



Young Farmers'  
Clubs of Ulster

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

This policy was approved by  
the Board of Directors of the  
Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

*Date:* 6 September 2018

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## Policy Details

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### Document Details

Equal Opportunities Policy

Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

### Approval Date

6 September 2018 Management Board Meeting

### Accountability

All employees Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

## Overview of Policy

To make sure that we reduce the risk of any exploitation or disadvantage occurring to any individual in the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster and this policy applies to all staff and volunteers to make sure that the organisation has a culture embracing culture and diversity within our society.

## Section 1

### Introduction to Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

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The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU) was founded in 1929 and is an open, non-political body operating by means of an association of individual clubs throughout Northern Ireland. YFCU is the largest rural youth organisation in Northern Ireland. It provides a support network to young people to the rural community and offers members a range of training opportunities, competitions, travel and exchanges.

#### Vision:

The Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster's vision is of a robust rural community which recognises and values all young people as key stakeholders.

#### Mission:

Our mission is to encourage individual development. Creativity, initiative and contribution for the benefit of members, the Association, industry and community.

## Section 2

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Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster wholeheartedly supports the principles of equal opportunities in employment and is opposed to all forms of discrimination on the grounds of marital or civil partnership status, religious belief or political opinion, disability, race or ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation and age.

The organisation is committed to recruiting and developing a team of staff and volunteers which reflects the diversity of the wider community in which we live, and which provides a quality service for those needing support within the rural community in Northern Ireland.

The organisation is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and volunteers will be treated fairly and not discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

This Equal Opportunities Policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the resources of staff and volunteers will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

### **Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working for the organisation.

### **Equality Commitments**

The organisation is committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and volunteers
- providing all employees and managers with a copy of this policy and explaining it to them
- providing equality training and guidance as appropriate
- ensuring that all complaints of discrimination or harassment are dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially and in accordance with our internal grievance procedures
- setting a good example by treating employees with fairness, dignity and respect
- being alert to unacceptable behaviour and taking appropriate action to stop it.

- monitoring all incidents of discrimination and harassment and reviewing the effectiveness of this policy periodically.

## **Implementation**

The CEO has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Each local group has responsibility to implement the policy at county level.

### Employee and Volunteer Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers are required to comply with this policy. They must treat each other with dignity and respect. They must not themselves commit any acts of unlawful discrimination or harassment against any other person, such as their co-workers, our job applicants or our customers. Such behaviour will not be permitted or condoned. We will treat it as misconduct which may warrant dismissal from employment.

## **Monitoring and review**

*Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster is registered with the Equality Commission for the purposes of the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998. As such we are obliged to monitor the community background and sex of all job applicants and workforce. We are also obliged to review the composition of our workforce and our employment policies and practices every three years and, where appropriate, to consider taking affirmative action to promote fair participation between members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities. We are committed to complying with these duties and have set up suitable arrangements to ensure that we do so.*

## **Complaints**

Staff or volunteers who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the organisation's Grievance Procedure. A copy of this procedure is available in the Contract of Employment or from the CEO. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

The organisation's internal procedures do not replace or detract from the right of the employee to pursue complaints under the Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003, Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 and Equal Pay Act (NI) 1970.

Employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint first under the organisation's internal grievance procedure.

Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

### ***Review of this policy***

This Policy will be reviewed every three years in consultation with staff, volunteers and those who engage in our services.

## Appendix 1

### GUIDANCE ON WEARING EMBLEMS AT WORK

Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster is committed to maintaining a harmonious and non-threatening environment in its premises. The display of any national, political or religious flags, emblems or posters and the circulation of sectarian materials is prohibited. With regards to staff and volunteers wearing emblems, the organisation has adopted the Equality Commission guidelines and staff and volunteers are required to adhere to the following guidelines.

1. Emblems which the Fair Employment Tribunal has specifically identified as having a "sectarian significance" whether intended or not, e.g. Rangers and Celtic football shirts, are not acceptable.
2. Emblems or displays which are directly linked to the community conflict over the past 30 years and/or local politics clearly have the potential to cause disruption to the good and harmonious working environment, e.g. "Ulster Says No" badges, Easter Lilies, Spirit of Drumcree badges, Bloody Sunday ribbons, Saoirse ribbons, orange lilies/regalia etc. Such emblems or displays are not acceptable.
3. Emblems which do tend to distinguish one community from the other in Northern Ireland but are not directly connected with the community strife are unlikely to be regarded as creating an intimidating or hostile working environment as described in the Code of Practice. In this category would fall, marks of religious observance, crosses, crucifixes, ashes, pioneer pins, Christian Unions badges, fáinnes, as well as poppies and shamrock, when worn with decorum and at the appropriate period.

The examples referred to above are not an exhaustive list.

Staff and volunteers must be aware that there may be times when working in the community that for reasons of personal safety it may not be appropriate or safe to wear any type of emblem. On these occasions the CEO may be required to make a decision on the appropriateness of wearing a particular emblem which staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to.

**Staff and volunteers are required to comply with this Equal Opportunities Policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, which could include dismissal.**

**Please sign and return this page to the Personnel and Admin Manager.**

**Staff/Volunteer Acceptance**

I have read and understood the Equal Opportunities Policy and agree to abide by the requirements laid down:

Signature:

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Date:

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Print Name:

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