



PILGRIM UNITING CHURCH

We are called by God to be a prophetic witness in the city of Adelaide so that new life and vitality will be generated in our city and its people. We celebrate in our unity and diversity, our shared beliefs and past experiences, and value worship, teaching, creativity and justice.

HR-08

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Pilgrim Uniting Church (Pilgrim) is committed to:

- fostering a positive and productive workplace which is mutually beneficial for Pilgrim and our employees; and
- ensuring that employment practices are in accordance with relevant legislation and best practice in human resources management.

1.2 Pilgrim acknowledges its responsibility to do all that is reasonably practical to ensure that staff are safe from injury and risks to health at work, and to provide a workplace that is free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

2. Purpose

This Policy outlines Pilgrim's responsibility for ensuring that staff are treated fairly and equitably, and are not subject to any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation with regard to employment, promotion or training, transfer or benefit.

Decisions will be based on merit, and with regard to the abilities, knowledge, aptitude, experience and relevant qualifications of each individual person in relation to the requirements of the particular position they are applying for or they hold.

3. Definitions

3.1 Discrimination

Discrimination in employment means treating a person less favourably than others, because of a particular attribute or status which is unrelated to the performance of the position. It is unlawful to discriminate in employment under a range of Federal and State legislation.

3.2 Harassment

Harassment refers to any unwanted, unwelcome and uninvited behaviour that results in a person feeling humiliated, intimidated and offended, and under the circumstances, it would be reasonable for them to feel this way. Complaints relating to Sexual Harassment are covered in Sexual Harassment Policy HR-09.

3.3 Victimisation

Victimisation means treating someone unfairly because they have acted on their rights under equal opportunity or harassment law or because they have supported someone else who acted upon those rights.

4. Discrimination, Harassment or Victimisation

Pilgrim will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation based on any of the following grounds:

- gender
- sexuality
- race, colour, nationality, descent and ethnic, ethno-religious or national origin
- physical or intellectual disability
- family responsibilities
- age
- religion
- political opinion
- criminal record (dependent upon the nature and details of the offence and in relevance to the position)
- trade union activity
- social origin
- medical record
- pregnancy or potential pregnancy
- marital status

Current legislation prohibits the victimisation of individuals who:

- intend to make a complaint
- make a complaint
- intend to provide information as a witness
- provide information as a witness
- support an individual who intends to make a complaint or who has made a complaint

5. Delegated responsibility - Equal Opportunity Policy

Pilgrim Church Council has delegated to the Business Manager responsibility for the management and implementation of the Equal Opportunity Policy, and ensuring that the Policy and Procedures are adhered to.

Authorisation

Church Council Chair:



Reviewed February 2020

Approved: March 2020

Next review date: March 2022

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROCEDURES

1. Responsibilities

1.1 Business Manager

Pilgrim Church Council has delegated to the Business Manager responsibility for the management and implementation of the Equal Opportunity Policy, and ensuring that the Policy and Procedures are adhered to.

1.2 Managers are responsible and accountable for ensuring that:

- the principles of equal opportunity are adhered to in all aspects of their decision making and dealings with Pilgrim's staff, and whilst acting as a representative of Pilgrim; and
- Pilgrim staff are aware of their rights and obligations as outlined in this Policy

1.3 Staff are responsible for ensuring that they understand their rights and responsibilities outlined in this policy and do not engage in any unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation of others.

2. Reporting an alleged incident of discrimination, victimisation or harassment

Any staff member who believes or perceives that they are being discriminated against, harassed or victimised should report the behaviour or incident to their Manager, or the Business Manager, or the Chair of Church Council.

Following the initial report, if the matter is deemed to warrant further action, the staff member will be requested to put their complaint in writing, which will include the action they want taken in relation to the person(s) concerned. This action may include:

- arranging for someone to speak to the person(s) responsible for the alleged discrimination or harassment;
- arranging a mediation meeting where an independent party will assist to resolve the issue(s); and/or
- making a formal complaint, which will involve the conduct of an investigation into the alleged incident(s).

Note: They may also seek assistance from the Human Resources section of Synod.

3. Investigation of Complaints

Formal complaints must be referred to the Business Manager for investigation. Note: In the event of a complaint of discrimination, harassment or victimisation being made against the Business Manager, the Chair of the Church Council will take responsibility for managing the complaint.

The Business Manager will ensure that all complaints of discrimination or harassment are investigated quickly and fairly and treated with complete confidentiality. The investigation will involve interviewing the person(s) who has been complained about,

and they will be provided with an opportunity to respond to the allegations made against them. Any other person(s) who may have been involved or who may have witnessed the incident(s) will also be interviewed as part of the investigation.

Pilgrim will take all necessary steps to ensure that people involved in a complaint are not victimised by anyone for coming forward with the complaint or for helping to resolve it.

Any staff member found guilty of perpetrating or condoning discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be disciplined up to and including, termination of employment.

4. Confidentiality

All details of complaints of discrimination will remain confidential unless specific permission from the complainant is granted. Any person who breaches confidentiality may be disciplined. It is also important that the complainant keeps this matter confidential (this will endeavour to avoid idle gossip and the possibility of defamation proceedings against the complainant or Pilgrim).

5. Right to be represented

During any meetings or discussions, the complainant will have the right to be represented or accompanied by a person of their choice. This may be a family member or friend.

6. Outcome of the Investigation

Following the investigation, the complainant will be informed of what action (if any) is proposed to be taken, the reasons for such action and/or the next steps to be taken.

7. Equal Opportunity Commission

If, in the first instance, the staff member is not comfortable in approaching their Manager, the Business Manager or the Chair of the Church Council, or if they are not satisfied with the way their complaint has been handled by Pilgrim, they have the right to refer the matter to the Equal Opportunity Commission.

8. Related Policies

- HR-01 - Grievance Policy
- HR-07 - Confidentiality Policy
- HR-09 - Sexual Harassment Policy
- HR-10 - Workplace Harassment and Bullying Policy
- HR-11 - Code of Conduct – Staff

Authorisation

Chair of Operations Committee:



Reviewed February 2020

Approved March 2020

Next review date: March 2022