

Equality Policy



Policy Objectives

1. PickleballEngland is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicants, employees, consultants, Directors, volunteers or participants (referred to in this document as “Stakeholders”) are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (referred to in this document as “Protected Characteristics”).
2. In addition, PickleballEngland recognises that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all Stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds.
3. PickleballEngland will encourage members, partner organisations, suppliers, sponsors and customers, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this Equality Policy.
4. PickleballEngland recognises that, in some cases, to further the principle of equality, an unequal distribution of resources may be required. If appropriate and proportionate, PickleballEngland will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a Protected Characteristic which is currently underrepresented within any group of Stakeholders.

Purpose of the Policy

1. PickleballEngland recognises that individuals (and/or certain groups in our society who share one or more Protected Characteristics) may not have been able to participate equally and fully in sports related activities or the management and organisation of sport.
2. This Policy has been produced to try to prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against Stakeholders that may preclude them from participating fully in sports related activities or the management and organisation of sport.

Legal Requirements

The law requires PickleballEngland not to discriminate against its employees, members and volunteers and it recognises its legal obligations under the following legislation:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, 1986 and 1999
- The Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Children Act 1998
- Disability Rights Commissions Act 1999
- Human Rights Act 2000

- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Equality Act 2010

Pickleball England also recognises that it may have future obligations from later amendments to the above acts/regulations or subsequent equality related legislation.

Commitment to Equality

PickleballEngland will:

- Ensure that equality is included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equality issues into consideration when making decisions.
- Educate and guide its employees, members, clubs, regions and volunteers on the adoption and implementation of this equality policy.
- Monitor, evaluate and review its policy, practices, procedures and operational systems and keep all relevant parties informed.
- Encourage and support the personal development of its employees and to assist their progress within the organisation.
- Support its clubs, members and volunteers in their own development, encouraging them to play an active role in the work of PickleballEngland.
- Take positive action or devise initiatives to target specific sectors of the community that may be underrepresented within its participants, employees, membership, volunteers and Stakeholders in general.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation

PickleballEngland recognises the following as being unacceptable:

1. *Direct Discrimination*: treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a Protected Characteristic.
2. *Indirect Discrimination*: applying a provision, criterion or practice which, on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage individuals with a particular Protected Characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.
3. *Harassment*: engaging in unwanted conduct relating to a relevant Protected Characteristic or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual affected by such conduct. PickleballEngland is committed to ensuring that its Stakeholders are able to conduct their activities free from harassment.
4. *Bullying*: the misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.
5. *Victimisation*: subjecting someone to a detriment because he or she has in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) or doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 (or any equivalent legislation).

PickleballEngland regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures including

disciplinary action may be brought against any Stakeholder who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person.

Reasonable Adjustments

1. When any decision is made about an individual, the only personal characteristics that may be taken into account are those that are consistent with any relevant legislation and are relevant to the substance of the decision being made.
2. PickleballEngland recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons. PickleballEngland will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled Stakeholders to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully in sports related activities or in the management and organisation of sport.

Transgender Athletes

PickleballEngland considers that pickleball is a gender affected sport under the Equality Act 2010. Its policy and rules are in accordance with the policy on transsexual competitors issued by the International Olympic Committee and also conform with the recommendations set out in the UK Sport guidance booklet 'Transsexual People and Sport' published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

Responsibility, implementation and communication

The following responsibilities will apply:

1. The Board of PickleballEngland is responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is adopted, implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.
2. The Chairperson has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy.
3. A member of the Board will be designated as the Equality Officer by the Chairperson and will have the overall day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy and for achieving any equality related actions resulting from it. The Equality Officer's work programme will be amended to reflect this. If required, an internal and/or external equality group will be created to provide additional support.
4. All Stakeholders have the responsibility to respect, follow and promote the spirit and intentions of this Equality Policy. Individual work programmes for PickleballEngland staff will be written to include equality related tasks where appropriate.

The new/amended policy will be implemented immediately following Board agreement and at a corporate level, will result in the following:

- A copy of this document will be available to all staff, members and volunteers of PickleballEngland.
- PickleballEngland will take measures to ensure that its employment practices are non-discriminatory.
- No job applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the role or which constitute unfair discrimination.
- Ensure that consultants, advisers and suppliers used by PickleballEngland can demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality and that they abide by this policy.

The new/revised policy will be communicated in the following ways:

- It will be part of the staff handbook and reference will be made to it in any codes of conduct.
- It will be covered in all staff and volunteer induction training.
- All members will be made aware of the policy's existence when they join and a summary of any revisions will be published on the website.
- At time of review, a mechanism will be put in place to allow all staff, members and volunteers to be part of the process.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This Equality Policy will remain in force until it is amended, replaced, or withdrawn. A review of this Equality Policy will take place as and when required, but not less than once every two years, and adopted by the Board.

PickleballEngland will seek advice each time this Policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

Complaints Procedures

1. To safeguard individual rights under this Equality Policy, any Stakeholder who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this Equality Policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.
2. Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken against any PickleballEngland Stakeholder who violates this Equality Policy under the relevant PickleballEngland disciplinary procedures.
3. An individual raising a grievance or complaint will not be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.
4. As with all grievances, complaints and disciplinary procedures, there will be the right of appeal as set out in the relevant procedure.

Further Information

For any questions or points of clarification on this policy, please contact PickleballEngland's Equality Officer Karen Mitchell.

This updated Equality Policy was adopted by PickleballEngland Board at a meeting on 8th October 2023.