and other objective criteria.
- To enable the Company to identify and act on opportunities to remove barriers to Equal Opportunities so that no individual or group is disadvantaged and that everyone will be dealt with impartially.

2. Fundamental Principle

The object of our Equal Opportunities Policy is to ensure that everyone who works for or applies to work for Hillsolve, will be treated fairly irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, disability, working patterns/hours, sexual orientation, age or religion.

3. Hillsolve Policy in Practice

The aim is to encourage:

- The development of better employment opportunities within Hillsolve, available to people from all walks of life.
- To improve employment practices and have a flexible approach from the management.

4. The policy is designed to meet the requirements of the following:

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (amended 1983)
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986
- Employment Equality (sexual orientation) regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (religion or belief) 2003
- Age Discrimination Act 2006
- Minimum Wage Requirements
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Criminal Justice Act and Public Order Act 1994
- European Directives e.g. Part Time Workers, Pregnant Workers, Working Hours, etc.

5. Employees have the right to fair treatment in all aspects of their work, in particular:

- Allocation of work based on abilities, experience and skill.
- Recruitment, progression/promotion open to all staff who qualify
- Training & Development open to all staff who qualify
- Assessment of performance and performance related pay to reflect job related criteria
- Working Hours
- Leave of Absence – both holidays and in special circumstances
- Maternity and associated issues
- Internal disciplinary, inefficiency and appeals procedures
- Internal transfers, redeployment and redundancy
- To work in an environment free from harassment of any kind.

NOTE: This is not a definitive list. The Equal Opportunities Policy applies to all aspects of working life with Hillserve.

6. Company Responsibility

All Management and Staff have responsibilities for implementing these policies throughout the Company under the overall direction of Julie Hadfield, Managing Director. Any policy issues will be directed towards the Managing Director to ensure that unfair discrimination does not arise.

7. Personal Responsibilities

All employees and sub contractors have a personal responsibility are expected to co-operate in carrying out and implementing Equal Opportunities by:

- Upholding the principal of treating all people fairly in all dealings that arise from or in connection with your work with Hillserve, not only in relation to colleagues but to customers, suppliers and others with whom you may come in contact with.
- Ensure that what you say or do cannot be reasonably taken as discriminatory
- Ensure that what you say or do cannot be taken as harassment of any nature

Equal Opportunities Practices

All of the Practices detailed below and all other activities related to them are subject to the over-riding consideration of the Fundamental Principle of our Equal Opportunities Policy.

a. Recruitment of New Employees

Aim:

Our aim is to attract applicants from all parts of the community in which the recruitment is taking place.

Sources of Recruitment:

Hillsolve will use organisations which will support and enhance their aim. Primary sources will be Job Centres, Career Offices, Newspaper Advertising and recruitment agencies. All advertising will be non-discriminatory, it will not include statements or suggestions of discrimination, stereotyping or other material which may discourage suitable applicants because of their age, race, colour, sex, marital status, etc. Referrals from existing employees must be channelled through the chosen advertising medium where they may compete equally with other applicants.

Application Forms:

Will relate to the needs of the job. They will be non-discriminatory.

Selection

Note:

This Practice covers all stages of selection; for interview and for appointment, whether for incoming or existing employees. The Practice includes selection for transfers, promotions, redeployment, training, etc. The Practice applies at all stages of the process; selection for interview, interview, selection for appointment.

Aim:

To uphold the fundamental principle in our Equal Opportunities Policy.

Process:

Each post has a Job Description. Consideration should be given at each new recruitment advertisement to ensure that the Job Description is up to date and relevant. Job Description will be written to reflect fairness and will only state requirements that are necessary for the job. The Job Description will provide the criteria for selection, which the person doing the selection will set against the information provided by the applicant. Allowance will be made for the quality of the application in relation to the job requirements if this will enhance the opportunities of those groups listed in our Fundamental Principle. Selectors should consider positively the availability of special aids for people with disabilities through the Job Centre's Disability Employment Advisor (DEA).

Interviews:

Care should be taken to ensure that interviews are conducted to give equal opportunity to all applicants. Questioning should be sensitive, non-intrusive, relevant job specific and avoid any content which could be taken as discriminatory (this includes questions about family circumstances which are not relevant to the applicant's capacity to do the job).

Appointment:

Will be based entirely on the merit or potential of the applicant to meet the needs of the Job Description.

Terms & Conditions

Pay:

Hillsolve is an equal pay employer. All employees will be paid at the same rate for the same work, or for work of equal value. Training rates will apply in circumstances which reflect lower value outputs. There is a wage for age structure for employees and they adhere to and follow the guidelines of the minimum wage guidelines.

Hours:

All employees will be employed for the hours agreed in their contract which will conform to those of other employees engaged in the same or similar work or work group. Sympathetic consideration will be given if employees wish to negotiate special working arrangements.

Managers will act fairly in circumstances where short time or overtime is to be allocated.

Time off (with or without pay) is discretionary, subject to the Company rules.

Leave of Absence:

Holiday leave will be as agreed in the contract, which will conform to those of other employees engaged in the same or similar work or work group. Part time workers will have their entitlement calculated on a fair pro-rata basis.

Prevailing Statutory maternity, paternity and parental rights will be upheld rigorously.

If employees wish to apply for special leave of absence, sympathetic consideration will be given. All such applications must be made in advance unless they relate to circumstances which could not reasonably be planned for in advance (e.g. sudden unavailability of a carer on whom the employee depends to be free to come to work).

Work allocation:

Work will always be distributed evenly and fairly. Managers must ensure that the manner in which they do this cannot be taken as discriminatory or as a form of harassment of any nature.

Timing:

Training appropriate to the job requirement will be provided equally to all employees. Managers will arrange appropriate training as soon as practicable for all employees in new posts. Managers will recognise the negative impact on individuals of being untrained for their work, as well as the negative costs to the Company.

Discipline + Dismissal

Hillsolve has a Disciplinary Procedure which upholds of the principles of the prevailing Employment Act(s).

In disciplinary situations managers must take particular care to avoid saying or doing anything which is, or can be taken as discrimination, victimisation or harassment of any kind.

Terms & Conditions (cont.)

Redundancy

In the event of redundancies being necessary, Hillsolve will consult the affected workforce (or their representatives) to seek out a fair selection process, within the spirit and requirements of best practice and legislation.

Grievance

Hillsolve has a Grievance Policy available to all employees who believe they are being treated unfairly. The Policy on Grievance and its related practices will be applied within the spirit and requirement of best practice and fairness to all parties.

Harassment

Hillsolve considers that any action of discrimination is unacceptable and operates a zero tolerance policy on any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination. The disciplinary procedure will be following including an investigation if a claim of bullying, harassment or discrimination is made using the Grievance or Disciplinary procedure(s).

Communication + Training

The Equal Opportunities Policy will be explained to all new employees as part of their induction training. Staff with responsibility for recruitment and selection, will receive the training and any other necessary detailed guidance on the application of the Equal Opportunities Policy. Managers will be responsible for cascading the information to their staff.

Other relevant training (e.g. Supervisory) will include input on the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy and practices as appropriate.

Employees will be kept informed of changes and consulted on issues which directly affect them.

Monitoring

Monitoring is an important and integral part of the Company's approach to Equal Opportunities. It is the means by which we can identify aspects of our activities which do not support our commitment to the stated Fundamental Principle in our Policy.

To achieve this, monitoring information will be requested from all existing staff, and those who join the Company. The information will include details of the person's sex, marital status, race and details of current post and post applied for. The information will not be part of the recruitment or selection process. After analysis in relation to the specific selection activity, it will be stored in statistical form only.

People will be asked to give the information on a voluntary basis. Failure to supply the information will in no way influence subsequent actions in relation to the individual concerned. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and breach of this rule will be a disciplinary matter.

Monitoring will be done annually on all relevant aspects of Policy and Practice, or more frequently if the findings of a monitoring exercise indicate a need for positive action.

Positive Action

If the monitoring work indicates the need for positive action the Company will respond appropriately. The exact nature of the response will vary in relation to the need. Action, which is deemed to be appropriate, will include:

- Consultation with Equal Opportunities organisation to address the issues.
- Targeted advertising.
- Guaranteed interview scheme.
- Equal Opportunities Policy stressed in advertising.
- Direct discussion with Job Centres / Careers offices including DEA's
- Direct discussion with community organisations representing special interest groups.
- Consultation with Local Authority Equal Opportunities Adviser.

This list is not exhaustive.

In appropriate situations, the Company will consider the review of its Job Description and/or Terms and Condition of employment if they are seen to impede the application of the Equal Opportunities Policy.