

**OXFAM GB**  
**Disability Policy**  
December 2018

<b>Title:</b>	Disability Policy
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<b>Area of Governance:</b>	Human Resources
<b>Date for Renewal:</b>	December 2021
<b>Approved by:</b>	Leadership Team
<b>Geographical Scope:</b>	Worldwide, except in countries where the following policy contravenes local legislation. In these cases, local legislation must be followed.
<b>Confidentiality:</b>	Not confidential

### **Policy Statement**

Oxfam GB aims to create a positive working environment that enables all employees and volunteers to realise their full potential. We are committed to respecting diversity and difference. Oxfam GB believes it will benefit from employing, retaining and developing people with disabilities at all levels of responsibility and across all areas of work where this is reasonably practical.

Oxfam GB is committed to challenging and preventing stereotyping, prejudice, disability discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We would like to develop a greater awareness of disability, removing barriers and changing attitudes among our managers, employees and volunteers that prevent people with disabilities from gaining access to and achieving equality of opportunity.

This policy does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of management.

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### **Guidelines**

#### 1. Management Responsibilities

Oxfam GB has made a commitment to tackle any prejudice or discrimination that disabled people may experience through the following measures:

- Improve recruitment of disabled people.
- Make every reasonable effort to ensure that if an employee or volunteer becomes disabled they can stay in employment or continue to volunteer.
- Develop greater awareness of disability amongst all employees and volunteers.

- Where reasonable, provide accessible services, environments and buildings.
- Review our progress on an annual basis.

These guidelines outline what is expected from Oxfam GB managers to successfully meet our commitments to achieving disability equality. By following these guidelines managers will be using good practice in recruiting and retaining people with disabilities in OxfamGB, and in the UK fulfilling the requirements of the Equality Act. If at any stage managers are unsure about what to do or find themselves asking “why do I have to do this?” then they should seek advice firstly from their Human Resources Team. Further information can be found on the Gov.UK website by following this link.

## 2. Definition of Disability

In the UK, a disabled person is defined as someone with:

**“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”**  
(Equality Act 2010).

- ‘substantial’ is more than minor or trivial, eg it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- ‘long-term’ means 12 months or more, eg a breathing condition that develops because of a lung infection

Disability is a protected characteristic covered by the Equality Act 2010 and so the Act protects people who have, or have had, a disability.

In the UK where it is possible to make reasonable adjustments to prevent disadvantage to a disabled person, the organisation is under a duty to do so. This applies to new and existing employees who become disabled or whose condition worsens.

Outside the UK this is best practice.

Where reasonably possible Oxfam GB encourages managers to apply these principles to volunteering positions as well as employees.

## 3. What is Disability Discrimination

In the UK, the Equality Act 2010 covers direct discrimination (treating a disabled person less favourably because of disability), and also introduces indirect disability discrimination and discrimination which “arises from disability”.

Indirect disability discrimination arises if Oxfam applies a provision, criterion, or practice (PCP) to a disabled employee which:

- Is also applied to all employees but that disadvantages disabled employees
- Puts persons who have the same disability as the disabled employee at a particular disadvantage when compared with persons who do not have the same disability

- The employer cannot show it to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from disability occurs where an employer treats a disabled employee unfavourably “because of something arising in consequence of his or her disability”.

Further information on the definitions of disability can be found in the Government’s Equality Act 2010 Guidance on Disability which you can find [here](#).

#### 4. Recruiting Disabled People (Disability Confident – UK only)



On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2001, Oxfam GB started using the two-ticks symbol – “positive about disabled people” – on its recruitment literature.

In 2016, the scheme was rebranded Disability Confident.

The Disability Confident symbol, awarded to OxfamGB by the Government Employment Service in the UK, makes it clear that Oxfam GB welcomes job applicants with disabilities for the abilities and skills they bring.

By using the Disability Confident symbol, Oxfam GB is making five commitments which are; recruiting disabled people, retaining employees who become disabled, consulting disabled employees, developing greater awareness of disability and reviewing progress.

In recruitment, this means that for candidates who meet the minimum criteria for a vacant role and declare themselves to have a disability, an interview for the position must be offered.

In employment, reasonable adjustments must be considered to support employees who are, or who become, disabled

Further information on the ‘Disability Confident’ requirements and guidance on recruitment of disabled people is included in the [Recruitment Policy](#). This specific guidance can be found on the intranet [here](#).

#### 5. Guidelines for managers of disabled employees

##### Induction

- Consider whether the standard induction procedures are accessible or whether you need to make any adjustments e.g. having facilities for deaf people, subtitles or signers on videos, information available in different formats.
- Ensure that the team is suitably briefed by focusing on the nature of the adjustments you have made rather than on the nature of the disability as employees may not always need to know about the latter.
- Consider whether it would be appropriate to assign another employee to support the new employee during their induction in the new post.

## Training and Development

- Arrange where needed, individual training for a disabled person to use any adaptations or equipment provided as part of reasonable adjustments.
- Ensure employees and volunteers with disabilities are given the same training and development opportunities as those without. If it is not possible to make reasonable adjustments to allow access to a particular training opportunity the manager should discuss with the Learning and Development team and seek alternatives.

## Performance Management

- Establish, as part of the performance management process, eg during regular 1:1 meetings, whether your disabled employee needs any support or adjustments to enable them to perform effectively and review this regularly. This discussion can also take place at the employee's annual performance review if the employee wishes.
- Make sure that you discuss with disabled employees what you and they can do to make sure they can develop and use their abilities.
- Seek advice on assistance packages for which disabled employees may qualify e.g. supported employment. Further information for support available in the UK can be found at:
  - <https://www.gov.uk/work-choice>
  - <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>
- An employee or volunteer who becomes disabled or whose disability becomes more severe should be retained, if reasonably possible, and arrangements made for appropriate training so they can remain in their present position or take a re-designed position.
- Consider flexible working to enable someone who becomes disabled to remain in their present position or take a re-designed position (see [Flexible Working Policy](#)).

Request expert guidance and assessment from your HR Team or Staff Health to help you retain an employee or volunteer who becomes disabled.

Leave to attend hospital or other medical appointments related to a disability (Disability Leave)

- Time off for appointments may be considered a reasonable adjustment depending on the circumstances and this should be explored. Managers should discuss the request with the employee and their HRBP and each request will be considered on a case by case basis. This type of leave would not be considered as sick leave.
- An appointment for day surgery or a course of treatment that requires the employee to spend the day, of half day, at a hospital may be considered as sick leave. Advice should be sought from your HR Team.

Useful links:

- [Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Flexible Working Policy](#)
- [Recruitment Policy](#)
- [\*Managing Stress Advice from Staff Health\*](#)