

Equality and diversity legislation

This handout provides a round-up of all the equality and diversity legislation that public bodies must be aware of, plus external links to the full legal texts.

Civil Partnerships Act 2004:

Provides legal recognition and parity of treatment for same-sex couples and married couples, including employment benefits and pension rights.

[Access the Civil Partnerships Act 2004](#) at the website of the Office of Public Sector Information

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Outlaws the discrimination of disabled people in employment, the provision of goods, facilities and services or the administration or management of premises.

[Access the Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#) at the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) website

Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005

Introduces a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality for disabled people.

[Access the Disability Discrimination Act 2005](#) at the OPSI website

Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006

Protects against discrimination on grounds of age in employment and vocational training. Prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, harassment and instructions to discriminate.

[Access the Employment \(Age\) Regulation 2006](#) at the OPSI website

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003

The directive protects against discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief in employment, vocational training, promotion and working conditions.

[Access the Employment Equality \(Religion or Belief\) Regulation 2003](#) at the OPSI website

The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005

Introduces new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, explicitly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave, sets out the extent to which it is discriminatory to pay a woman less than she would otherwise have been paid due to pregnancy or maternity issues.

[Access the Employment Equality \(Sex Discrimination\) Regulations 2005](#) at the OPSI website

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003

The directive protects against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment, vocational training, promotion, and working conditions.

[Access the Employment Equality \(sexual orientations\) Regulation 2003](#) at the OPSI website

Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amended)

This gives an individual a right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, where the man and the woman are doing: like work; work rated as equivalent under an analytical job evaluation study; or work that is proved to be of equal value.

[Access the Equal Pay Act \(Amendment\) 1970](#) at the OPSI website

Equality Act 2006

Establishes a single Commission for Equality and Human Rights by 2007 that replaces the three existing commissions. Introduces a positive duty on public sector bodies to promote equality of

opportunity between women and men and eliminate sex discrimination. Protects access discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in terms of access to good facilities and services.

[Access the Equality Act 2006](#) at the OPSI website

Further information at the [Women and Equality Unit website](#)

Gender Recognition Act 2004

The purpose of the Act is to provide transsexual people with legal recognition in their acquired gender. Legal recognition follows from the issue of a full gender recognition certificate by a gender recognition panel.

[Access the Gender Recognition Act 2004](#) at the OPSI website

Race Relations Act 1976

The Act prohibits discrimination on racial grounds in the areas of employment, education, and the provision of goods, facilities, services and premises.

Further information at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(EHRC\) website](#).

Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

Places a statutory duty on all public bodies to promote equal opportunity, eliminate racial discrimination and promote good relations between different racial groups.

[Access the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000](#) at the OPSI website

Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulation 2003

Introduced new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, new burden of proof requirements, continuing protection after employment ceases, new exemption for a determinate job requirement and the removal of certain other exemptions.

[Access the Race Relations Act 1976 \(Amendment\) 2003](#) at the OPSI website

Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006

The Act seeks to stop people from intentionally using threatening words or behaviour to stir up hatred against somebody because of what they believe.

[Access the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006](#) at the OPSI website

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex. Sex discrimination is unlawful in employment, education, advertising or when providing housing, goods, services or facilities. It is unlawful to discriminate because someone is married, in employment or advertisements for jobs.

[Access the Sex Discrimination Act 1975](#) at the Press for Change website

The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

The Act seeks to prevent sex discrimination relating to gender reassignment. It clarified the law for transsexual people in relation to equal pay and treatment in employment and training.

[Access the Sex Discrimination \(Gender Reassignment\) Regulations 1999](#) at the Press for Change website