Recruitment Policy And Procedure

Introduction

Effective and consistent recruitment practices are essential to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly, in line with Improving Lives Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy.

The recruitment process must result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in respect of their values, skills, experience and qualifications.

This Policy defines the principles that the Charity considers important in the recruitment process and aims to ensure that consistency and good practice is applied across the Charity.

Equality and Diversity in Recruitment

It is against the Charity's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy and against the law in many cases to discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, pregnancy, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, ethnicity, cultural or religious beliefs.

All employees are required to comply with the requirements of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy at every stage of the recruitment process including production of job descriptions, advertising material, instructions given to recruitment agencies, short listing of applications, interviewing, selection decisions and offers of employment.

All the Charity's policies and procedures reflect our commitment to achieving and maintaining equal opportunities within the workplace. It is the responsibility of every employee to monitor continually and evaluate formal and informal practices and procedures to ensure that they do not directly or indirectly discriminate against any individual or group of society.

Any employee who is found to be discriminating in any way during the recruitment process will be subject to the disciplinary procedure and may be liable to dismissal.

Monitoring Equality and Diversity Policy in Recruitment

In order for us to monitor the effectiveness of the Recruitment and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy it is requested that candidates complete the Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form. Any data which is collected regarding gender and ethnic origins will be collected solely for the purpose of monitoring equal opportunity and will be held confidentially by the Charity and protected from misuse.

Recruitment Authorisation

Any vacancy must be discussed with the Chair of the Board and CEO before an attempt is made to fill the role. Consideration should be given as to whether the role could be absorbed amongst the rest of the team or elsewhere in the Charity and also cost implications need to be considered.

Job Descriptions

A job description for the vacancy should be prepared, which provides a fair and accurate representation of the role and follows the format which is laid out in the Job Description Form.

The job description and person specification should be given to all candidates at the time of application to enable them to prepare adequately, which will improve the success of the interviewing process.

Particular care must be taken when producing job descriptions to ensure that unreasonable requirements are not placed on the job holder which cannot be objectively justified and may unfairly disadvantage certain groups e.g. women, ethnic minorities, elderly or disabled persons.

Advertising of Vacancies

The position must be advertised on Indeed and other appropriate places, for example NCVS, Nottingham Jobs, the Charity website and social media with a closing date of two to three weeks. The date and time of which should be stipulated in the packs sent to interested candidates.

The pack should include information about our Charity, a job specification, a person specification, an application form and information about the closing date and time.

An advertisement must not show any intention to discriminate unlawfully and should follow the Equality and Human Rights Commission recommended code.

Shortlisting

Preparation is the key to maximising the likelihood of selecting the most suitable candidate for the position.

- Identify specific job related criteria using the job description.
- Match these criteria with those detailed in the candidate's application or CV.
- Use this to select which candidates will be invited for interview, if appropriate.

Once a list of criteria has been identified it is useful, particularly when considering a large number of candidates for one position, to record how the candidate(s) compare using a tabular format, as follows:

Name	Criteria					
	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Criteria 6
Candidate 1						
Candidate 2						

Candidates who apply for positions with the Charity, whether through a direct advertisement or a recruitment agency, will always be informed of the outcome of their application as quickly as possible. Where candidates have applied to the Charity directly, they should be informed if they have progressed to the interview stage.

Recruitment Interviews

Preparing for the Interview

Recruitment interviews will be arranged and conducted by the CEO/ Business Manager in conjunction with another member of staff, someone who uses the service and either a board member or commissioner. Joint decisions can then be made about the candidate's ability to fulfil the criteria for the role.

Interview arrangements should wherever possible be confirmed in writing to the candidate.

In preparing for the interview:

Formulate the questions to be covered in the interview. Ensure that they will enable all the above information to be gathered and ensure that the questions are the same for all the candidates. Include a question which highlights the applicant's values to give an objective measure of their suitability to become part of the team.

During the Interview

When conducting the interview:

- Use the same questioning strategy with each candidate and do not ask for any personal information or views that are not relevant to the job as this could be considered discriminatory.
- Give every candidate an opportunity to answer the questions fully. If the answer appears incomplete ask the candidate if they wish to provide any further information.
- Keep the questions open and allow the candidates to address any issues within their application that may have given cause for concern eg regularly changing jobs, gaps in employment, criminal record.

Remember – the candidate should be talking for 80% of the interview and the interviewer(s) for 20%!

After the Interview

- Read through the notes about each candidate and complete the assessment form. The reasons for appointing or nor appointing a particular candidate are important in case the final decision is challenged e.g. under the Equality Act 2010.

- Compare each candidate against the job description again in light of the additional information concerning each candidate.

- Make an assessment for each candidate as to whether they will be the best person for the job and meet the needs of the team and the Charity as a whole. Ensure that there is no discrimination against any candidate because they are a different sex or of a different age or from a different racial, religious or cultural background to the rest of the team.

- Recruitment mistakes are costly and time consuming and ultimately it is better to re-advertise to get the right person for the role.

- If it is unclear whether or not the person is suitable from what was discussed in the interview, ask the candidate back for another interview or talk to the over the phone to clarify. If uncertainty remains do not offer the job anyway and hope that it will be alright.

- Let all candidates know whether they are successful or not as quickly as possible. Delays could mean missing out on the best candidates.

Offer of Employment

Once the most appropriate candidate has been selected, this needs to be approved by the board member involved in the interview process, and the terms and conditions of the offer of employment need to be confirmed.

In setting a starting salary to offer the chosen candidate bear in mind the salary level the candidate is seeking, the budget and the authorised salary range (as shown on the Job Description Form). Bear in mind the salary of existing employees in a similar role so that where possible inconsistencies are not created within the Charity which could be challenged under the Equality Act.

An offer should be made verbally to the candidate and once agreed, a contract of employment needs to be raised and an offer letter sent out.

References

All employment offers are conditional upon receipt of two professional references which are satisfactory to the Charity. The referees should usually be the applicant's current and previous employers, although in the case of a college or school leaver the college tutors or teachers will be acceptable.

Referees will usually be sought from an applicant once an offer of employment is made and referees will not be approached without the applicant's permission.

However, for senior positions the Charity may require the applicant to provide details of referees prior to an offer of employment being made. With the applicant's consent the referees will be approached and the responses received will form part of the selection decision.

References will usually be sought in writing and require that a standard reference form be completed although details may be checked or clarified by telephone where necessary. If a response to a written request for a reference has not been received, then the Charity will telephone the referee where the details have been provided and may seek an oral reference instead.

If references which are satisfactory to the Charity are not received within a reasonable timescale then it may be necessary to withdraw the offer of employment.

Qualification Certificates

All applicants may be required to provide evidence of qualifications either in the form of original certificates which will be copied and then returned. Confirmation from the relevant Examination Board may be needed if certificates cannot be produced.

The employment offer will be conditional upon valid evidence of qualifications if this is necessary for the role, and the offer may be withdrawn if this is not supplied within a reasonable timescale.

If an applicant falsifies certificates or evidence of qualifications and this subsequently comes to the attention of the Charity at any stage during employment then the individual will be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable to dismissal.

All applicants are required to disclose on their application if they have any criminal offences including those that may have been spent. All employees of the Charity are required to have a current DBS check and any prospective employee will not be able to commence their employment prior to this being obtained. If information arises from this check which indicates the unsuitability of the prospective employee they will be informed by the CEO of this disclosure and decision to withdraw the offer of employment with the Charity. This will also be followed up in a letter to that person.

The Right To Work

Improving Lives must check that a job applicant is allowed to work in the UK before employing them. This includes the types of work they're allowed to do and how long they can work in the UK for, if there's a time limit.

This will be done by:

- Checking the applicant's right to work online if they've given their share code
- Checking the applicant's original documents

It is also possible to check an applicant's right to work by using an identity service provider that offers Identity Document Validation Technology (IDVT).

Improving Lives does not need to do checks for existing employees from the EU, EEA or Switzerland if they came to the UK before 1 July 2021.

Irish citizens can use their Irish passport and passport card to prove their right to work.

The Charity would need a sponsor licence to employ EEA and Swiss citizens coming to the UK to work from 1 January 2021.

Improving Lives could face a civil penalty for employing an illegal worker if they have not carried out a correct right to work check. This could include being sent to jail for 5 years and pay an unlimited fine if found guilty of employing someone who we knew or had 'reasonable cause to believe' did not have the right to work in the UK.

This includes, for example, if the Charity had any reason to believe that:

- they did not have leave (permission) to enter or remain in the UK
- their leave had expired
- they were not allowed to do certain types of work
- their papers were incorrect or false

Improving Lives can also be penalised if someone is employed who does not have the right to work and the correct checks were not completed or not completed properly.

If this happens, there might be a 'referral notice' to notify the case is being considered and that there could be a civil penalty (fine) of up to £20,000 for each illegal worker.

There would be a 'civil penalty notice' if found liable, with 28 days to respond. The notice indicates how to pay, what to do next, and how to object to the decision. Improving Lives business's details may be published by Immigration Enforcement as a warning to other businesses not to employ illegal workers.

The Charity must not discriminate against anyone because of where they're from.

Checking the applicant's original documents

1. Ask to see the applicant's original documents. Improving Lives can no longer accept biometric residence cards or permits. Ask the applicant for a share code instead.
2. Check that the documents are valid with the applicant present.
3. Make and keep copies of the documents and record the date you made the check.

What to check

Improving Lives would need to check that:

- the documents are genuine, original and unchanged and belong to the person who has given them to us
- the dates for the applicant’s right to work in the UK have not expired
- photos are the same across all documents and look like the applicant
- dates of birth are the same across all documents
- the applicant has permission to do the type of work you’re offering (including any limit on the number of hours they can work)
- for students, see evidence of their study and vacation times
- if 2 documents give different names, the applicant has supporting documents showing why they’re different, such as a marriage certificate or divorce decree

Follow-up checks

If the employee’s right to work is time-limited, a check of their documents will be needed again when it’s due to expire.

Taking a copy of the documents

When the documents are copied:

- make a copy that cannot be changed, for example a photocopy
- make sure the copy is clear enough to read
- for passports, copy any page with the expiry date and applicant’s details (for example nationality, date of birth and photograph) including endorsements, for example a work visa
- for all other documents a complete copy must be made
- keep copies during the applicant’s employment and for 2 years after they stop working for the organisation
- record the date the check was made

Make sure to follow data protection law.

If the job applicant cannot show their documents

Improving Lives must ask the Home Office to check an employee’s or potential employee’s immigration status if they cannot show their documents or online immigration status.

This could be, for example, because they:

- have an outstanding appeal, review or application with the Home Office
- arrived in the UK before 1989 and do not have documents to prove their immigration status or right to work

Improving Lives must also ask the Home Office to check their status if they have:

- a digital or non-digital Certificate of Application that says the organisation needs to ask the Home Office to check their right to work
- an Application Registration Card

Application Registration Cards must state that the work the employer is offering is permitted.

The Home Office will send the Charity a ‘Positive Verification Notice’ to confirm that the applicant has the right to work. This document must be kept.

Personnel Records & Starter Procedures

Personnel records are held by the Charity. An electronic and paper file are held for each employee. Most information is only held electronically but the paper file will include:

- Application form
- Contract of Employment
- Changes to terms and conditions
- Records of Supervision and Performance Appraisals
- Current Disciplinary details

The electronic record will include:

- Personal information
- Emergency contacts
- Ethnic origin
- Home address
- Proof of right to work
- DBS number and date. (Including renewal dates)
- Absence records: sickness, holidays etc
- Records of any Training undertaken

These records are held in a secure environment, only accessible to the managers. This enables information gathering and quick access to employee records. Our accountants/payroll teams also have limited access to enable them to run payroll and pay expenses. Employees will be asked annually to confirm the information we hold on them is correct.

Complaints Procedure

Any applicants who consider that they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against during the recruitment process should write to the CEO or Chair of the Board stating the grounds of the complaint. Any employee who wishes to complain about their experience of the recruitment process should do so by means of the Grievance Procedure.