



# DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Labour Relations Agency

## Introduction

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Articles 49A and 49B of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), the Labour Relations Agency is required, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disabled duties').

Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, as amended by Articles 49A and 49B of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 the Labour Relations Agency is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a Disability Action Plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

1.2 As Chief Executive of the Labour Relations Agency we are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this Disability Action Plan. We will take all the necessary steps (in relation to people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans.

This is the fourth Disability Action Plan to be produced by the LRA. This action plan follows on from our 2012-2015 action plans and outlines how the LRA intends to advance the measures outlined in the previous action plan. We will continue to put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this Disability Action Plan is effectively

implemented. We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to staff and ensure the provision of all necessary training and guidance for staff on the disability duties and the implementation of the plan.

Having submitted an annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of the 2012-2015 plans, we shall submit further annual reports as well as carrying out a three yearly review of this plan. The Agency will also consult with Disability Advocates and Stakeholders when implementing and reviewing its plans.

The responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this Disability Action Plan and the point of contact within the Labour Relations Agency will be:-

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Title: Director (Corporate Services)

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If you require this plan in an alternative format (such as large print, Braille, easy read, audio cassette or on computer disc) and/or language, please contact the Agency on [info@lra.org.uk](mailto:info@lra.org.uk) to discuss your requirements.

- 1.3 We confirm our commitment to continue to submit annual progress reports on the implementation of this plan to the Equality Commission and carrying out a three year review of this plan, or plans submitted to the Equality Commission over the three year review period.

A copy of this plan will be made available on our website [www.lra.org.uk](http://www.lra.org.uk)

In addition, all our employees will receive a copy of the plan.

#### 1.4 **Who we are and what we do**

The Labour Relations Agency is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department for Employment and Learning established in 1976 under the Industrial Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 and continued by the Industrial Relations Order (Northern Ireland) 1992. Under Article 69(3) of the 1992 Order, the Agency is required to pay the Northern Ireland Certification Officer's remuneration and allowances and to provide support services. These costs are reflected in our financial statements.

The Agency's principal activities are to assist employers, employees and their representatives to improve the conduct of their employment relations.

The Labour Relations Agency provides effective, impartial and confidential services to those engaged in industry, commerce and the public services in Northern Ireland, those services including:

- Advice and assistance on all aspects of the employment relations and employment practices

- Comprehensive conciliation, arbitration and mediation facilities for resolving both individual and collective matters in dispute.

These services are available to employers, employers' associations, individual employees, trade unions and other organisations or to individuals who require assistance with any question relating to employment relations or employment matters.

## 2. **Previous Measures**

Outlined below are the key measures which the Labour Relations Agency has already taken to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

### **Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people**

- a text-phone number on our website and publications to ensure accessibility to our services;
- welcoming statements in our recruitment, selection and induction documentation;
- training on specific disability areas impacting on our staff, e.g. deaf awareness training, sign language training;
- provision of interpreters for those with communication difficulties and hearing loops installed in our conference rooms and interview rooms;
- provision of a designated disabled person's car space within the Agency's car park;
- provision of disabled access toilets on each floor of our buildings;
- utilisation of Type talk operator assisted relay service for callers with hearing difficulties;
- providing home-visits to house-bound users of our service;
- Extending Disability Access at Agency Headquarters by the installation of a wheelchair ramp to adjoining premises.

## **Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life**

- Information is made available in various formats to suit particular needs
- We engage with Disability Employment Services to participate in the Access to Work (NI) Programme
- We make reasonable adjustments for any staff member/public life appointee declaring a disability
- We welcome applications from suitably qualified persons regardless of disability in our recruitment advertisements for Staff and Board Members.

### **3. Action Measures**

Outlined below are the measures which we propose to take over the period of this Disability Action Plan (June 2015 to May 2018) together with performance indicators or targets. We will review and update this plan on an annual basis and all plans will be included within the three year review to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

Measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life are contained with Appendix 1.

Signed by:

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Chair

Marie Mallon

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Chief Executive Officer

Tom Evans

**LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT**

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
1. Publish and promotes the disability Action Plan	Increase awareness of disability issues and our duties in relation to these	DCS/Compliance Office	On-going
2. Provide training to Board, Staff and Stakeholders on disability issues, health, safety, wellbeing and stress management	Increase awareness of disability issues. Promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people	HR/Advisory/Compliance	On-going
3. Establish staff Disability Focus Group	Acts as a sounding board with regard to the implementation of the Disability Action Plan. Staff with a disability orientation is able to give first hand advice on disability related issues with the Agency. Provide a monitoring and advisory service body for the implementation of such disability related issues within the Agency.	Disability Focus Group/compliance	On-going quarterly meetings

**PUBLIC LIFE POSITIONS**

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
4. Promote opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in public events organised by the Labour Relations Agency	People with disabilities are supported in contributing to society and are included in the economically active community	DCS/CEO/DAS	On-going

ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION			
Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
5. Review accessibility and user friendly facilities of Agency website for disabled people, particularly those with a sensory impairment	Agency website will be fully disability friendly	DCS/IT Manager	December 2015
6. Provide and arrange for Board/Staff training on Section 75 (NI Act 1998) and on policy relevant to disability discrimination	Awareness of responsibilities in delivery of Agency services	DCS/HR	Annually
7. Review public access to Agency premises	Improvements in access to Agency services and premises ensuring unrestricted accessibility to all facilities	DCS/compliance Officer	On-going
8. Seek on-going feedback from service users and employees	Agreed method to process feedback on issues flagged by stakeholders on the use of, and access to, Agency services.	DCS/Compliance Officer/Advisory and Conciliation services	On-going

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING			
Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
9. Continue to provide training and refresher training for employees and Board members	Compliance with a safe working environment for employees with/without disabilities in line with Agency policy	DCS/Compliance Officer/HR	On-going



<p>10. Provide advice and assistance to employees on necessary reasonable adjustments required</p>	<p>Implement adjustments and provide equipment (hardware/software) or other material goods to enable employees to carry out their duties.</p>	<p>DCS/HR/Compliance Officer</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<p>11. Offer and obtain full support, information and assistance from relevant authorities on implementing disability adjustments</p>	<p>Fully co-operate with organisations such as ECNI, Disability Action, and Disability Employment Services assessments for staff requiring short, regular, long term support in the workplace.</p>	<p>Compliance Officer</p>	<p>On-going</p>