

## Equality and Good Relations Legislation

1. **Equal Pay Act (NI) 1970** - provides for equal pay between men and women
2. **The Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 (SDO)**, as amended, makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex in the fields of employment, training and related matters, education, the provision of goods, facilities and services, and the disposal and management of premises. The Order also makes it unlawful to discriminate against married persons in employment; on grounds of gender reassignment in employment and training; and prohibits discrimination against contract workers.
3. **Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998** ('the Act') requires the Council in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
  - between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
  - between men and women generally;
  - between persons with a disability and persons without;
  - between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, without prejudice to its obligations above, the Council shall in carrying out its functions, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The needs of ethnic minority groups including Irish Travellers will be fully considered. In lay terms this duty is defined as a duty to tackle sectarianism and racism.

4. **DDA the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (amendment) Regulations (NI) 2004 and Disability Discrimination Order (2006)** makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of a disability in the areas of employment and access to goods, facilities, services and premises.
5. **The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (FETO)** makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the ground of religious belief or political opinion.
6. **The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (as amended 2003)** which outlaws racial discrimination. This includes indirect discrimination as well as direct discrimination and covers goods, facilities and services.
7. **Single Equality Bill** – aims to harmonises antidiscrimination law as far as practicable and extend it into new categories, including age, sexual orientation, is currently being developed.

8. **The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003** makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on grounds of sexual orientation in employment and training.
9. **Employment Equality (Age) Regulation NI 2006** (commences 1<sup>st</sup> October) makes it unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise workers, employees, job seekers, trainees and ex – employees because of their age.
10. **A Shared Future** - 'The establishment over time of a normal, civic society, in which all individuals are considered equals, where differences are resolved through dialogue in the public sphere and where all people are treated impartially. A society where there is equity, respect for diversity and recognition of our interdependence'.
11. **The Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland** - The Racial Equality Strategy emerged from the devolved Northern Ireland Assembly, as an aim of the first programme for government in 2000. The strategy sets out six shared aims that Government will pursue in eradicating racism and tackling racial inequalities: Elimination of Racial Inequality, Equal Protection, Equality of Service Provision, Participation, Dialogue, and Capacity Building.
12. **The Human Rights Act 1998** which incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law and binds state bodies on matters including the prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment. This Act embraces 15 fundamental rights and freedoms:
  - Article 2** - the right to life
  - Article 3** - the right not to be tortured or inhumanly or degradingly treated or punished
  - Article 4** - the right not to be required to perform forced labour
  - Article 5** - the right to liberty and security of the person
  - Article 6** - the right to a fair trial (and to a range of other associated things, such as the free assistance of an interpreter if one cannot understand the language in a trial situation)
  - Article 7** - the right not to be punished for something which was not a crime at the time it was done
  - Article 8** - the right to respect for one's private and family life, correspondence & home
  - Article 9** - the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
  - Article 10** - the right to freedom of expression, freedom to hold opinions and freedom to receive and impart information
  - Article 11** - the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association with others
  - Article 12** - the right to marry and found a family
  - Article 14** - the right not to have Convention rights secured in a discriminatory way
  - Protocol 1, Article 1**- the right to peaceful enjoyment of one's possessions
  - Protocol 1, Article 2**- the right to education
  - Protocol 1, Article 3**- the right to free and secret elections at reasonable intervals

The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 1998 states that the Bill should reflect the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland, to respect, on the basis of equality of treatment, the identity and ethos of both communities in Northern Ireland, and rights not to be discriminated against and to equality of opportunity in both the public and private sectors.