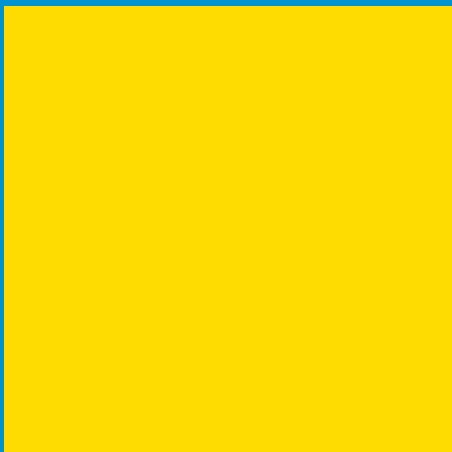


What is the Gender Equality Duty?

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Making a difference for women and men

gender
equality duty



What is the Gender Equality Duty?

The Gender Equality Duty is the biggest change in sex equality legislation for 30 years and is designed to help women, men, girls and boys. When the duty comes into force in April 2007, public authorities will have to take action to eliminate sex discrimination and harassment and to promote equality for women and men.

Instead of depending on individuals making complaints about sex discrimination, the duty gives public authorities legal responsibility for demonstrating that they treat women and men fairly in policy-making, services and employment.

Which public bodies does the duty apply to?

All public authorities and some public service providers from the private and voluntary sectors.



Women. Men. Different. Equal.
Equal Opportunities Commission

How will the Gender Equality Duty make a difference?

It should mean that public policies, services and employment practices meet the different needs of women and men. Taking these differences into account from the start will mean a more targeted and effective use of resources which makes great business sense. It should lead to improved customer satisfaction.

Examples of likely changes are:

- Pushchair space and better night-time safety on public transport.
- Schools encouraging girls and boys into non-traditional careers.
- Primary health services being used as much by men as by women.
- Effective strategies to prevent domestic violence and support survivors.

How will the duty be enforced?

Public authorities must implement the gender duty. The Equal Opportunities Commission and, in future, the Commission for Equality and Human Rights can enforce it in the courts.

6 steps to meet the Gender Equality Duty

Public bodies should:

- 1 Gather information on how their work affects women and men.
- 2 Consult employees, service users, trade unions and other stakeholders.
- 3 Assess the different impact of policies and practices on both sexes.
- 4 Identify priorities and set gender equality objectives.
- 5 Plan and take action to achieve those objectives.
- 6 Publish a gender equality scheme and review progress every three years.

Where can you find help?

www.eoc.org.uk/genderduty
Email: genderduty@eoc.org.uk

Important Dates:

October 2006

Code of Practice on EOC website – this explains how to put the duty into practice.

6 April 2007

Gender duty comes into force.

30 April 2007

Gender equality schemes must be in place.

“The duty gives public authorities legal responsibility for demonstrating that they treat women and men fairly.”