



**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND EQUAL
OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

MIDAYE SOMALI DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Date reviewed:

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Date of next review: January 2027

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. Midaye Somali Development Network (“Midaye”) is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our trustees, staff, volunteers and service users, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.
- 1.2. Midaye is committed to taking positive action to oppose and end unlawful discrimination in every respect of its work including unlawful discrimination against service users or the public.
- 1.3. Midaye will strive to redress any imbalance that may become evident.
- 1.4. Midaye’s goal is to ensure that these commitments, reinforced by its values, are embedded in its day-to-day working practices and are upheld by the Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, partners and service users and to ensure that our organisation is truly representative of the community that it serves and for each employee and volunteer to feel respected and able to give their best.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to:
 - 2.1.1. Encourage, promote and celebrate diversity in all activities and services;
 - 2.1.2. Ensure equal access to services and opportunities;
 - 2.1.3. Ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality including the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation currently in force;
 - 2.1.4. Promote equal opportunities in other areas not currently covered by legislation;
 - 2.1.5. Create environments free from harassment and discrimination;
 - 2.1.6. Maximise the use of resources in the best interests of service users and the general public;
 - 2.1.7. Confront and challenge discrimination where and whenever it arises, whether it is between colleagues, or in any other area relating to the organisation’s work;
 - 2.1.8. Ensure there is clear commitment from staff/volunteers and the board of trustees to accept and implement this policy in their work for the organisation;

- 2.1.9. Ensure, through positive action and so far as is practicable, that the organisation's premises and services are accessible to all people.

3. APPLICATION, AVAILABILITY AND REVIEW

- 3.1. This policy applies to:
 - 3.1.1. Everyone employed directly or indirectly by Midaye, including trustees, staff and volunteers, irrespective of funding agent.
 - 3.1.2. All aspects of service delivery and promotional, educational, and campaigning activities of Midaye.
 - 3.1.3. All memberships, partnerships and affiliations. Midaye would expect its membership to concur with and actively promote these objectives.
- 3.2. This policy will be made directly available to all staff and volunteers. It will also be made available to other stakeholders and interested parties on request.
- 3.3. This policy must be reviewed, approved and endorsed by the Board of Trustees every two years.

4. LEGISLATION

- 4.1. Employment procedures and practices will be undertaken strictly in accordance with the following and all other relevant legislation:
 - 4.1.1. Race Relations Act 1976
 - 4.1.2. Sex Discrimination Acts 1975-85
 - 4.1.3. Equal Pay Act 1970
 - 4.1.4. Disability Discrimination Act 1995
 - 4.1.5. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
 - 4.1.6. Equality Act 2010

5. DEFINITIONS

Age	Age refers to a person being of a certain age (such as 65 years old) or belonging to a particular age group (such as 40 - 45 year olds).
Disability	A disabled person refers to a person who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Gender Reassignment	Gender reassignment is the process of transitioning from one gender to another.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Marriage is defined as a 'union between two partners'. Both heterosexual and same sex couples can get married. Currently, same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'.
Maternity and Pregnancy	Pregnancy is the condition of expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In a non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth. It includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
Race	Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.
Religion or belief	Religion refers to a person's faith. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
Sex	Sex refers to a person's sex - man or woman
Sexual orientation	Sexual orientation refers to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

- 6.1. The Board of Trustees and the management team have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.
- 6.2. All staff and volunteers have a duty to ensure that they act in a manner which upholds this policy and work to ensure that it is consistently and effectively implemented.

- 6.3. Midaye's Board of Trustees and management team will regularly review the implementation of this policy and strategy. Where evidence is found of ineffectiveness, they shall be responsible for taking remedial action.
- 6.4. The Director, with the support of the board of trustees, will ensure that the management team work consistently to achieve greater equality by keeping the principles of this policy as a key value when:
 - 6.4.1. reviewing organisation priorities;
 - 6.4.2. overseeing the delivery of services and the performance of the organisation as a whole;
 - 6.4.3. recruiting and managing employees and volunteers;
 - 6.4.4. developing and producing mechanisms for client consultation;
 - 6.4.5. establishing guidelines for service monitoring; and
 - 6.4.6. managing staff welfare, training and development.

7. DECLARATION OF INTENT

- 7.1. Midaye will provide equality of opportunity and will not tolerate discrimination on grounds of:
 - 7.1.1. gender, gender identity or gender reassignment;
 - 7.1.2. marital status or civil partnership;
 - 7.1.3. sex or sexual orientation;
 - 7.1.4. race or skin colour;
 - 7.1.5. nationality or ethnicity;
 - 7.1.6. religion or belief;
 - 7.1.7. age;
 - 7.1.8. disability or HIV status;
 - 7.1.9. caring responsibilities;
 - 7.1.10. trade union activity or political beliefs;
 - 7.1.11. spent criminal convictions; or
 - 7.1.12. any other grounds covered by the 2010 Equality Act.
- 7.2. Midaye will oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination, including (but not limited to) discrimination in:
 - 7.2.1. pay and benefits;
 - 7.2.2. terms and conditions of employment;
 - 7.2.3. dealing with grievances and discipline;

- 7.2.4. dismissal;
 - 7.2.5. redundancy;
 - 7.2.6. leave for parents / carers;
 - 7.2.7. requests for flexible working;
 - 7.2.8. selection for employment, promotion, training or other development opportunities.
- 7.3. Midaye commits to:
- 7.3.1. encourage equality diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make sense;
 - 7.3.2. create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued;
 - 7.3.3. take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities;
 - 7.3.4. make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation; and
 - 7.3.5. make decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- 7.4. Midaye will demonstrate its commitment to the principles of this policy by:
- 7.4.1. promoting equality of opportunity and diversity within the communities in which it works and with all of its partners, staff and volunteers;
 - 7.4.2. building an organisation which reflects its customer base and the diverse communities in which it works;
 - 7.4.3. encouraging recruitment from groups currently under-represented in the organisation;
 - 7.4.4. treating its customers, colleagues and partners fairly and with respect;
 - 7.4.5. promoting an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment, and proactively tackling behaviour that is not;

- 7.4.6. recognising and valuing the differences and individual contributions that people make;
- 7.4.7. providing support and encouragement to staff/volunteers to develop their careers and increase their contributions to the organisation through the enhancement of their skills and abilities;
- 7.4.8. building in legislative requirements and best practice to all its service delivery and employee/volunteer policies and procedures, and supporting these with appropriate training and guidance.

8. RECRUITMENT

- 8.1. With regard to the recruitment of trustees, Midaye will monitor and review the composition of its Board of Trustees with the aim of promoting broad-based representation.
- 8.2. With regard to the recruitment of employees:
 - 8.2.1. A written job description and person specification shall be prepared in respect of every vacancy that arises and every new post that is created. It shall be checked and agreed by the management team for any indications of direct and/or indirect discrimination, including culture-bound assumptions and ageism before the recruitment procedures commence.
 - 8.2.2. An equal opportunity statement should be included on the application form and job advert and every effort must be made to ensure that the statement is upheld during and after the recruitment process.
 - 8.2.3. Job applications and/or CVs may not be rejected for any reason which may constitute unlawful discrimination, or which contravenes the requirements of this policy.
 - 8.2.4. Job applicants will be made aware that general life experience and voluntary as well as paid work experience are valued.
 - 8.2.5. All jobs must be advertised externally and as widely as is reasonable. In addition to whatever channels the organisation may choose to utilise, the vacant post must also be advertised in a manner accessible to those within the local community.

- 8.2.6. Reasonable efforts must be made to accommodate job candidates with accessibility requirements or time restraints due to caring or other responsibilities.
- 8.2.7. Job interviews must always be conducted by a panel of at least two representatives and no more than five members of the management team, Board of Trustees and staff. Matters of diversity must be considered when constituting an interview panel.
- 8.2.8. Appropriate notes from every interview panel member should be kept and made available for review on request.
- 8.2.9. Questions on the following topics are not permitted in an interview. Any candidate who is asked these questions has the right to refuse to answer.
 - 8.2.9.1. marital status;
 - 8.2.9.2. sexual orientation;
 - 8.2.9.3. occupation of partner;
 - 8.2.9.4. number of children/domestic arrangements (it should be made clear that the organization aims to be flexible to individual requirements).

9. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- 9.1. New staff should be inducted into the Staff Development and Training Policy and made aware of training opportunities available to them, and be positively encouraged to take them up.
- 9.2. All reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that staff are able to take study leave and are provided with suitable and reasonable training opportunities which align with their job.
- 9.3. All staff and volunteers should have access to appropriate support and supervision. If a worker feels isolated, provision should be made for support from other parts of Midaye or outside the organisation. If groups of women, Black workers, or gay workers, for example, want to set up a support group, this should be encouraged.

10. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 10.1. Midaye is committed to ensuring equality of access to all its services. The Board of Trustees will take action to provide genuine equality of opportunity to counter past discrimination and to monitor the outcomes of these actions. The Board of Trustees will aim to ensure that no sector of the community shall be denied access to or receive a poor service from the organisation on the grounds of age, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnicity or religious belief.
- 10.2. In order to promote equality of access Midaye will ensure that:
 - 10.2.1. services are based on consultation with those who receive the services and positive steps are taken to include excluded groups in decision making.
 - 10.2.2. all services are flexible and responsive to the changing needs in the community;
 - 10.2.3. information on services is widely available and, where necessary, targeted to ensure maximum awareness of provisions;
 - 10.2.4. systems are developed to audit and monitor service delivery and consumer satisfaction;
 - 10.2.5. an accessible complaints procedure will be developed to ensure against discrimination in service allocation and delivery;
 - 10.2.6. positive action programmes will be developed to target the needs usually excluded groups;
 - 10.2.7. in advertising and publicity, Midaye will be presented as an organisation committed to promoting equality of access to employment and services.
- 10.3. Where appropriate, statistics on the services provided by the organisation will be collected and analysed in relation to equality and diversity matters.
- 10.4. If appropriate, action will be taken to encourage wider take up of volunteering, and community use of its services.

11. ENFORCEMENT

- 11.1. It must be made clear to all employees and volunteers that discrimination, abuse or harassment on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality - if proven - is a dismissible offence.
- 11.2. All incidents of direct discrimination will be dealt with in accordance with complaints procedure.

- 11.3. Incidents of indirect discrimination will be investigated to determine whether they should be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints, Grievances and Whistleblowing Policy and the Disciplinary Policy.
- 11.4. Incidents of victimisation or harassment will be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints, Grievances and Whistleblowing Policy and the Disciplinary Policy. Where incidents of victimisation and harassment are proven, the issue will be dealt with by the Trustees.
- 11.5. Any staff member or volunteer, including Trustees, found to be in breach of this policy will be counselled on his/her actions and may, where necessary, be removed from the volunteer register or be dismissed.
- 11.6. Any service user found in breach of this policy will, where appropriate, be counselled on their actions and, where necessary, appropriate action will be taken.

Revised: February 2025

Next revision date: February 2027