

Equality Act 2010 c. 15

s. 4 The protected characteristics

Law In Force

Version 1 of 1

1 October 2010 - Present

Subjects

Employment; Human rights

Keywords

Protected characteristics

4 The protected characteristics

The following characteristics are *protected characteristics* —

age;

disability;

gender reassignment;

marriage and civil partnership;

pregnancy and maternity;

race;

religion or belief;

sex;

sexual orientation.

*Part 2 EQUALITY: KEY CONCEPTS > Chapter 1 PROTECTED
CHARACTERISTICS > s. 4 The protected characteristics*

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s. 149 Public sector equality duty

Law In Force

Version 1 of 1

5 April 2011 - Present

Subjects

Employment; Government administration; Local government

Keywords

Public sector equality duty

149 Public sector equality duty

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).
- (3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—
 - (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- (4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- (5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—
 - (a) tackle prejudice, and
 - (b) promote understanding.
- (6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.
- (7) The relevant protected characteristics are—
 - age;

disability;
gender reassignment;
pregnancy and maternity;
race;
religion or belief;
sex;
sexual orientation.

(8) A reference to conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act includes a reference to—

- (a) a breach of an equality clause or rule;
- (b) a breach of a non-discrimination rule.

(9) [Schedule 18](#) (exceptions) has effect.

*Part 11 ADVANCEMENT OF EQUALITY > Chapter 1 PUBLIC
SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY > s. 149 Public sector equality duty*

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