Policy

In keeping with our Fundamental Principles the Society is committed to social justice and diversity. We welcome all who share our mission and want to help, and are determined that those who need our service have full access. We continue to provide humanitarian services to all people in need, without regard to race, ancestry, place or origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status, or disability.

To ensure our services are free of barriers, employee diversity is an integral part of the Society’s business practices. Individual differences are respected and valued. Fair and equitable treatment will apply to all aspects of employment. To ensure this, the Society will actively remove barriers to ensure that each person has equal access to the benefits of employment.

Pro-active accommodation at work will be provided, where necessary and reasonably practical, to provide ways that support the employee’s dignity, worth and productivity, or to hire or retain qualified employees disabled through either injury or illness, or otherwise belonging to groups protected under the applicable Human Rights Code.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers of the Society.

Definitions

For other definitions, refer to the “Diversity Definitions” document in the Tools section of this manual.

Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as any action, behaviour or attitude, whether intentional or unintentional, which negatively affects or could negatively affect the employment of an employee/volunteer, on the basis of one or more of the prohibited grounds contained in the legislation. Discrimination that is prohibited can be intentional and direct, or can take the form of indirect, unintentional or “systemic” discrimination.

Barriers

Generally fall into three areas: attitudinal/behavioural, procedural, and physical. Barriers prevent people from maximizing their contribution to the Society because of their race, ancestry, place or origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status, or disability.

Work Accommodation

Work accommodation is any modification made to the way in which an individual works that enables that person to fulfill the essential job tasks for his or her assigned position. Modifications may be temporary or permanent.

Reasonably practical

Efforts to accommodate a worker will be deemed to be reasonably practical based on several factors. Those that should be considered include sources of funding, undue hardship, health and safety requirements, and cost. Factors that may be excluded are business inconvenience and third party preferences.
Policy application

Policies
The Society will be free of structures or actions that oppress, exclude, limit or discriminate. Society policies, procedures and standard practices will be in compliance with applicable Human Rights legislation. Fair and equitable treatment will apply to all aspects of employment including but not limited to, recruitment, selection, placement, training and development, promotion, compensation, benefits, termination, and the work environment.

Management responsibilities
It is the responsibility of management to ensure that all policies, practices, guidelines and/or procedures do not permit intentional or unintentional (systemic) discrimination, and on an ongoing basis, to review and assess their policies, practices, and environments to ensure they are free of barriers and biases. In so doing, supervisors/managers will make every effort to ensure that their volunteer and employee workforce is reflective of the communities in which our services are provided.

Vulnerable clients
Within this inclusive framework, the Society will make special efforts to involve and address the special needs of the most vulnerable, including:
- Children and youth
- Refugees, recent immigrants and new Canadians
- Aboriginal communities
- Smaller and remote communities

Reasonable accommodations
In order to discharge its obligations under this policy, the Society will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the particular needs of employees and volunteers, subject to operational requirements. Such initiatives may include, but are not limited to:
1. The modification of job tasks and/or the physical workplace to accommodate for temporary and permanent physical disabilities (refer to the Disability Management Manual in your Human Resources department);
2. The modification of work hours (refer to 1. Hours of Work in your applicable Conditions of Employment);
3. Religious Holiday Exchange: An employee may be permitted to exchange a religious holiday with any current non-statutory holiday where appropriate work accommodations can be arranged. Consultation with Human Resources is required (refer to 4. Designated Paid Holidays in your applicable Conditions of Employment).
5. Education and workshops aimed at improving our understanding of diversity and social justice.

Note: The Society has an obligation to provide early return to work opportunities for those disabled as a result of a workplace injury or illness. The employee also has an obligation to cooperate and actively participate in their own recovery and return to employment, where practical. For more information, employees are to speak to their applicable HR Representative.
### Responsibility

The National Director, Human Resources, is responsible for advising stakeholders, maintaining, monitoring, and revising this policy; and for authorizing exceptions.

Members of the Society Management Team are responsible for applying and implementing this policy in each of their respective areas.

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A national organization agreed to post this policy on www.hrcouncil.ca as part of the HR Toolkit. Sample policies are provided for reference only. Always consult current legislation in your jurisdiction to create policies and procedures for your organization.