



EGLAC
EAST GREENWICH LEGAL ADVICE CLINIC

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

East Greenwich Legal Advice Clinic (EGLAC) is committed to providing high-quality, free legal advice to all individuals in need in South East London, regardless of their background or circumstances. We recognise that diversity and inclusion are fundamental to our mission and inclusivity – being thoughtful, inclusive and respectful of the diverse clients we support – is therefore one of EGLAC’s core values. We strive to ensure that everyone, whether a client, volunteer, trustee or member of staff, is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. This policy sets out our approach to promoting equality and diversity within our organisation and in the services we provide.

2. Our Commitment

We are dedicated to ensuring that all individuals have equal access to legal advice and support, subject to geographic and financial criteria due to our limited resources, and that no one is excluded or discriminated against on any other grounds. We believe that diversity enriches our work and we aim to create an inclusive environment where all individuals feel valued and supported.

This policy applies to:

- All clients accessing our services;
- All volunteers, members of staff and trustees working with the charity;
- Any other individuals who come into contact with the charity’s operations.

3. Principles of Equality and Diversity

We are committed to the following principles:

- **Equality of Opportunity:** We aim to ensure that everyone has equal access to the services we offer, subject to our geographic and financial criteria. No one will be

excluded based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status or any other protected characteristic.

- **Respect for Diversity:** We embrace the differences of the individuals and communities we serve. We believe diversity strengthens the charity and enhances the services we provide.
- **Non-Discrimination:** We will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or bullying of any kind. We take all complaints seriously and will investigate them thoroughly to ensure a safe and respectful environment for everyone.
- **Inclusive Practices:** We strive to make our services accessible and welcoming to all people, ensuring that everyone's needs are considered, and we make adjustments where necessary as far as our resources allow. This includes providing services in accessible formats, offering language support through a translation and interpretation service provided by an agency, and accommodating any special requirements where possible.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is in compliance with all relevant equality legislation, including:

- The Equality Act 2010 (UK); and
- The Human Rights Act 1998 (UK).

5. Responsibilities

- **Trustees:** The board of trustees is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively and regularly reviewed. Trustees will also monitor the progress of diversity and inclusion initiatives and assess the charity's adherence to the policy.
- **Management and Volunteers:** All volunteers and members of staff are expected to promote equality and diversity in their work and to act in accordance with this policy.
- **Clients:** We encourage clients to inform us of any specific needs, preferences or concerns that would help us provide them with the best service possible. We also encourage feedback from clients on how we can improve our services and ensure they are accessible to everyone.

6. Equal Access to Legal Advice

We are dedicated to providing free, high-quality legal advice to those in need. We will:

- Ensure that no person is denied legal advice due to their background, culture or identity.

- Offer services to individuals regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Where necessary (and possible), offer translation or interpretation services to clients who may not speak English fluently through a service offered by another agency.

7. Recruitment and Selection

EGLAC aims to receive the widest response to recruitment of volunteers or trustees. Information sent to potential volunteers will include the role description and details of this policy. Information will be supplied in large print when requested.

8. Terms and Conditions

EGLAC will endeavour to ensure that volunteers and staff are not discriminated against through the terms and conditions under which they have been engaged. Furthermore, EGLAC recognises that from time to time, family and social circumstances may change and consequently that volunteers or staff may need to change their conditions of volunteering or work. EGLAC will attempt, where circumstances and resources permit, to accommodate those needs.

9. Training and Awareness

EGLAC recognises that training, including induction and safeguarding training, is an important factor in leading to job achievement and opportunity. When other needs are identified, every effort will be made to ensure that training is provided to everyone, regardless of their role within EGLAC.

To ensure that all staff, volunteers and trustees uphold this policy, we will:

- Promote awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusion in legal practice.
- Encourage ongoing learning about issues related to discrimination, bias and cultural competence.

10. Monitoring and Review

We will regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy through feedback, surveys, and ongoing dialogue with clients and volunteers. We will:

- Keep records of the demographic makeup of those accessing our services to ensure that we are reaching diverse communities.
- Collect anonymous data about client experiences to assess how inclusive our services are.

- Review this policy annually and make updates as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, best practice and the needs of our clients.

11. Complaints and Grievances

We take any complaints or concerns about discrimination or inequality very seriously. Any individual who believes they have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment can file a complaint with us. We will ensure that complaints are addressed fairly, confidentially, and promptly.

Complaints should be submitted in writing to the charity's designated Equality and Diversity Officer at admin@eglac.org.uk. Please see EGLAC's Compliments and Complaints Policy for more information.

12. Conclusion

EGLAC strives to be an inclusive, fair, and diverse organisation. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of our work, from providing legal advice to creating an environment where everyone can thrive. We are dedicated to ensuring that everyone, regardless of their background, feels welcomed, respected and supported.

This policy will be made available to all staff, volunteers and trustees of EGLAC, and we encourage everyone to familiarise themselves with it. We believe that a commitment to equality and diversity is essential to fulfilling our mission and ensuring access to justice for all.

Date adopted:	4 th June 2025
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