



## POLICY

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

### 1. Introduction

At Citizen<sup>1</sup> we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all and creating a working environment that is inclusive and free from discrimination<sup>2</sup> or harassment. We will ensure that by providing excellent customer services that are 'fair and transparent', we show that we value the diversity between cultures, perspectives and experiences for all our customers<sup>3</sup> and staff.

We are guided by our values in everything we do, and recognise that being a diverse and inclusive employer that is representative of our society, helps our purpose to provide homes that are a foundation for life. We will recruit, develop and retain the most talented people.

We seek to work in partnership with our customers, staff and stakeholders to create and deliver services that meet their needs and offer value for money. We will work within the spirit and the practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and actively challenging discrimination.

Through our work in providing affordable housing and as an inclusive employer, we will help ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of;

- Age
- Gender
- Race; ethnic origin, nationality or colour of skin
- Disability; physical, sensory, learning or mental
- Religion; includes philosophical and lack of belief
- Marital and civil partnership
- Sexual orientation
- Gender re-assignment and
- Pregnancy and maternity
- We also recognise that a person's socio-economic status and vulnerabilities may have an impact upon their life.

---

<sup>1</sup> Citizen will be referred as "Organisation", "Our", "We", "Us" as appropriate

<sup>2</sup> This refers to – direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, associative discrimination, and perceptive discrimination

<sup>3</sup> Customers means tenants, leaseholders and shared ownership residents



All of these characteristics may be inter-linked and impact each other in different ways. We are committed to achieving the highest standards of equality in the way we relate to the people who use our services or work for us.

We will continue to support our board and committee members, leaders, managers and employees to demonstrate the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in their everyday activities, roles and functions.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline our commitment to equality within all our services for employees, customer and communities. Citizen is committed to promoting equality, diversity *and an inclusive (EDI) culture* that values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the way we develop and deliver our services to enhance the way we work.

Citizen aims to be an inclusive organisation, *and an employer of choice*, committed to providing equal opportunities including in the recruitment, training and development of *diverse* employees, and to pro-actively tackling and eliminating discrimination within our services.

## 3. Equality, Diversity *and Inclusion* at Citizen

Equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all diverse groups to employment, goods and services.

We consider diversity to mean celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which are beneficial for all.

We acknowledge that equality and diversity are not inter-changeable but may be inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if diversity is not valued *and Inclusion* embraced.

## 4. Scope

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all stakeholders, customers, employees, board members, committee members, volunteers, agency staff, contractors, managing agents and others employed under a contract of service.

Individuals have personal responsibility for the application of this policy and are expected to read and familiarise themselves with this policy, ensure that this policy is properly observed and fully comply with it.

---

### POLICY

### Equality and Diversity

Version: 3

Lead: Ravinder Kaur

Approved at/by: Board

Date: 29 March 2021

Page 2 of 7

Date of review: March 2024

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

---



This policy is also of particular relevance to directors, line managers and other employees concerned with recruitment, training and promotion procedures and employment decisions which affect others.

This policy applies to all conduct in the workplace and also to conduct outside of the workplace that is related to your work (e.g. at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues) or which may impact on Citizen's reputation (e.g. the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy, that could be linked to Citizen).

## 5. Policy Principles

The broad purpose of the equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into day-to-day business operations, as failing to do so may result in greater inequality and poorer outcomes.

We have identified *four* key principles. These principles will be applied by each member in their day to day work, paying attention to both our legal and regulatory obligations and our individual service standards and priorities.

1. Human Rights - We will take a Human Rights approach to equality and diversity that puts each individual's needs and preferences at the center of our work, whilst maintaining a fair and proportionate balance between the individual's rights and the rights and welfare of the organisation and the wider community.

2. General Duty - We will ensure we comply with the general duty of the Equality Act 2010 and are able to demonstrate how we:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic<sup>4</sup> and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic<sup>4</sup> and those who do not.
- 

3. Citizen Equality and Diversity Strategy – We will support the delivery of the overall business strategy ambitions and make our equality and diversity vision a reality, developing an integrated,

---

<sup>4</sup> The protected characteristics are: Age, Gender Race, Disability, Religion, Martial and civil partnership, Sexual orientation, Gender re-assignment, Pregnancy and maternity

---

### POLICY

### Equality and Diversity

Version: 3

Lead: Ravinder Kaur

Approved at/by: Board

Date: 29 March 2021

Page 3 of 7

Date of review: March 2024

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

---



whole organisation approach in which EDI considerations run through all of our strategic and operational services, our strategy objectives can be summarised as follows:

- To deliver a fair and equitable service experience to our customers and contribute positively to our communities.
- To build understanding and awareness of our impacts to promote continuous E&D learning
- To create a fair and inclusive environment for our staff and partners to work within, enabling development and innovation flourish
- To lead and be accountable for the progress we make on our E&D commitments
- To communicate transparently on our strengths and weaknesses and engage with all appropriate stakeholders to shape our successes and areas for improvement

4. Social Housing Equality Framework (SHEF) - The SHEF is a performance and improvement tool to help self-regulate an organisation's diversity and equality practices. We will use the SHEF framework to assess compliance and identify future equality objectives. The SHEF focuses on 5 key areas:

1. Knowing your customers and equality mapping
2. Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
3. Customer engagement and satisfaction
4. Responsive services, access and customer care
5. A progressive and diverse workforce.

We set out below some specific areas of application:

## 5.1 Employment

### a) Recruitment

Selection for employment will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All recruitment whether internal or external will follow agreed procedures that meet the requirements of this policy. Further detail is set out in the Recruitment and Selection Policy. Where possible, we will capture applicants' diversity characteristics as part of our recruitment processes to promote the elimination of unlawful discrimination. Citizen supports the 'Positive about Disabled People' scheme (the Two Ticks system) which means we guarantee to interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy.

We will monitor all stages of recruitment to ensure it is fair and transparent for all, especially under-represented groups.

### b) Training

---

#### **POLICY**

#### **Equality and Diversity**

Version: 3

Lead: Ravinder Kaur

Approved at/by: Board

Date: 29 March 2021

Page 4 of 7

Date of review: March 2024

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

---



We will require staff to participate in training and development activities from time to time, to encourage the promotion of the principles of this policy. All staff will be required to undertake Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training once every three years. Where appropriate the EDI training will be provided that is suitable for the job role and will take into consideration any employees additional needs.

#### c) Staff development

Through our 'Talent Management' work we will promote the development of those staff within underrepresented groups. Where appropriate, support will be provided, and steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers to these individuals achieving their potential.

#### d) During employment

The benefits, terms and conditions of employment and facilities available to employees will be reviewed regularly to ensure that access is not restricted by unlawful means and to provide appropriate conditions to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

### 5.2 Governing Bodies

Citizen will endeavor to ensure that the composition of its governing bodies reflects the customers and communities it serves and staff it leads. This applies to the recruitment and development of board and committee members, executive and senior leadership teams. Where possible, action will be taken to redress any imbalance in membership. Board and committee members, executive and senior leadership team are bound to comply with this policy in discharging their duties by setting and monitoring equality and diversity goals and commitments across the organisation.

### 5.3 Procurement

We will endeavor to ensure equality of access to our supply opportunities and our procurement processes to all suppliers and will offer support to all suppliers to help them through the tendering process when required.

### 5.4 Service delivery

Anyone applying for housing or services will be dealt with fairly and without discrimination. We will ensure our premises and services are accessible to all our customers and staff.

---

#### **POLICY**

#### **Equality and Diversity**

Version: 3

Lead: Ravinder Kaur

Approved at/by: Board

Date: 29 March 2021

Page 5 of 7

Date of review: March 2024

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

---



We will provide a wide range of communication methods to help meet diverse customer and staff requirements and will make reasonable adjustments in order to meet those needs, whether these are face-to-face, over the telephone or via our on-line services.

We will treat all customers, employees, contractors, and suppliers (existing or prospective) fairly and equally regardless of their protected characteristics or social origin. We will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation within our communities, workplaces or services.

## **6. Roles, responsibility and authority**

Citizen requires all Board members, staff and contractors to comply with the content of this policy and also appraise themselves of the Citizen Equality Strategy document.

It is the responsibility of the Board to monitor and oversee compliance with this policy, ensuring that it is successfully implemented; oversight for EDI monitoring is currently delegated to the Remuneration Committee who provide assurance to the Board.

Senior leadership team and local directors are responsible for ensuring that all staff understand the importance of this policy and related procedures and comply with them.

The EDI Forum are responsible for promoting compliance with this policy.

Any changes to this policy must be agreed by the Board.

## **7. Policy Management and Delivery**

We will provide relevant equality and diversity training; capacity building and support across all levels of the organisation (including staff, board and partners). The level of training offered will be in proportion to an individual's role within the organisation, the customers they work with and risk they are potentially dealing with.

## **8. Policy monitoring and review**

The Social Housing Equalities Framework (SHEF) monitoring tool will be used by Citizen to assess how equality and diversity is being delivered across the organisation.

Reports on the Equalities Strategy objectives incorporated into the SHEF principles will show how we demonstrate a clear corporate approach on working together to meet our equality duties. This will ensure that real change can be delivered for our customers, communities and staff.

---

### **POLICY**

### **Equality and Diversity**

Version: 3

Lead: Ravinder Kaur

Approved at/by: Board

Date: 29 March 2021

Page 6 of 7

Date of review: March 2024

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

---



An annual report will be provided to The Remuneration Committee (who have delegated authority from the Board) and published on our website accounting for the delivery of the Equalities Strategy objectives and SHEF principles along with policy specific monitoring and reporting on all protected characteristics.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, unless:

- Legislation/regulation or sector developments require otherwise, ensuring that it continues to meet its objectives and takes account of good practice developments.
- We identify deficiencies or failures in this policy, as a result of complaints or findings from any independent organisations

## 9. Equality analysis

An equality analysis has been carried out and shows that this policy has or has the potential to have a positive impact on all individuals regardless of their protected characteristic as per the Equality Act 2010.

## 10. VERSION CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	AMENDMENTS	APPROVED AT/BY	REVIEW
V 2.0	05 Jul 2019	Procedure in new Citizen brand format	[NAME]	Jul 2019
V 3.0	March 2021	Full Review	Citizen Board	
[VERSION]	[DATE]	[AMEND MADE]	[NAME]	[DATE]

---

### POLICY

### Equality and Diversity

Version: 3

Lead: Ravinder Kaur

Approved at/by: Board

Date: 29 March 2021

Page 7 of 7

Date of review: March 2024

UNCONTROLLED WHEN PRINTED

---