

DISABILITY POLICY AND PROCEDURE			
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For use by:	All employees of Burgess Farms and its subsidiary Companies		
Purpose:	This policy is intended to assist the Company's commitment to put in to practice equal opportunities within the workplace for all employees including those with a disability.		
This document supports: <i>Standards and legislation</i>	Equality Act 2010 Employment Rights Act 1996		
Key related documents:	Grievance and Disputes Policy and Procedure Disciplinary Policy Data Protection Policy Equal Opportunities Policy Dignity at Work Policy Code of Conduct Policy		
Review date:	Changes to legislation		



Contents

Definitions	3
1. Policy statement.....	3
2. Key principles.....	3
3. Scope.....	3
4. Recruitment.....	3
5. Induction	3
6. Training and Career Development.....	3
7. Benefits.....	4
8. Retention.....	4
9. Principles of reasonable adjustment.....	4
10. Removing barriers.....	5
11. Your responsibilities.....	5
12. Grievances.....	5
13. Monitoring and review	5
14. Confidentiality.....	6
15. Breach of policy.....	6
16. Document control	6

Definitions

"Company" means Burgess Farms (Produce World Group)

"Subsidiary Companies" means all Companies owned by Burgess Farms (Produce World Group)

1. Policy statement

The Company is committed to equal opportunities from recruitment and selection, through training, development, appraisal and promotion to retirement for all employees including those with a disability.

2. Key Principles

- The Company will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.
- Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.
- The Company strives to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees employed by Burgess Farms (Produce World Group) and its subsidiary companies. This policy is non-contractual and may be varied or revoked by the Company at any time with or without notice.

4. Recruitment

Employees will be recruited solely on the basis of work criteria and the applicant's abilities and individual merit. A disability will not of itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant.

Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made as required where the Company is made aware of an applicant's disability to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of their disability.

Except for the purpose of making reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process, applicant's will not be required to provide any medical offer until at least a conditional offer of employment has been issued.

Where the Company is aware of an applicant's disability during the recruitment process, before a disabled applicant is judged to have failed to meet the requirements of the job description and person specification, or to be less suitable than other applicants, full consideration will be given to whether any reasonable adjustments would make the applicant the best person for that post.

5. Induction

On starting work the employee's Line Manager, Site HR Representative and Site Health & Safety Representative will be responsible, in consultation with the disabled employee, for ensuring such reasonable adjustments are made as are required to enable the employee to work safely and effectively and to secure equal access to the benefits of employment.

6. Training and Career Development

All employees will have equal access to training and opportunities for promotion and other aspects of career development based solely on their abilities.

Where, during the course of employment, a disabled employee recognises the need for a reasonable adjustment to working arrangements or to a feature of the premises, they should discuss this requirement with their Line Manager, site HR representative and site Health & Safety representative.

7. Benefits

Disabled employees will have equal access to all benefits and facilities of employment and reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary.

8. Retention

It will be the responsibility of the employee's Line Manager and the site HR representative to identify issues of disability and retention about an individual employee, for example where dismissal is being considered on the grounds of sickness or incapacity.

The Company will make such adjustments as are reasonable to enable a disabled employee to carry out their duties. These may include, but are not limited to, provision of specialist equipment and training, job redesign, retraining, flexible hours, remote working and/or redeployment to a suitable alternative vacancy.

If, as a result of a disability, an employee is absent from work for more than 21 consecutive days the Company may request a medical, vocational or functional assessment of the employee. The aims and objectives of this assessment will be agreed by both parties. Following such an assessment the further steps to be taken to facilitate a return to work where possible, including any reasonable adjustments, will be discussed with the employee.

If redeployment is necessary, the disabled employee will be viewed as a priority within the redeployment procedure.

Where the post to which the disabled employee is redeployed is of a lesser grade or salary, the Company may, at its sole discretion, protect the employee's salary at the original salary for a period of up to three months, after which they will be paid the salary for the new post. Where an employee's hours change as part of the implementation of reasonable adjustments or a phased return to work, the employee's pay will be pro-rated.

9. Principles of reasonable adjustment

Where an employee requires or may require an adjustment to the working arrangements or environment, they should bring this to the attention of their Line Manager and site Health & Safety representative. The prime responsibility for arranging reasonable adjustments will lie with the site Health & Safety representative. However, in many cases a team approach will be appropriate, for example when arranging training courses where the responsibility may pass to the training course coordinator.

The person responsible for arranging the adjustment will at all times consult the employee concerned, whose agreement will be sought. The knowledge of the disabled employee concerning their own disability will be recognised, although independent medical advice may also be sought where appropriate. Once an adjustment has been made its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals to assess its continuing effectiveness.

10. Removing barriers

Burgess Farms (Produce World Group) recognises the importance of taking proactive measures to remove barriers from the working environment for disabled people. It is recognised that this will benefit not only disabled employees and prospective employees but also in many cases customers and visitors. It will

An action plan will be drawn up to address physical access to premises; access to benefits of employment; terms and conditions of employment; recruitment; and arrangements for recruitment, performance assessment, promotion and retention.

The plan will consider the incorporation of access improvements into maintenance plans and any refurbishments or building works.

11. Your responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist the Company to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Company for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

12. Grievances

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you may use the Company's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy.

The Company will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is made in bad faith or without a genuine belief in its truth.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored periodically by the Company to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. In particular, the Company will monitor the number of people with disabilities within the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion) and will review its equal opportunities policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, the Company will implement them.

Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

14. Confidentiality

Where any information is given by the employee or about the employee, their right to absolute confidentiality on all personal matters will be guaranteed by all parties.

Access to this information will be restricted to the business where appropriate and used for business statistical purposes unless otherwise required or permitted by law.

15. Breach of policy

Any breach of the Disability Policy, following a full and thorough investigation, may be regarded as misconduct which may lead to disciplinary action.

16. Document control

Version	Revision	Action	Author	Date
001	0.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated logos and branding.	MK	Jan 2020
001	0.1	Logo, formatting, removed gender pronouns	GT	Feb 2026