

THE CITY OF VANTAA AS EQUAL AND NON-DISCRIMINATORY WORKPLACE – PERSONNEL POLICY EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION PLANNING AT THE CITY OF VANTAA

BACKGROUND

ACT ON EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN

The amended Act on Equality between Women and Men entered into force on January 1, 2015. The purpose of the law is to prevent gender-based discrimination and to promote equality between women and men, and consequently, improve women's status especially in the labor market. The law also aims to prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression. Promoting equality is directly linked to well-being at work and work profitability. An equal, open, encouraging, and fair work community benefits both the employer and the entire personnel.

An employer that employs at least 30 persons is obliged to compile an equality plan—consistent with the Act on Equality Between Women and Men, with special focus on wage and other employment terms—which is the basis for implementing measures promoting equality. According to the amended Act on Equality Between Women and Men, the plan shall also prevent discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression. The plan can be included in the HR and training plan or in the occupational safety and health action program.

According to the Act on Equality Between Women and Men, the equality plan shall include:

- 1) an account of the state of equality at the workplace, and as a part of it, a specification of placement of women and men in different tasks, as well as a wage chart of classification of women's and men's tasks, wages and wage differences, as applied to the entire personnel;
- 2) planned measures to be started or implemented to promote equality and wage equality;
- 3) an assessment of implementation and results of measures included in the previous equality plan.

The wage chart—mentioned above in paragraph 1)—helps to ensure that there are no unjustified wage differences between women and men doing the same and similar work. If the analysis of the wage chart's requirement- or tasks-specific or other group-based analysis shows that there are clear differences between the wages of women and men, the employer must analyze the reasons and grounds for the wage differences. If the workplace applies a wage system where wages consist of partial wages, the differences found shall be analyzed on the basis of the essential partial wages.

The equality plan shall be compiled together with representatives of the employees, and the representatives shall have sufficient possibilities of participating in and influencing the compilation of the plan. The employees shall be notified of the equality plan and its updating.

NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

The new Non-Discrimination Act entered into force at the beginning of 2015. The aim of the law is to promote non-discrimination, prevent discrimination, and bolster the due process of persons subjected to discrimination. The grounds of discrimination specified in the Non-Discrimination Act are age, origin, nationality, language, religion and conviction, opinion, political action, labor-union action, family relationships, state of health, disability, sexual orientation, and another reason related to the person. From the perspective of human resource management (HR), it is essential that the city, as an employer, actively strives to identify any kind of discrimination, to address it, as well as to prevent it. The personnel and management shall be developed to better accept and account for differences. The aim is to increase versatility as well as to utilize it as a resource.

An employer that employs at least 30 persons is obliged to compile a non-discrimination plan. The aim of the plan is to promote non-discrimination by defining and describing the frames, means and methods with which the employer promotes non-discrimination in its operations on a systematic and long-term basis. The non-discrimination plan shall include measures required for promoting non-discrimination. The measures and their effectiveness shall be handled with the employees or their representatives. A non-discrimination plan consistent with the amended Non-Discrimination Act shall be completed by January 1, 2017.

The Non-Discrimination Act does not stipulate the form and contents of the non-discrimination plan. It can be either a separate plan or part of another plan, for instance, the equality plan, HR and training plan, or occupational safety and health action program.

PERSONNEL POLICY EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION PLANNING AT THE CITY OF VANTAA

The application of the Act on Equality between Women and Men and the Non-Discrimination Act cover the entire employment relationship, ranging from recruitment to termination of employment. As an employer, the city shall actively and determinedly prevent discrimination as specified in the Act on Equality between Women and Men and the Non-Discrimination Act, as well as to boost such operating procedure that is consistent with equality and non-discrimination. In Vantaa, personnel policy equality and non-discrimination planning is based on the Työkirja tasa-arvosta ja yhdenvertaisuudesta worksheet and on the personnel policy principles and practices related to equality and non-discrimination planning specified in this appendix. The worksheet is a tool for supervisors and work communities to establish and strengthen an equal and non-discriminatory operating procedure as part of everyday management.

Vantaa compiles an annual city-level personnel policy equality and non-discrimination plan. This annual planning is part of Vantaa's HR and training plan and the HR report. In Vantaa, the representatives of the employer and of the employees have locally agreed that the city-level wage chart, part of the equality plan, will be conducted at three-year intervals, and for the other parts, the equality and non-discrimination plan will be made on an annual basis.

The equality and non-discrimination plan, as well as the wage chart related to it, are prepared in regular meetings where the city's chief shop stewards represent the employees. The annual preparation takes place as follows: in the spring, the representatives of the employees and the employer chart the city's equality situation based on the statistics and realizations published at the beginning of the year. They discuss what other data could be required to support the equality and non-discrimination planning process. In the fall, they plan and choose the measures required for promoting equality and non-discrimination. The chief shop stewards' meetings in Vantaa constitute part of representative joint operation organization, compliant with the legislation on joint operation between the employer and employees in municipalities. The city-level HR and training plan, which includes the equality and non-discrimination plan, is annually handled and approved at the city's joint operation team where the City of Vantaa chief shop stewards and occupational safety delegates represent the employees.

The state of equality and non-discrimination is monitored in connection with annual HR reporting. The indicators in the city-level HR report consist of, among others:

- number and sex ratio of employees
- sex ratio in temporary employment relationships
- sex ratio in the biggest occupational groups
- age structure per sex ratio

- number and sex ratio of supervisors (management, higher middle management, middle management, supervisors)
- employees' average wage per sex ratio
- recipients of personal bonus per sex ratio
- percentage of foreign-language speakers (of the official number of employees).

The city's joint operation team handles the HR report on an annual basis. The state of the city's equality and non-discrimination is regularly monitored also with the help of the Kunta 10 employee survey, conducted at 2-year intervals, which includes indicators related to, for instance, fairness, fairness of decision-making, and experiences of discrimination.

All the employees can view the HR report and the HR and training plan that includes the equality and non-discrimination plan on the city's intranet. In addition, completion of the HR and training plan will be separately informed according to internal communication practices valid at any time.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION WORK IN THE CITY'S DEPARTMENTS, RESULT DIVISIONS AND WORK UNITS

The city-level equality and non-discrimination plan and planning will not dictate or restrict the contents or scope of the departments', result divisions' or work communities' potential own personnel policy equality and non-discrimination plans. All result divisions annually compile an HR or HR costs plan that describes the result division's current personnel and any changes in it from the perspective of realization of equality and non-discrimination. When they so wish, the result divisions can also make a more extensive initial assessment and evaluation of the state of equality and non-discrimination in their own organizational units. Furthermore, the result divisions are encouraged to introduce result-division-specific goals or development focuses promoting equality and non-discrimination into the result division's annual HR and HR costs plan.

In addition to data from personnel data systems and the Kunta 10 survey, information on the state of equality and non-discrimination in departments and work communities is also gained in connection with work-community development projects. Individual-level information is gained in connection with result and development discussions. When required, departments and work units can carry out a survey of the state of equality and non-discrimination in their work communities. For this purpose, there is a free-of-charge equality-survey tool, tailored for the public sector, on the website of the Ombudsman for Equality's website (www.tasa-arvokysely.fi).

The foundation for Vantaa's equality and non-discrimination planning is created in value discussions and strategy work conducted in the profit centers and work communities. Vantaa's vision is to be the best-managed city in Finland for its employees. Achieving this goal and

maintaining it will not be possible without establishing an equal and non-discriminatory operating method as part of all management. Equality and non-discrimination can also be promoted through strategy work, so that goals promoting and supporting the employees' diversity and accounting for the characteristics of operations are added in the goals of the balanced scorecards.

Below are some examples of what personnel-policy goals can be on result-division- and work-community-level:

- Creating ground rules for a culture of speaking that respects the individual, for handling conflicts, and ensuring that the entire work community knows where to find help and support in case of suspected discrimination in the work community
- Ensuring that the recruitment process is non-obstructive and accounting for the needs of different kinds of employees in the workplace induction program. This can refer to, for example, plain-language induction material.
- Facilitating reconciliation between working life and private life by accounting for the work community's work arrangements. Individual solutions, such as arranging specific shifts for single parents, or other work-time arrangements.
- Accounting for the number and needs of multicultural customers in the employees' language requirements.
- Planning the physical work environment in such a way that the needs of different sexes, sexual minorities, ethnic groups and aging employees are accounted for. This may refer to, for instance, accessibility of premises and charting the accessibility, the restroom and shower facilities that a person planning on sex change will use.
- Striving at personnel diversity based on sex, ethnic background, etc., in relation to the diversity of the customer base. For instance, a home for the aged with a predominantly male customer base can try to increase the percentage of men in the nursing staff, or an educational institution focusing on training ethnic groups may strive to increase the number of teachers with ethnic backgrounds.

It is to be noted that the employer may not neglect the obligation to promote equality between the sexes and non-discrimination by appealing to negative attitudes. For instance, customers' expectations or employees' objection may not prevent equal and non-discriminatory treatment.

CITY-LEVEL PERSONNEL POLICY EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION PLAN IN VANTAA IN A NUTSHELL:



Further information:

- <http://www.finlex.fi> (public and free-of-charge online service, owned by the Ministry of Justice, that includes, among other things, valid legislation).
- <http://www.tasa-arvo.fi> (the website of the Ombudsman for Equality's office)
- <http://www.yhdenvertaisuus.fi> (website on non-discrimination maintained by the Ministry of Justice)
- <http://www.kuntatyonantajat.fi> (KT Kuntatyönantajat's website that contains a lot of up-to-date information on employers' obligations of equality between the sexes and non-discrimination, as well as on realizing these obligations in the municipal sector).



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