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|  | Disability Policy |

Document Overview

PCC/ PARISH LOGO

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| **Purpose** | The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all employees who are disabled or have a long term health condition are fully supported during their employment. This policy applies to all staff with a contract of employment. |
| **Confidentiality** | This document is not confidential. |
| **Document owner** |  |
| **Status note** | Draft/Final |
| **Distribution** | All PCC staff. |
| **Required action** |  |
| **Proposed next step** |  |

Version History

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Status Note** |
| 1.0 | 14/12/2023 | Draft |
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1. Introduction

A disability is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on a person’s ability to do normal daily activities. Substantial means it should be more than minor or trivial, and long term means that the disability should have lasted at least one year, or be expected to last more than 1 year. A person who has suffered with a disability in the past as defined by the act, is still covered by the act for future illnesses. Progressive illnesses automatically qualify as a disability from the point of diagnosis, such as Cancer, HIV and Multiple Sclerosis, plus many more.

We are committed to promoting an inclusive environment for all employees with a disability or long term health condition in our organisation. As part of this, we will provide appropriate workplace support to them.

Although we recognise that disabilities and health conditions can cause difficulties for affected individuals, we will focus on the strengths that are brought to the workplace and provide support for the difficulties.

1. Our responsibilities
   1. We are aware of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments for employees who have a disability where they suffer a substantial disadvantage within the workplace, in comparison to non-disabled employees. For more information on our general approach towards disability at work, please refer to our equal opportunities policy.
   2. You will not be treated unfairly or suffer any other form of detriment at work due to your disability or health condition. You will be given the same opportunities as other staff and will not be refused employment, overlooked for promotion and training opportunities or denied any other workplace benefits due to this.
   3. We recognise that all disabilities and health conditions are different, and the effects of them vary per employee. We will ensure that any measures implemented will be suited to each individual by undertaking a process of consultation with them. We will not adopt a “one size fits all” approach, nor will we stereotype individuals based on common characteristics associated with their disability or health condition.
2. Notification
   1. If you have been diagnosed with a health condition or disability, we would encourage you to disclose this information to your line manager/HR representative. Although there is no legal requirement for you to disclose this to us, it would help us to support you in the best possible way.
   2. We appreciate that you may feel uncomfortable sharing this information, however, any information disclosed as part of this process will remain confidential and will be treated with sensitivity at all times.
   3. Your line manager/HR representative will seek to have an open and honest discussion with you about your disability or health condition, how it affects you and the impact that it may have on your duties. The discussion will then focus on adjustments that can be made to your role to remove any barriers that this may create.
   4. It may be necessary for a ‘needs assessment’ to be arranged to help us identify exactly how your disability or health condition affects your ability to perform your role. We will then be able to use the results of the assessment to understand which adjustments will be most helpful to you.
   5. Any information obtained about you for this purpose will be held in accordance with our obligations under data protection legislation.
3. Workplace adjustments
   1. The Organisation is legally obliged by the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to an employee’s role or working conditions if they have a disability that places them at a disadvantage when performing their role and we will ensure compliance with our obligations in this regard.
   2. In order to assist you in your daily duties, we will explore making adjustments to your role or working environment with the aim of reducing the effect that your disability or health condition is having on you. We acknowledge that different conditions affect each individual in different ways so no adjustment will be made without fully discussing it with you first.
   3. As an illustrative guide, we have set out below examples of adjustments that may be made to reduce or remove disadvantages faced by neurodivergent employees in the workplace:
      1. amending working duties
      2. offering flexible working arrangements such as homeworking or permitting employees to start earlier or finish later
      3. redesigning the workplace/workstation
      4. providing specialist equipment as a reasonable adjustment
      5. This is not an exhaustive list and all applicable adjustments will be discussed and explored with employees on an individual basis to ensure the adjustments put in place are appropriate to their individual circumstances. The effectiveness of any adjustments will be reviewed on a regular basis and may be subject to change if it becomes apparent that these are no longer fit for purpose. This review will be carried out proactively between the employee and their line manager in line with our duty to make reasonable adjustments.
   4. We will also support employees in claiming Access to Work grants from the Government where applicable and where a formal diagnosis has been given. An Access to Work grant is one that is given to those whose needs, such as specialist equipment/software is outside of the bounds of reasonable adjustments in terms of cost. The government will often cover most or all the cost of these adjustments.
4. Discrimination and Harassment
   1. We aim to provide a safe working environment for all of our employees in line with our equal opportunities and positive working policy. If you feel that you have been exposed to unwanted conduct because of your disability or health condition, we encourage you to talk to your line manager in the first instance. You may also wish to refer to our grievance policy. This includes any conduct instigated by a fellow colleague or third-party individual such as service users, agency workers or the general public.