



Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Purpose

The Sussex Reptile Rescue Centre (SRRC) is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion throughout its activities and to providing an environment in which people are treated fairly, respectfully and with dignity.

We recognise that people from different backgrounds, experiences and circumstances can make valuable contributions to our charity and the communities we serve.

This policy sets out our commitment to preventing unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and creating an inclusive environment for trustees, volunteers, staff, applicants, supporters, visitors, adopters, service users and members of the public.

2. Our Commitment

The Sussex Reptile Rescue Centre is committed to:

- treating people fairly, respectfully and with dignity;
- providing equality of opportunity wherever reasonably possible;
- preventing unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- creating an inclusive and welcoming environment;
- making reasonable adjustments for disabled people where required;
- encouraging participation from people with different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives;
- ensuring recruitment and selection decisions are based on the requirements of the role and the needs of the charity;
- ensuring that decisions concerning access to our services are made fairly, consistently and in accordance with our charitable purposes; and
- taking concerns about discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour seriously.



3. Equality Act 2010

SRRC will comply with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other applicable equality legislation.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

SRRC will not unlawfully discriminate against a person because of a protected characteristic.

4. Scope

This policy applies to everyone involved with or interacting with SRRC, including:

- trustees;
- employees, should the charity employ staff;
- volunteers;
- prospective trustees, employees and volunteers;
- contractors;
- supporters and donors;
- visitors;
- adopters and prospective adopters;
- people surrendering animals to the charity;
- participants in educational or outreach activities; and
- members of the public using or engaging with our services.



5. Recruitment and Volunteering

SRRC aims to provide fair and accessible opportunities to participate in the charity.

Recruitment of trustees, employees and volunteers will be based on relevant skills, experience, suitability and the legitimate requirements of the role.

We will aim to ensure that recruitment processes do not create unnecessary barriers for applicants.

Where appropriate and reasonable, adjustments will be considered to enable disabled applicants, volunteers, trustees and employees to participate fully.

Certain roles may legitimately require particular abilities or experience. For example, animal-care roles may involve physical activities, specialist competence or health and safety requirements. Any such requirements will relate to the genuine needs and risks of the role rather than assumptions about an individual.

6. Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility

SRRC recognises that some people may require reasonable adjustments to access opportunities, services or activities.

Where required by law and reasonably practicable, we will consider adjustments such as:

- adapting how information is communicated;
- providing information electronically or in an accessible format;
- adjusting duties or working arrangements;
- adapting training or induction arrangements;
- considering physical accessibility; and
- providing alternative ways for someone to communicate with the charity.

Requests will be considered individually and sensitively.

7. Animal Welfare and Safety

Equality and inclusion will not compromise animal welfare, safeguarding or legitimate health and safety requirements.

SRRC may restrict access to animals, facilities, equipment or particular activities where this is reasonably necessary for animal welfare, biosecurity, safeguarding, competence, licensing, insurance or health and safety reasons.

Such decisions should be based on an appropriate assessment of the circumstances and should not be based on unlawful discrimination.



8. Adoption and Animal Surrender

Applications to adopt animals will be considered according to relevant animal welfare criteria, including the applicant's ability to provide appropriate accommodation, husbandry, veterinary care and long-term care for the animal.

Decisions should not be based on protected characteristics unless a lawful exception applies.

Similarly, people contacting SRRC about surrendering an animal should be treated fairly and respectfully. Acceptance of an animal will depend upon matters such as available capacity, animal welfare, available facilities, expertise and resources.

9. Education and Community Outreach

SRRC aims to make its educational and community activities welcoming and accessible to a broad range of people.

Where reasonably practicable, we will consider accessibility requirements when planning outreach events, educational activities, visits and other public-facing activities.

Everyone participating in these activities is expected to treat others respectfully.

10. Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation

SRRC does not tolerate unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation.

This includes inappropriate conduct in person and through email, messaging services, social media or other online platforms where the conduct relates to the charity or its activities.

Concerns will be considered fairly and, where appropriate, under the charity's complaints, safeguarding, volunteer or other relevant procedures.

Serious or repeated breaches may result in action including removal from activities, termination of a volunteering arrangement or other appropriate measures.

11. Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that SRRC complies with its legal obligations and that this policy is implemented appropriately.

Trustees should:

- provide leadership on equality, diversity and inclusion;
- ensure significant decisions are made fairly and objectively;
- consider accessibility and inclusion when developing the charity's activities;
- respond appropriately to concerns; and
- periodically review this policy and the charity's practices.



All trustees, employees and volunteers are expected to follow this policy and contribute towards an inclusive and respectful environment.

12. Raising a Concern

Anyone who believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination; harassment, victimisation or another breach of this policy should raise the matter with SRRC.

Concerns may be raised with the Operations Manager or a trustee.

Where a concern relates to the Operations Manager, it should be referred directly to the Board of Trustees.

Complaints will be handled in accordance with the charity's Complaints Policy or other applicable procedure.

Concerns will be handled sensitively and information will only be shared where reasonably necessary to investigate or respond to the matter.

No person should be treated unfairly because they have raised a genuine concern in good faith.

13. Monitoring and Review

The trustees will periodically consider whether SRRC's activities, recruitment practices and services remain fair and accessible.

The charity may consider feedback from volunteers, service users and other stakeholders when reviewing its practices.

This policy will normally be reviewed annually, or sooner where:

- legislation or regulatory guidance changes;
- the charity's activities significantly change;
- a significant equality or discrimination concern arises; or
- the trustees otherwise consider a review necessary.