

# Ontario Football Alliance

Ethics & Equality Policy

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## **ETHICS/EQUITY POLICY**

### **1.01 POLICY STATEMENT**

The OFA, through its Board of Directors, is committed to fostering respect and dignity for each of its members and employees. This policy is intended to guarantee equal opportunities and a working environment free of discrimination to all those members and employees. Discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, ethnic origin, class, age, sexual orientation, family status, religion or disability is expressly forbidden in the OFA workplace, in any work-related activity, in any of the employment or recruitment practices of the OFA or in any OFA sanctioned programs, services, or events. In addition, the OFA will take positive measures to ensure that employment opportunities are equally available to all employees, prospective employees.

### **1.02 DEFINING THE TERM**

- A) Right to Equal Opportunity.
- (1) The OFA prohibits any treatment which has a discriminatory effect on any person based on any of the following prohibited grounds; sex, race, ethnic origin, class, age, family status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
  - (2) In addition to the rights ensured by this policy, applicants, employees have a legal right to equal opportunities at work. Discrimination is prohibited by several pieces of legislation, including the Canadian Human Rights Act and provincial human rights act.

- (3) Providing equal opportunities also mandates that the OFA identify and address any barriers to success in and access:
  - (a) To employment at the OFA; and
  - (b) To participation in any OFA sanctioned program, service, or event.
  
- (4) Said mandate shall be done both in responses to and prior to complaints being made about those barriers.

b) Discrimination.

Discrimination is defined as any distinction that disproportionately and negatively impacts on an individual or group in a way that does not impact on others. Whether or not such discrimination is intentional is irrelevant. Rather, the effect of the acts on the target of the discrimination is the relevant criteria.

**1. Direct Discrimination.**

Direct discrimination occurs when an individual is treated less favourably than others on the basis of a prohibited ground. If, for example, a prospective employee were refused a job because the OFA said that members would be uncomfortable with any one or more of the prohibited ground of discrimination, direct discrimination would be operative.

**2. Indirect Discrimination.**

Indirect discrimination occurs where practices or acts not reasonably related to job requirements or participation in any OFA

sanctioned programs, services, and events have a negative impact on individuals or groups on the basis of a prohibited ground of discrimination. For example, an unnecessary age restriction that eliminates most men and women from consideration of a competing in a football tournament is an example of indirect discrimination.

3. Systemic Discrimination.

Systemic discrimination may occur, where long term practices have resulted in structures of work that disadvantage individuals because they are members of certain groups.

For example, long, unpredictable and inflexible hours of work may systematically prevent women with childcare responsibilities from pursuing career opportunities.

4. Adverse Effect Discrimination.

Adverse effect discrimination occurs when the application of an apparently neutral law or policy has a disproportionate and harmful impact on individuals from social groups. For example, a dress code that required all employees or members to wear a particular type of hat would adversely impact on persons who, for religious reasons, wear turbans.

5. Retaliation.

Retaliation occurs where a person has made a complaint of discrimination and the party who is alleged to have committed the discriminatory act takes further or increased harmful action towards the complainant because of that complaint.

c) Sexual Harassment is Sex Discrimination

Sexual harassment in the workplace, either in the form of direct sexual demands or threats related to employment advantages or disadvantages, or in the form of sexist attitudes or treatment that poisons a workplace atmosphere, constitutes sex discrimination and is prohibited. A workplace free of sexual discrimination is an employee's right. The OFA, through its Board of Directors, is committed to ensuring that no sexual harassment occurs in any work-related exchange and any OFA sanctioned programs, services, or events. Any complaints concerning allegations of sexual harassment will be dealt with through the complaints process in the OFA's sexual harassment policy.

d) Employment Decisions Covered.

All employment decisions made by the OFA are covered by this policy. These decisions include but are not limited to: job advertising, recruitment, hiring, remuneration, benefits, availability of support services, availability of leave, professional opportunities and advancement. Any decisions made in any of these areas must be made on the basis of performance-based criteria such as qualifications, experience, and merit, rather than on stereotypes or any other discriminatory considerations.

e) Pregnancy Discrimination Is Sex Discrimination.

Where opportunities are denied to a woman because of a pregnancy or an anticipated or possible pregnancy, that woman has been discriminated against on the basis of sex.

Sex discrimination is prohibited.

### **1.03 IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **A. Recruitment.**

All OFA promotional materials will attempt to encourage diversity among applicants to the OFA. They will state that the OFA is an equal opportunity employer that welcomes applicants from diverse backgrounds and with non-traditional qualifications. The OFA policies that have been implemented to promote equal opportunities, such as the parental leave or alternative work arrangement policies, as well as OFA policies, which aim to prohibit discrimination, such as the workplace equity or sexual harassment policies, will also be listed.

#### **B. Interviewing.**

Recognizing that most human rights legislation prohibits making employment decisions on the basis of characteristics such as family status, sexual orientation, or religion, questions that even indirectly solicit such personal information are to be avoided by those interviewing for the firm.

Instead, open ended questions that allow an applicant to offer what, if any, personal information that person feels is appropriate should be asked. The interviewer will outline the OFA's expectations and job descriptions in some detail. Evaluation criteria will be carefully explained. The applicant will have an opportunity to explain why she or he is especially qualified for the job. The interview will focus

on its intended purpose, which is to discover the most qualified candidate for the job. Where questions relating to personal commitment or future plans are necessary at an interview, all applicants will be asked identical questions.

Every applicant will be informed about the OFA's workplace ethics policy, sexual harassment policy and any other relevant work related policies at initial interviews.

### C. Hiring.

All persons making hiring decisions for the OFA will receive education and training to assist them in overcoming discriminatory attitudes. Recognizing that this is a difficult task, hiring, as well as evaluations, remuneration, and professional development will be carried out by committees representing as much of the diversity within the OFA as possible. The Employment Equity clause of this policy will be applied in all decisions regarding hiring and promotion.

### E. Evaluations.

Evaluations of employees at the OFA will be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that problems are identified at an early stage and can be rectified. Open discussion with employees and volunteers will be encouraged at each evaluation to allow employees or volunteers to notify the Board of Directors of the OFA of any areas of dissatisfaction. The expectations of the Board of Directors of the OFA will be explained in detail at the initial interview. These same expectations will be formalized into evaluation criteria which are applied to all employees or volunteers and will be discussed with the employee or volunteer at each evaluation.

Evaluations of employees or volunteers will be conducted by the Board of Directors of the OFA and/or its, designate(s). Evaluations will be based on performance and recommendations and evaluations will be kept on file.

G. Recruitment of Volunteers.

All members making decisions regarding the recruitment of volunteers for any OFA sanctioned programs, and services or events will do so in accordance with this policy.