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Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

***DML Contracting
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INTRODUCTION

The Company has an Equal Opportunities Policy to ensure that all applications are treated fairly and are appointed solely on the basis of their suitability for the post irrespective of race, ethnic or national origin, colour or skin, religion or creed, marital status, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, or unrelated criminal conviction.

All stages of the recruitment process are monitored to check that unfair discrimination is not taking place. Once in the company's employ, every effort is made to ensure that our Equal Opportunities Policy is working in practice.





EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

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The purpose of this policy is to make clear Decorating Masters commitment to the principles of Equal Opportunities. At Decorating Masters we believe that an Equal Opportunities Employment Policy is the best employment/management practice, which will benefit not only the employees of the Company, but also the customers they serve and the Company itself.

How The Policy Works

The policy commits the Company to eliminating discrimination in it's employment practises and, to this end, a code of practice on selection has been adopted which is particularly aimed at groups of people who may experience difficulty in gaining employment because of race, marital status, disability, sexuality, age, religious belief, creed, or unrelated criminal conviction.

National And Ethnic Minorities

The Company opposes all discrimination on the ground of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin or religious belief and continues in taking positive steps to eliminate discrimination by offering everybody equal opportunity.

Direct And Indirect Discrimination

The Race Relations Act 1976 makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, directly or indirectly, in the field of employment. Direct discrimination consists of treating a person, on racial grounds, less favourable than others are or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.

Segregating a person from others on racial grounds constitutes less favourable treatment.

Indirect Discrimination consists of applying in any circumstances covered by the Act a requirement or condition, which, although applied equally to persons or all racial groups, is such that a considerably smaller proportion of a particular racial group can comply with it and it cannot be shown to be justifiable on other than racial grounds.

Women

Decorating Masters has taken and continues to take, positive steps to eliminate discrimination against women and to enable women to take advantage of career opportunities and training; specialists in our personnel department are responsible for advising on employment issues affecting all women.





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Disability

Decorating Masters recognises the positive contribution made to its work by its employees with disabilities and their right to a full and fair consideration in all aspects of employment. The Company is committed to reducing and eliminating any discriminatory features in the work environment and to assist all employees in fully carrying out their duties.

Age

All appointments are made by assessing the candidate's suitability for the posts and age, unless specified by law, is not a factor in assessment.

Monitoring

All aspects of recruitment, promotion and training are monitored to measure the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Employment Policy. In this way, the Company can alter its procedures if they are effective.

Harassment

The Company will not permit any harassment whatsoever. Any alleged harassment will be investigated and disciplinary action may be taken against an employee and any such action taken may lead to instant dismissal.

Grievance/Complaints Procedure

Decorating Masters operates a procedure to deal with complaints relating to appointment. Candidates who consider they have not been fairly treated should write to the Managing Director 27-31 North Cross Road, Dulwich, London, SE22 9HZ, as soon as possible and within 3 months the matter will have been investigated.

Individual Rights

No aspect of the Company's policy detract in any way from a person's right to refer a case to an industrial tribunal or any other body which deal with the enforcement of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976.



PROCEDURE INSTRUCTION – EMPLOYMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Decorating Masters is committed to providing equality of opportunity in employment. These detailed instructions, which supplement the Equal Opportunity Policy available to all employees are aimed at all those in the company involved with employment decisions. Their purpose is to give guidance on the legal framework of the Race Relations and Sex Discrimination Acts and to set our company policy in relation to the various stages of recruitment and selection for training and promotion.

2. THE LEGAL FRAMWORK

2.1 The legislation of race and sex discrimination has three board bases:

- i) To eliminate race and sex discrimination by making it unlawful
- ii) To enable employers to develop equal opportunities by taking positive action
- iii) To provide a mechanism for individuals who have suffered discrimination to seek redress

2.2 The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and Race Relations 1976 make it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, sex, race, and nationality - including citizenship - ethnic or national origins or marital status. Under the Act it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate in recruitment (including the arrangements made for recruitment), promotion, training or transfer, terms and conditions of employment and dismissal. Employers may also be liable for unlawful discriminatory acts carried out by their employees in the course of their employment, unless they can show that they took such steps as were reasonably practicable to prevent them from doing such acts.

2.3 Unlawful discrimination can take the following terms:

i) Direct Discrimination

This occurs when a person has been dealt with on racial or sexual grounds less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same circumstances, i.e., when an individual is treated differently simply because of his/her sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins.



ii) Indirect Discrimination

This occurs when a requirement or condition is applied which, whether intentionally or not, adversely affects, women, men or a particular racial group considerably more than others and cannot be justified. For example certain types of technical qualifications may be demanded which few women, or racial groups, may possess and which are not necessary for the job. “Word of mouth” recruitment is another example of indirect discrimination. Similarly, specifying a set number of years experience as an essential requirement for the job without justification could also be indirectly discriminatory.

iii) Victimisation

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others because that person has done something by reference to the Equal Pay Act, Sex Discrimination Act or Race Relations Act, such as bringing proceedings under the Acts, being a witness in proceedings brought under the Acts, or making allegations or discrimination against another person.

2.4 The Race and Sex Discrimination Acts (Sections 38 and 48 respectively) also allow for positive action to be taken where a particular racial group or sex is under represented. Many racial groups or women employees have potential which, perhaps because of previous discrimination and other causes of disadvantage, they have not been able to realise and which is not reflected in their qualifications and experience. Where members of the previous 12 months in particular work, employers and specified training bodies are allowed under the Act to encourage them to take advantage of opportunities for doing that work and to provide training to enable them to attain the skills needed for it. Examples of positive action areas are:

- a) Job adverts designed to reach under-represented groups and to encourage their applications.
- b) Use of employment agencies and careers offices in areas where these groups are concentrated.
- c) Recruitment and training schemes for school leavers designed to reach members of these groups.
- d) Encouragement to employees from these groups to apply for promotion or transfer opportunities.
- e) Training for promotion or skills for employees from these groups who lack particular qualifications or experience but show potential.

2.5 Positive action only allows fair access to opportunities through training, encouragement and advertising. It does not allow for discrimination in short-listing or at the point of selection, i.e., positive discrimination which is unlawful.





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Codes of Practice

- 2.6** Under section 47 of the Race Relations Act 1976 the Commission for Racial Equality has issued a Code of Practice for the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of equality and opportunity in employment. This Code aims to give practical guidance on how racial discrimination in employment can be avoided. It contains general advice on the policies that are needed and detailed recommendations, for example, on ways of preventing discrimination in the recruitment and treatment of employees as well as outlining those steps, which can have a positive impact of equal opportunity. The Code does not have the force of law, however, Industrial Tribunals consider any of it's provisions relevant to a case before them they must take such provisions into account. In addition, individuals taking complaints of racial discrimination can call on the recommendations in support of their case.
- 2.7** Under Section 56 (A) (1) of the Sex Discrimination Act or similar code of practice for the elimination of discrimination on the ground of sex and marriage and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment has been issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Further Information

- 2.8** Copies of both the Codes of Practice, on which the procedures set out below are based, are available from Mr S Thorpe – Managing Director, who has overall responsibility for implementation of the equal opportunity policy.

3. COMPANY POLICY IN RELATION TO RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND PROMOTION

Stereotyped Assumptions

Discrimination, direct or indirect, can take place at any stage of the recruitment procedures, from choice of advertising media to final selection of candidates. This may be the result of tacit assumptions, of which the discriminator may not be fully aware, about the abilities or characteristics of a particular minority group or sex. Sometime it occurs because of fears of a particular minority group or sex. Sometimes it occurs because of the fears about the reactions of others (which are usually unfounded or at least exaggerated).

- 3.1** Do not allow yourself at any stage to be influenced by general assumptions about sexes or national and ethnic minorities.

Do not assume for example that:

- Customers will object to a racial group
- Men will not work for a women
- Women are not interested in careers
- White workers will object to a national or ethnic origin supervisor
- Married women with small children will be absent more often



Advertising

- 3.2 In accordance with the Code of Practice (paragraph 1.5 to 1.10) it is company policy that all vacancies should be advertised in a way which ensures that they are made known to all members of the community. The following procedures should therefore be followed in relation to all job vacancies:

Company advertising policy should be via

- E.g. job centres
Careers service
Local papers
Trade press
National and ethnic minority press

Advertisement should encompass the following:

- That the company is an equal opportunity employer/welcomes applications from all sections of the community regardless of sex, race, disability or national or ethnic origin.
- Avoidance of words with a sexual connotation - e.g., Foreman - without a specific indication that jobs are open to both sexes (Sex Discrimination Act Section 38 (3)).
- Policy in relation to illustrated recruitment literature including nation/ethnic origins and female employees as well as white males.

Recruitment

- 3.3 It is essential that recruitment processes are based on objective criteria related to the needs of the job and that such criteria are applied equally to all applicants. When recruiting to a vacancy it is therefore company policy that:

Company Policy

Areas to be covered might include:

- Need at outset to draw up a list of qualifications/experience/skills needed for the job in question taking particular care that such criteria are not indirectly discriminatory (Code of Practice paragraph 1.13).
- Use of application forms ensuring that questions are not included relating to irrelevant matters such as number and ages of dependant children (contrary to the Sex Discrimination Act).
- Need to short-list and plan interviews around the criteria referred to above.
- Need to keep records of interview assessment and reasons for decision.
- Number of people to be involved in interviews.



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Training Promotion

- 3.4 As with recruitment it is company policy that decisions relating to training and promotion of employees should be related to objective criteria, should be reviewed to ensure that they are not indirectly discriminatory and should be seen to be fair. It is also company policy that the criteria and opportunities for training and promotion should therefore ensure that:

Criteria in each case are drawn up and made known

Training and promotion opportunities are publicised

Monitoring

- 3.5 The CRE Code of Practice (paragraph 1.33) recommend that employers should regularly monitor the effects of selection decisions and personnel practices and procedures in order to assess whether equal opportunity is being achieved.

Further to all the foregoing, would employees also carefully note the following:

A. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Individual rights are as stated in the Terms and Conditions of Employment as varied from time to time. These are issued to all employees.

B. HEALTH AND SAFETY

A copy of the Company's Health and Safety Policy is available at any time from a director. You should ensure that all employees are aware of its contents.

C. DISABLED PERSONS

Wherever possible disabled persons should be considered for suitable employment.

D. STAFF LEVELS/SALARIES

Staff levels and salaries cannot be increased without the agreement of a director.

E. DISMISSALS

Staff may not be dismissed without prior consultation with a director.

