



SCREENING REPORT

August 2024

Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires Choice when carrying out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between nine categories of persons, namely:

- 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; and
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

Choice must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. Our Equality Scheme outlines how we propose to fulfil our statutory duties under Section 75. Within the Scheme, Choice gave a commitment to apply the screening methodology below to all new and revised policies.

Screening Methodology

When screening policies Choice will consider:

- What are the likely impacts of equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy/proposal, for each of the Section 75 equality categories.
- Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 equality categories?
- To what extent is the policy/proposal likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?
- Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

The screening process identifies which policies are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity or good relations.

Screening Outcomes

Screening assesses the likely impact as major, minor or none. If it is decided that a policy is likely to have significant/major issues relating to equality, an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) will be carried out.

This screening report outlines the screening outcomes from date to date.

If you would like to request a copy of the full screening please contact

CorporateServices@choice-housing.org

Description of Policy	Screening Outcome	Reason
<p>The screening is for the following revised Corporate Services Policies (which are related policies grouped under the category of Governance and Communications):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Protection Policy 2. Social Media Policy 3. Staff Communication Policy <p>Record Keeping Protocol</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Data Protection Policy is the strategic policy that governs Data Protection activity within Choice. • The Social Media Policy is the strategic policy that governs employees' use of social media. • The Staff Communication Policy Record Keeping Protocol is the policy that provides guidance to employees with regards the conduct expected of them when communicating and engaging with stakeholders. 	<p>Screened Out June 2024</p>	<p>There is no evidence gathered to demonstrate this policy affects specific groups. This policy applies to all members of staff and stakeholders fairly and consistently irrespective of which equality group they belong to.</p>
<p>The Zero Tolerance to Aggression/Violence policy was screened. It's aim is the protection of employees from violence and aggression and the policy was revised to include zero tolerance. The policy gives guidance on Choice's action in response to aggression/violence against staff members.</p>	<p>Screened out December 2023</p>	<p>There is no evidence gathered to demonstrate this policy affects specific groups. This policy applies to all members of staff and stakeholders fairly and consistently irrespective of which equality group they belong to. The policy is reflective of best practice and aims to provide a consistent and fair approach to all employees.</p>
<p>The rent policy has been reviewed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply an extra 10% charge for new build properties to recognise the higher quality and to cover increasing build costs; and • Standardise the rent policy in respect of new build so 	<p>Screened out February 2024</p>	<p>The rents proposed under these policy changes applies to all groups equally and equitably. Although we haven't identified any S75 concerns at this time, we planned a phased implementation (i.e. introduced as new schemes are handed over) with</p>

<p>that the same rent applies across Northern Ireland.</p>		<p>mitigating measures. All new tenants (with no differentiation across the S75 groups) will have access to a range of housing management services including the financial inclusion team.</p>
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