

Reporting Incidents of Discrimination

What is 'discrimination'?

Discrimination happens when someone is treated less favourably (known as 'direct discrimination') or when a policy, practice or process puts someone at an unfair disadvantage (known as 'indirect discrimination') because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation (known as 'protected characteristics'). Direct discrimination includes acts of harassment (conduct that is unwanted with the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment), bullying and victimisation.

Examples of discrimination: Inaccessible building or communication method to a disabled person; refusal to co-operate or provide a service; excluding someone; offensive language or stereotyping; display or forwarding of offensive material; sexual innuendo. Hate Crime is a form of discrimination and includes verbal abuse/threats, physical assault or damage to property. Sometimes behaviours can be very subtle such as a 'funny look' or a culturally ignorant comment, but the impact on someone, if repeated over a period of time, becomes severe.

Why report it?

- You have a right to be treated fairly and to feel safe, respected and supported.
- We want to know if you have been affected by, or witnessed, an incident.
- Knowing what happens can help us understand the issues people are facing and develop approaches to stop them happening again.

How do I report an incident?

You can use this form to report incidents that have affected you or others anonymously. Information is used for monitoring purposes only and general recommendations (not specific to your situation) for employment or service improvements may be made – for example, if there is a pattern of incidents. Care is taken so that individuals will not be identified in any monitoring reports.

How do I resolve the matter?

If you are a member of staff, to resolve the matter directly, you can either do this informally or formally through the grievance procedure. Please contact the HR Helpdesk for advice on the best course of action. Members of the public may use the customer feedback and complaints procedure to resolve the matter directly. A separate process for reporting bullying incidents applies to School Pupils, visit www.devon.gov.uk/j4s-formeducation.

• Support and Further Information

The HR Helpdesk has dedicated advisors who are available to listen and provide impartial information to help you decide the course of action best suited to you, for example, using the Mediation Service. Telephone 01392 382828 or email hrrshelp@devon.gov.uk.

Our Customer Feedback and Complaints Procedure is available at www.devon.gov.uk/compliments_and_complaints. Telephone 0845 155 1015 or email customer@devon.gov.uk. Write to: Devon County Council, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QD.

Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council is an independent and impartial registered charity, working with BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) individuals and communities in Devon, offering a free and confidential service including racial discrimination case work. Telephone 01392 422566 or email devonrec@devonrec.org.

The Intercom Trust is a registered charity offering a range of services including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans community help and advocacy. Telephone 0845 6020 818 or email helpline@intercomtrust.org.uk.

Devon Advocacy helps people who have issues with health and social care services. Telephone 0845 3311002 or email hello@devonadvocacy.org.uk.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission provides information to help you consider your options if you think you have been unlawfully discriminated against. You may decide to bring a claim in a court or tribunal, or you may consider that your complaint can be better resolved another way: www.equalityhumanrights.com or telephone 0845 604 6610.

Staff support and information:

Council policies and procedures for staff are available on The Source, from your line manager, Trade Union rep or the HR Helpdesk (see above): Equality Policy, Acceptable Behaviour Policy, Grievance Procedure and Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy.

Counselling is confidential and available via the wellbeing@work service who can also provide stress management and post-trauma intervention. Telephone 01392 383277.

The Mediation Service has nationally trained and accredited mediators. The use of mediation at an early stage can help improve working relationships and is recommended by ACAS and Employment Tribunals. Contact via the HR Helpdesk (see above).

Employee Networks are open to the following staff: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans employees: email devonlgbt@hotmail.com.

Trade Unions campaign against unfair treatment at work and in wider society. Contact your local steward for further information and support.

Training can help reduce discrimination as it develops an understanding of equality and diversity issues and a fair and positive working environment. For more information about equality and management development opportunities visit the 'learning and training' section on The Source.

Other services:

Hate Crime is any crime committed against a person or property that is motivated by the offender's hatred of people because of their association with one or more of the protected characteristics listed on page one. If you have been a victim of hate crime there are a number of ways you can report an incident and receive support. For more information or to complete the Hate Crime Report Form visit www.devon.gov.uk/reporting-hate-crime, or telephone the Police on 08452 777444 or Victim Support on 0845 3030 900.

The Community Development Worker BME Mental Health and Wellbeing Service provides culturally sensitive emotional support, signposting and referrals into health services for BME people. Telephone 07772 061740 or email chukumeka.maxwell@nhs.net.

The Olive Tree Association is involved in a range of projects and services to reduce isolation for BME people including the Hikmat adults social contact centre and Mosaic (activities which aim to empower participants to address different issues in their lives). Telephone 01392 759515 or email Rehabfarag@hotmail.com.

DISCRIMINATORY INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Send this form to: Corporate Equality Officer, County Hall,
Exeter EX2 4QU. Email: equality@devon.gov.uk.
Online version: www.devon.gov.uk/reportincidents



Write as much or as little as you want.

1 Who is reporting this incident?

Victim witness advocate other

2 Please describe what happened:

3 Please say whether the discrimination was on grounds of age, disability, gender (including maternity/pregnancy, transgender, marriage and civil partnership status), race, religion/belief or sexual orientation:

4 Where did it happen?

5 When did it happen? (date/time)

6 Was this the first or a repeat incident? If repeat, over what period of time?

7 Who was involved?

(For example, provide relevant details of the victim, perpetrator and any witnesses such as their gender, age or ethnic origin and whether they were a member of staff, a councillor, a customer, or a member of the public. Please do not provide names because direct action cannot be taken as a result of this report).

8 Have you told anyone else? Has any action been taken? What was the outcome? Please describe:

9a Will you, or did you, make a formal complaint or grievance and when?

9b If you have made a formal complaint or grievance, has it has been resolved satisfactorily? If not, why not?

10 Is there anything you would like the Council to consider in terms of areas for improvement or awareness raising?

**CHALLENGING INEQUALITY
& CELEBRATING DIVERSITY**

**For more information: www.devon.gov.uk/diversity
staff.devon.gov.uk/equalityanddiversity**