EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

PRN-57: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd

Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES

Company Registration Number: 15556946

SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled

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Version Number: V01 20260815

Date of Review: (August 2026)

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the organisation promotes equality, embraces diversity, and fosters an inclusive culture throughout all areas of service delivery, employment, volunteering, and organisational governance.

As a Non-Accommodation Companionship and Wellbeing Support Service for Older People and Adults with Disabilities, we recognise that every individual has the right to be treated fairly, with dignity, respect, and without discrimination.

This policy demonstrates our commitment to:

- Equality of opportunity.
- Inclusive service delivery.
- Respect for individual differences.
- Human rights.
- Fair treatment for all.
- Creating a welcoming and accessible environment.
- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Service users
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Directors
- Trustees
- Contractors
- Agency workers
- Students and placements
- Visitors

The policy applies to all organisational activities including:

- Recruitment and selection
- Volunteer recruitment
- Training and development
- Supervision and appraisal
- Service delivery
- Community activities
- Partnerships
- Communications
- Decision-making processes

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3. Policy Statement

The organisation is committed to providing services and opportunities that are fair, inclusive, and accessible.

We will:

- Treat every person with dignity and respect.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Value and celebrate diversity.

- Encourage inclusion and participation.
- Challenge discrimination.
- Remove barriers to access wherever possible.
- Promote a culture of belonging.

We expect everyone connected with the organisation to contribute to a respectful and inclusive environment.

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4. Definitions

Equality

Equality means ensuring people have fair access to opportunities, resources, services, and support according to their needs.

Equality recognises that some individuals may require additional support or reasonable adjustments to achieve equitable outcomes.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the differences between people, including but not limited to:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Nationality
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marital status
- Social background
- Education
- Life experience
- Culture

Diversity enriches individuals, communities, and organisations.

Inclusion

Inclusion means creating an environment in which all people:

- Feel welcomed.
- Feel respected.
- Feel safe.
- Feel valued.
- Can participate fully.
- Can contribute meaningfully.

Inclusion is about ensuring that diversity is actively supported and celebrated.

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5. Legislative Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR

The organisation will comply with all applicable equality and human rights legislation.

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6. Protected Characteristics

Under the Equality Act 2010, the organisation recognises the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment

- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Discrimination based on any protected characteristic is prohibited.

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7. Our Commitment to Service Users

The organisation is committed to ensuring that all service users:

- Have equal access to services.
- Are treated fairly and respectfully.
- Receive person-centred support.
- Are free from discrimination.
- Have their individuality recognised and respected.
- Are able to participate fully in services and activities.

Services will be delivered based on individual needs rather than assumptions or stereotypes.

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8. Our Commitment to Employees and Volunteers

The organisation is committed to providing equal opportunities throughout the employment and volunteering lifecycle.

This includes:

- Recruitment
- Selection
- Induction
- Training
- Development
- Promotion

- Supervision
- Recognition

Decisions will be based on:

- Skills
- Experience
- Competence
- Suitability
- Organisational values

Protected characteristics will never be used as a basis for unfair treatment.

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9. Equality in Recruitment and Selection

The organisation will ensure recruitment processes are:

- Fair
- Transparent
- Objective
- Inclusive
- Accessible

Recruitment decisions will be based on merit and suitability for the role.

Advertisements, interviews, and selection processes will be designed to promote equal opportunity and eliminate bias.

Reasonable adjustments will be provided where required.

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10. Disability Inclusion and Reasonable Adjustments

The organisation recognises the importance of removing barriers for people with disabilities.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Accessible venues
- Flexible communication methods
- Larger print documents

- Additional support during meetings
- Adjusted volunteering opportunities
- Flexible work arrangements where appropriate

Each situation will be considered individually.

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11. Accessible Communication

Communication should be accessible to all.

Where reasonably practicable, we will provide information in formats such as:

- Large print
- Easy Read
- Audio
- Electronic formats
- Plain English
- Alternative languages

We will seek to understand and accommodate individual communication preferences.

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12. Promoting Cultural Awareness

The organisation values cultural diversity and recognises the importance of respecting:

- Cultural identities
- Traditions
- Languages
- Religious beliefs
- Values and customs

Employees and volunteers should approach cultural differences with curiosity, respect, and sensitivity.

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13. Inclusive Service Delivery

All services should be delivered in a manner that promotes inclusion.

Employees and volunteers should:

- Encourage participation.
- Adapt activities where possible.
- Consider accessibility requirements.
- Respect individual preferences.
- Promote social inclusion.
- Challenge exclusionary behaviours.

Every effort should be made to ensure individuals feel welcomed and involved.

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14. Preventing Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

The organisation operates a zero-tolerance approach to:

- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Victimisation
- Hate incidents
- Prejudice

Examples include:

- Offensive comments
- Exclusion from opportunities
- Unwanted behaviour
- Stereotyping
- Intimidation

Such behaviour will be investigated and addressed appropriately.

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15. Respecting Individual Identity

Employees and volunteers must respect each person's:

- Name

- Identity
- Background
- Beliefs
- Lifestyle choices
- Personal preferences

Individuals should be addressed in accordance with their wishes wherever possible.

Respect for identity contributes to dignity, trust, and wellbeing.

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16. Challenging Inequality

The organisation encourages employees and volunteers to challenge discriminatory attitudes and practices appropriately.

This may include:

- Raising concerns.
- Reporting incidents.
- Challenging inappropriate language.
- Supporting affected individuals.
- Promoting positive behaviour.

Failure to challenge discrimination can contribute to exclusion and harm.

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17. Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to:

- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Victimisation
- Hate incidents
- Exclusion

should be reported to:

- A Line Manager
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Service Manager
- Director

Concerns will be treated seriously, investigated fairly, and handled confidentially where possible.

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18. Equality Impact Considerations

The organisation will consider the potential impact of significant decisions on different groups of people.

This may include reviewing the equality impact of:

- New services
- Policies
- Procedures
- Organisational changes
- Community activities

The aim is to identify and reduce unintended barriers or disadvantages.

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19. Training and Awareness

Employees and volunteers will receive training appropriate to their role.

Training may include:

- Equality Act 2010 awareness
- Diversity and inclusion
- Disability awareness
- Inclusive communication
- Unconscious bias
- Cultural competence
- Human rights
- Dignity and respect

Training needs will be reviewed through supervision and appraisal processes.

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20. Partnership Working

The organisation will seek to work with partners who share our commitment to:

- Equality
- Inclusion
- Accessibility
- Human rights
- Anti-discriminatory practice

We will encourage collaborative approaches that promote equitable outcomes for service users.

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21. Case Study

Scenario: Supporting Participation

Mrs K uses a walking aid and wishes to attend a local wellbeing group organised by the service.

An initial review identifies that the usual venue has limited accessibility.

The organisation:

- Identifies a fully accessible venue.
- Ensures accessible toilet facilities are available.
- Provides clear information about access arrangements.
- Offers support with transport options.

Outcome

Mrs K is able to participate fully and comfortably in the activity.

Learning Point

Removing barriers promotes inclusion, independence, confidence, and wellbeing.

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22. Responsibilities

Directors

Responsible for:

- Leading the organisation's commitment to equality and inclusion.
- Ensuring legal compliance.
- Reviewing equality-related issues and trends.

Managers

Responsible for:

- Implementing this policy.
- Promoting inclusive practices.
- Addressing concerns promptly.
- Supporting employees and volunteers.

Employees and Volunteers

Responsible for:

- Treating others with respect.
- Promoting inclusion.
- Challenging discrimination.
- Reporting concerns.
- Participating in relevant training.

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23. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The organisation will monitor:

- Complaints relating to discrimination.
- Equality-related incidents.
- Recruitment outcomes.
- Service user feedback.
- Volunteer feedback.
- Accessibility concerns.
- Training compliance.

Findings will be used to improve services, policies, and practices.

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24. Review Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following legislative changes
- Following serious equality-related incidents
- Following service reviews
- Following significant organisational changes

Related Policies

- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Person-Centred Support Policy
- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Volunteer Management Policy
- Employee Wellbeing Policy
- Confidentiality Policy