



Association of Breastfeeding Mothers

## Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Discrimination Policy

October 2024

**Date last reviewed:** 1/11/24

**Next review due before:** 31/3/25

**Person responsible:** Caroline Bolton/Board of Trustees

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## Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Discrimination Policy

The Association of Breastfeeding Mothers (ABM) is committed to its aims which are laid down in the Constitution, namely 'to promote the physical and psychological health of mothers/parents and children through education in the techniques of breastfeeding, irrespective of whether they are members of the ABM or not, and to advance the education of the public, especially those persons concerned with the care of children, on the health benefits, both immediate and long-term of breastfeeding'.

We aim to achieve this, with due respect to all social groups and the following characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Reasonable adjustments will be made in terms of disclosed disability. We will not discriminate against individuals on the grounds of protected characteristics or social groups.

Membership to the ABM is open to all individuals regardless of their protected characteristics. As an organisation that is responsible to its trustees and with respect to its charitable status, the ABM will act within the constitution of the organisation and may disallow membership to an individual or take other disciplinary action against someone who cannot follow its aims, should the Board of Trustees decide that this is the appropriate action.

We are a UK Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), and our insurance and governance will affect the geographical scope of our work.

Applying for training as a Peer Supporter or Breastfeeding Counsellor is open to those who have breastfed for at least six months because we are a peer support charity. However, we have alternative training available to those who are not mothers/parents and/or who have not breastfed.

Our Training and Development fund also offers opportunities for ABM volunteers to further their training when they may have financial barriers for doing so.

The ABM has a complaints procedure. Should any discriminatory practices arise within the ABM and be brought to our attention, it will be the subject of our complaints procedure.

As an organisation, we are mindful of the fact that discrimination can be unconscious as well as present obviously and consciously. We encourage our volunteers and members to reflect on their own implicit bias and acknowledge that we all have a personal responsibility to further our own learning and development. This is reflected in our training programmes. We ask our volunteers to be sensitive when supporting families who may not have had the same cultural background or life experiences as their own.

The ABM expects our volunteers to be inclusive of all families and to support with kindness. We believe that equality for all parents doesn't mean less for some. We understand not all families use the terms 'breastfeeding' and 'mother' and as they are in our name, we are aware we need to work harder to ensure everyone knows they are included. The ABM uses inclusive language, to make sure all groups are represented. Our Board of Trustees collects demographic data around our members and volunteers to understand the groups we represent – something that can be hidden because of the nature of our training and support. This helps to influence our future practice in this area.

It is also appropriate that we reflect on our publications, social media activity and wider messages to encourage a diverse membership wherever possible.

All trustees, post-holders and members have a responsibility to ensure the ABM fulfils this policy.

## Contacting Us

If you have any questions about this policy, you can contact the Administration office by the following means:

By telephone: 0844 412 2948

By post: PO Box 1629, Bedford, MK42 5EF

By email: [admin@abm.me.uk](mailto:admin@abm.me.uk)

## Alternative Formats

If you require a copy of this policy in an alternative format, please contact [admin@abm.me.uk](mailto:admin@abm.me.uk) and we will do our best to meet your needs.

## Supporting Documents

1. Complaints Policy

## Review History

- Revised February 2017 – EP & LM
- Revised January 2021 – EP & LM
- Revised May 2021 – EP & CC