

Case study – Community Justice Sector Employee

As an employee in the justice sector, I know that I am bound by legislation promoting equality and valuing diversity. Part of my job is to ensure that I treat people fairly and with respect. This doesn't mean, however, that I should treat everybody the same. Our service users are of varied backgrounds and this means they need to receive a different service that takes into account their individual needs.

For example, I'm aware of the need to engage the services of an interpreter where language is a barrier to my assessment and management of offenders. Or, whenever possible, I try to arrange appointments for those who are in employment at a time that does not interfere with their attendance at work. Also, our office has undergone alterations and the installation of a lift to ensure that, as an organisation, we are compliant with the **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**.

I understand that I should act in ways that:

- acknowledge individuals' background and beliefs
- respect individuality
- value people as individuals and
- do not discriminate against people.

It is important for me to acknowledge the need to challenge other peoples' behaviour when they acting in a discriminatory manner. For example, I understand that the use of derogatory language when talking about people from a different race is offensive and cannot be tolerated.

I appreciate the power that I have as a worker in the justice sector. In my role I am engaged in assisting people who have appeared before the Court or who are in danger of doing so. I'm sometimes in uniform and sometimes have to see offenders, as they are told to see me. I try to use my status sensitively to build a rapport with those individuals with whom I work. One of the best ways of doing this is to recognise their individuality and make the service I deliver relevant by understanding their circumstances.

I receive regular feedback on my performance through supervision and appraisal. It is essential that my colleagues and I support each other, as our work can be demanding.

My work is informed by regular, in-service training that is based on legislation and agency policy and procedure. In order for me to be successful in my role, I strive to learn all the time about different cultures, specific individual circumstances and my personal and professional obligation to value diversity.