

## **Factsheet B51: Equality Act 2010 and discrimination**

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection for everyone from discrimination, harassment or victimisation and refers particularly to the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

You're protected from discrimination:

- at work
- in education
- as a consumer
- when using public services
- when buying or renting property
- as a member or guest of a private club or association

You're also protected from discrimination if:



- you're associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, for example a family member or friend
- you've complained about discrimination or supported someone else's claim

Under the Act people are not allowed to discriminate, harass or victimise another person because they have any of the protected characteristics.

**Discrimination** is where you are treated worse than someone else, or when people put policies or procedures in place that put you at a disadvantage.

**Harassment** can be when someone violates your dignity or makes you feel degraded or humiliated, or you feel they are being hostile or offensive to you.

**Victimisation** is when you are being treated unfairly because you are taking action under the Equality Act, or supporting someone else to take such action.

### **Advice on Equality/discrimination issues**

You will find useful information at <https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights>. Alternatively, the Government has commissioned a new Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) to replace the Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline. The new service is aimed at individuals who need more expert advice and support on discrimination than advice agencies and other local organisations can provide.

The EASS will give bespoke advice to individuals on discrimination issues, and will explain legal rights and remedies within discrimination legislation. It will also explain options for informal resolution and refer people who cannot or do



not wish to go down this road to conciliation or mediation services. Finally, it will help people who need or want to seek a legal solution by helping to establish eligibility for legal aid and, if they are not eligible, to find an accessible legal service or to prepare and lodge a claim themselves.

The new service will be open 9am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 2pm on Saturdays. The contact number is 0808 800 0082.

This service can give you advice about the Equality Act and what your options might be, particularly with regard to what support might be available to help you. They will not provide you with legal advice, or tell you if you have a strong case. They also will not deal with complaints from disabled air passengers (you will need to contact the Civil Aviation Authority).

On their website they have guides to your rights with an 'Equality Act Starter Kit', Codes of Practice for Employers, Workers, Service Providers and Education Providers, and template letters (for example, to your employer making a formal request for reasonable adjustments at work) For more information go to: <http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/>

If you require further information or would like this Factsheet in an alternative format you can contact us by calling: 01508 491210, by emailing: [info@equallives.org.uk](mailto:info@equallives.org.uk), or by writing to: Equal Lives, 15 Manor Farm Barns, Fox Road, Framingham Pigot, Norfolk, NR14 7PZ.

