

EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Purpose of Policy

Irish Squash is committed to ensuring equal opportunities, equal treatment, inclusivity, diversity and anti-discrimination in Squash in Ireland. We are also an equal opportunities employer and our staff policies are also based on principles of equal opportunity of employees.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all activities Irish Squash is involved in and applies to all affiliated Clubs, Provincial Associations, Participants, Volunteers, Contractors, Parents, Coaches and those who work with and/or on behalf of or those who represent our organisation.

3. Objectives of Policy

This policy sets out our commitment to;

- promoting an environment of equality in Squash;
- encouraging our members and those we interact with or engage to be responsible for ensuring our competitions and activities are administered in a fair and equal way.
- Involving all people from all backgrounds and abilities into our sport.
- embedding a culture of equality, inclusivity and diversity in all the work that we do
- complying with the National Sports Policy (dated 2017) to ensure that a minimum of 30% of Board positions are held by women.

4. Legal basis

Equal Status

The Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 ('the Acts') prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education. They cover the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community. In addition, the Acts prohibit discrimination in the provision of accommodation services against people who are in receipt of rent supplement, housing assistance, or social welfare payments.

The Acts prohibit discrimination, in access to and use of goods and service, including indirect discrimination and discrimination by association, sexual harassment and harassment, and victimisation. The Acts allow positive action to promote equality for disadvantaged persons or to cater for the special needs of persons. There are some situations in which the Acts allow clubs to treat people differently. These are called exemptions. Specially Section 5(2) (f) states that discrimination will not apply where differences in the treatment of persons in relation to the provision or organisation of a sporting facility or sporting event to the extent that the differences are reasonably necessary having regard to the nature of the facility or event and are relevant to the purpose of the facility or event.

The main kinds of exemptions which may apply are:

Special events: For example, separate men's tournaments may be held, so long as there is no discrimination and opportunities also provided and made for a women's tournament. Clubs may also have events just for children, or for people with disabilities. Apart from in the case of gender, clubs do not have to balance the special event with another one, such as a tournament for older people.

Different kinds of membership: For example, a club can offer a choice of full membership, off-peak membership, and so on.

People who were excluded in the past can offer special rates to encourage them to join now.

Discriminatory advertising is also prohibited. It is prohibited to publish, display or cause to be published or displayed, an advertisement which indicates an intention to discriminate, harass or sexually harass or might reasonably be understood as indicating such an intention.

What kinds of discrimination are unlawful?

- **Direct discrimination** means that you are treated less well than someone else because of one of the grounds.
- **Indirect discrimination** means that there are conditions in place which appear neutral but which impact more strongly on you because of your inclusion in one of the grounds.
- **Harassment** means you have been treated in a demeaning way because of one of the grounds.
- **Sexual harassment** means you have been treated in a sexually demeaning way.
- **Victimisation** is a technical term which means you have been treated badly because you have taken action to oppose discrimination on one of the grounds.
- **Discrimination by association** means you have been treated badly because of your connection with someone covered by the grounds.

Examples where discrimination can arise;

- refusing to admit a person to membership;
- providing different terms and conditions of membership for members or applicants for membership;
- terminating the membership of a person or subjecting a member to sanction; ● having rules or practices which discriminate against a member or applicant; ● giving preferential treatment on the basis of one of the characteristics above.

Reasonable Accommodation

In addition the Acts require those selling goods or providing services to provide reasonable accommodation or special treatment or facilities where without these it would be impossible or unduly difficult for a person with disabilities to avail of the goods and services, unless this would cost more than a nominal cost. What amounts to a nominal cost will depend on the circumstances such as the size and resources of the body involved.

Discrimination in employment

Discrimination is defined in the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2015 as "treating a person less favourably than another is, has been, or would be treated". Discrimination may occur where a job applicant, employee or customer is treated less favourably than another for one or more of any of the

following reasons:- Gender, marital/civil, family status, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age, race, membership of the travelling community. Discrimination may also occur where a condition or requirement is applied to all but can't be so easily complied with by a particular person or group.

We have a separate equality policy for our employees which sets out our policy with regard to recruitment and selection, pay and remuneration, conditions of employment, training and career development, dignity at work and equal access and opportunity to anyone with a disability. We also have an anti-discrimination and bullying policy.

For additional information please refer to The Workplace Relations Commission www.workplacerelations.ie and The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission www.ihrec.ie

Legal position in Northern Ireland

There is no one equivalent act applicable however there are a number of pieces of equality legislation which deal with equality and discrimination similar to the above. These have not yet been consolidated (at the date of this publication) into one act although work has been ongoing in this area.

In relation to discrimination these include;

Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976, (and all subsequent amendments),
Equal Pay Act (NI) 1970,
Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 (and all subsequent amendments),
Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (and all subsequent amendments and ancillary acts),
Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (and all subsequent amendments),
Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (and all subsequent amendments and ancillary acts),
Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003

It is unlawful for service providers to discriminate on five key grounds – sex (including gender reassignment and pregnancy/maternity), disability, race, religious belief or political opinion, and sexual orientation. The same types of discrimination apply such as Direct and Indirect discrimination. There are exceptions relevant to Clubs;

- Sporting organisations can discriminate between the sexes where the physical strength, stamina, or physique of the average woman puts her at a disadvantage.
- Voluntary bodies can also restrict membership to one sex and provide its services to those members as long as that is the main reason why it was set up. For example women only or men only teams and single sex sporting clubs.
- Services can be restricted to one sex if the users are likely to suffer 'serious embarrassment' at the presence of a member of the opposite sex or the users are likely to be in a state of undress or where physical contact may be involved – (eg: physical contact classes, women only saunas and leisure facilities)

Complaints can be made to the Equality Commission or County Court.

For additional information please refer to The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland www.equalityni.org

5. Monitoring and implementation

This policy was approved by the Board of Irish Squash and will be reviewed every two years or updated in compliance with any new legislation or guidance before then. The Governance Committee are responsible for all reviews of this policy and adoption of the policy is a matter for the Board.

The Governance Committee will continue to monitor this and other policies to ensure they are in line with legislation and also with any other required changes which Irish Squash wish to include. The Governance Committee is always open to reviewing its policies and taking on board any advice or guidance or suggestions in respect of same.

Senior Management within Irish Squash will also ensure all our materials and publications promote equality, diversity and inclusion. Our employees will be provided with adequate training to support the roll out of this policy across our membership.

We will ensure this policy is promoted to affiliated clubs, participants, contractors, players, parents, coaches, officials and volunteers.

6. Breaches of policy and complaints

Irish Squash takes any form of discrimination or inappropriate behaviour seriously. Anyone found to be in breach of this policy or behaves in contravention of this policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Disciplinary issues should in this first instance be dealt by Clubs. Anyone wishing to raise a complaint should do so in accordance with the Disciplinary and Grievance policy.

Queries or guidance in relation to how to make a complaint should be addressed to: honsecretary@irishsquash.com.