

Citizens Information Board Public Sector and Human Rights Duty

Assessment and Action Plan 2022 – 2024

All public bodies in Ireland have responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans. This is a legal obligation, called the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, and it originated in Section 42 of [the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014](#).

In particular, Section 42 states:

“42. (1) a public body shall, in the performance of its functions, have regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination,
2. Promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services, and
3. Protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.”

Section 42 of the Act also sets out three core steps to be taken by public bodies. These are:

1. **Assess** – set out in its strategic planning processes, an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions and purposes.
2. **Address** – set out in its strategic planning processes the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to address those issues.
3. **Report** – report on developments and achievements in a manner accessible to the public.

The Citizens Information Board (CIB) is committed to ensuring that there is a culture of respect for human rights and equality among our staff and for the people to whom we provide services. We have conducted an assessment of human rights and equality issues that are relevant to our functions and we are satisfied that we are fulfilling our public sector duty obligation as set out in the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. As a means of further embedding and promoting human rights and equality principles, we have prepared a three-year action plan. This action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and we will report progress on relevant actions in our Annual Report.

A Working Group with cross-service, cross grade representation was established under the steps set out in the Public Sector Duty. The Working Group is actively engaging with ensuring human rights and equality in CIB and identifying values as well as assessing and considering positive action measures in service provision and employment from a rights-based approach. CIB will continue to ensure organisational commitment with the senior management and leadership team continuing to work with staff in implementing the Duty. In supporting this, a member of the Senior Management Team has been appointed to oversee and monitor progress on commitments identified in this Action Plan. The Action Plan will be integrated into our annual Work Plans and progress will be reported in our Annual Reports.

The Citizens Information Board supports the provision of information, advice, money advice and advocacy services to the public. Established under the Comhairle Act 2000, CIB comes within the remit of the Department of Social Protection. CIB's legislative mandate includes ensuring that individuals have access to accurate, comprehensive and clear information relating to social services and providing feedback on social policy. CIB provides a number of services directly to the public, including citizensinformation.ie and mabs.ie. Other services are provided to the public by the companies funded by CIB, known as Service Delivery Companies. CIB funds twenty-two Service Delivery Companies. We are a values driven organisation, as set-out in our [Strategic Plan 2023-2026](#) (pdf).

CIB's values are:

Availability

- We will support service development and delivery so that trusted information, advice and advocacy is available to the public in formats that meet their needs. In doing so, we will be strongly guided by our Public Sector Duty requirements, ensuring that those who need most support are prioritised.
- We will collaborate with the Department of Social Protection, the Service Delivery Companies, users and other organisations to design accessible, seamless services.

Sustainability

- We will consider sustainability in all of our decision making and in our ways of working, ensuring that CIB-funded services are resilient and fit-for-purpose in the long-term. Sustainability will be considered in respect of our workplace, the environment, funding, and, crucially, in how services are delivered to the public.

Accountability

- We will operate strong systems of governance and oversight to drive performance.
- We will use public funds prudently to deliver positive outcomes for the public.

- We will work with the Department of Social Protection, the Service Delivery Companies and other organisations to ensure that trusted information, advice and advocacy is available to the public in a timely and accessible way.

ACTION	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Timeline
CIB will promote an awareness of the organisational policies that relate to equality and human rights of all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure policies are highlighted and accessible to all staff 	Annually
CIB will continue to support staff through the promotion and implementation of flexible working arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote opportunities for flexible working arrangements • Staff will be facilitated with flexible work patterns and blended working opportunities. • An annual audit will monitor the uptake 	Annually
CIB will reflect our commitment to diversity and inclusion in recruitment campaigns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference our commitment to diversity and inclusion in recruitment campaigns and demonstrate during the recruitment process. 	Ongoing
CIB will publish data on the numbers of complaints, including those to the Ombudsman, and internal reviews requested and upheld relating to Equality and/or Human Rights legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data will be published on our corporate website. 	Annually
CIB will carry out awareness raising, training and capacity building of our Public Sector Duty for all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training on human rights and equality to all staff as an organisational objective. • Survey staff to measure awareness of Public Sector Duty and identify the key human rights and equality issues that 	Complete and added to induction process for new staff. Every two years

	<p>need to be addressed or considered by CIB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out in our corporate strategic plan and assessment of the human rights and equality issues (we) believe to be relevant to the functions and purpose of CIB. • Develop a calendar of events celebrating diversity & human rights. 	<p>Complete</p> <p>Annually</p>
<p>CIB will raise awareness and understanding of various forms of disabilities and to create a dialogue regarding meeting the needs of people with disabilities within the workplace.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the role of the Access Officer within CIB. • Develop and promote relevant policies. • Invite guest speakers from relevant organisations or awareness campaigns to run information/learning sessions with staff. 	<p>Annually and include in induction for new staff.</p> <p>Every two years</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>CIB will highlight an awareness of the Public Sector Duty that relate to equality and human rights for members of the public.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a new section on human rights on citizensinformation.ie • Review of inclusive language and accessibility on citizensinformation.ie 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>CIB will prioritise human rights and equality perspectives in social policy/research/data outputs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of, and improvement of data collection under different equality 	<p>Ongoing</p>

	<p>related grounds including gender, disability, ethnicity, country of origin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued focus on equality matters in research and social policy outputs.	Ongoing
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