**Equality Screening Form**

**INTRODUCTION**

The information contained in this Equality Screening Form has been extracted from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland’s Guide for Public Authorities (2010). Additional information about the 5 parts of the form and a flowchart to demonstrate the process of completion is detailed in [**Appendix 1**](#Appendix1) of the form.

This template document and further guidance can be found by clicking the following link - [www.equalityni.org/S75duties](https://www.equalityni.org/S75duties)

**PART 1- POLICY SCOPING**

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

**Information about the policy**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of Policy** | Face Covering Guidance | | | | | |
| **Is it existing, revised or a new policy?** | Existing |  | New |  | Revised |  |
| **If revised, please outline main updates:** |  | | | | | |
| **What is it trying to achieve?**  **(Intended aims/outcomes)** | To encourage the safe use of face coverings in Translink premises and on services during the Covid-19 pandemic. | | | | | |
| **Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.** | n/a, the policy is in the interest of public health during the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. | | | | | |
| **Who initiated or wrote the policy?** | Translink Corporate SHE department | | | | | |
| **Who owns and who implements the policy?** | Translink Corporate SHE department | | | | | |

**Implementation Factors**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  | No |  |

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they: (Select all applicable)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Financial |
|  | Legislative |
|  | Other – please specify: | Legislation exists to support the wearing of face coverings. |

**Main stakeholders affected**

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Staff |
|  | Service Users |
|  | Other Public Sector Organisations |
|  | Voluntary/ Community/ Trade Unions |
|  | Other – please specify: | Visitors to Translink premises, contractors |

##### [Other policies with a bearing on this policy](#Onefour) (please list):

|  |
| --- |
| * n/a |

**Available Evidence**

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 75 category** | **Details of evidence/information** |
| Religious belief | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Political opinion | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Racial group | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Age | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Marital status | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Sexual orientation | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Men and women generally | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Disability | The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1977 and supporting regulations require risk assessments to be carried out for workplace activities. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the minimum we must do is identify what could cause injury or illness (hazards), decide how likely it is that someone could be harmed and how seriously (the risk), and take action to eliminate the hazard, or if this isn’t possible, control the risk.  Risk Assessments for Translink workplaces support the wearing of face coverings as a mitigation measure in the control of the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) and the guidance has been written based on that identified need.  In Northern Ireland on 10th August 2020, it became mandatory to wear a face covering in a relevant place (generally meaning a shop or shopping centre). Since 14th October 2020, banks and other similar businesses, restaurants, cafes and pubs, and offices that deliver Government services, also became relevant places.  The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 legally protects those with a disability from discrimination, Translink is also aware of their duty to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.  Translink data shows that currently 1.5% of total employee workforce have a declared a disability. However, this data is collected at one time point and is therefore not believed to be wholly representative of the true demographic breakdown.  According to NISRA, data on the percentage reporting a disability is sourced from the Labour Force Survey and uses the Government Statistical Service harmonised definition of disability. The definition covers people who report a physical or mental health condition or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more where this reduces their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.  Overall, 21.7% of respondents aged 16-64 in Northern Ireland (Apr-Jun 2017) reported a long-term illness and a disability.  In addition, Translink reviewed the relevant advice notes produced by the ECNI (<https://www.equalityni.org/Covid19>) indicating the impact of face coverings on those with a disability. |
| Dependants | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to wear a face covering. |

**Needs, Experiences and Priorities**

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 75 category** | **Details of needs/experiences/priorities** |
| Religious belief | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Political opinion | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Racial group | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Age | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Marital status | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Sexual orientation | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Men and women generally | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the requirement to wear a face covering. |
| Disability | It is important that allowances are made for those who cannot wear a face covering due to having a disability, whether hidden or not, and whether it is physical and/or mental. Government guidance states that if someone has a condition (e.g. [asthma](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/conditions/asthma), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/conditions/chronic-obstructive-pulmonary-disease-copd), emphysema or [bronchitis](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/conditions/bronchitis-acute)) which means they cannot wear a face covering they only need to say, if asked, that they cannot wear a face covering because they are exempt. Some of the people who cannot wear a mask will find it very difficult to explain their eligibility under the exemptions, because of their disability.  Adjustments in the workplace may be required where staff find it difficult to understand others because they are wearing a face covering and this is to be discussed with staff and managed through a risk assessment if necessary. |
| Dependants | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the requirement to wear a face covering. |

**PART 2 - SCREENING QUESTIONS**

**Introduction**

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of the Guide: [Guide for Public Authorities April 2010](https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf)

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

**Impact: Major / Minor / None**

If the public authority’s conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

**In favour of ‘MAJOR’ impact**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance; |
| **B** | Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them; |
| **C** | Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged; |
| **D** | Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities; |
| **E** | The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review; |
| **F** | The policy is significant in terms of expenditure. |

If the public authority’s conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

* Measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
* The introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**In favour of ‘MINOR’ impact**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible; |
| **B** | The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures; |
| **C** | Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people; |
| **D** | By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations. |

If the public authority’s conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is ‘screened out’ as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

**In favour of ‘NONE’**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. |
| **B** | The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories. |

**Screening Questions 1 - 4**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Screening Question 1** | | |
| What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? Minor/ Major/ None | | |
| Section 75 category | Details of policy impact | Level of impact? Minor/Major/None |
| Religious belief | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s religious belief in order to adhere to the requirement to wear a face covering. | None |
| Political opinion | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s political opinion in order to adhere to the requirement to wear a face covering. | None |
| Racial group | There is no identified content regarding a person’s racial group and adhering to the requirement to wear a face covering. | None |
| Age | There is no identified content regarding any particular age group and the requirement to wear a face covering. | None |
| Marital status | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s marital status in adhering to the requirement to wear a face covering. | None |
| Sexual orientation | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s sexual orientation in adhering to the requirement to wear a face covering. | None |
| Men and women generally | There is no identified content regarding any particular gender group and the requirement to wear a face covering. | None |
| Disability | The face covering guidance does not apply to staff who cannot wear face coverings because they have a disability, or because they would otherwise suffer severe distress. These people are deemed to have a reasonable excuse*,* and thus a legal defence, if they do not wear face coverings. Staff are to discuss any issues with their manager in the first instance, and managers and staff alike have been made aware that an excluded person does not need to provide evidence to support the exclusion. There are currently no recognised alternatives to wearing a face covering, e.g. an exemption badge or card. However, the policy encourages the Line Manager to discuss employees’ needs in the workplace. | None |
| Dependants | There is no identified content that would affect people with or without dependants in adhering to the requirement to wear a face covering. | None |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Screening Question** **2** | | |
| Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? | | |
| Section 75 category | If **Yes**, provide details | If **No**, provide reasons |
| Religious belief |  | No, there is no impact on this category |
| Political opinion |  | No, there is no impact on this category |
| Racial group |  | No, there is no impact on this category |
| Age |  | No, there is no impact on this category |
| Marital status |  | No, there is no impact on this category |
| Sexual orientation |  | No, there is no impact on this category |
| Men and women generally |  | No, there is no impact on this category |
| Disability |  | No, the Government exemptions and subsequent exemptions allowed through this guidance allow for equal opportunities of staff. Line Managers are encouraged through the policy to discuss employees’ needs to promote equality of opportunity. |
| Dependants |  | No, there is no impact on this category |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Screening Question** **3** | | |
| To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? Minor/ Major/ None | | |
| Good relations category | Details of policy impact | Level of impact Minor/Major/None |
| Religious belief | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s religious belief therefore no impact on good relations between those of different religious belief. | None |
| Political opinion | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s political opinion therefore no impact on good relations between those of different political opinion. | None |
| Racial group | There is no impact identified relating to racial group or good relations between different races. | None |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Screening Question 4** | | |
| Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? | | |
| Good relations category | If **Yes**, provide details | If **No**, provide reasons |
| Religious belief |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Political opinion |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Racial group |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |

**Additional Considerations**

**Multiple Identity**

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?  (For example: disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

|  |
| --- |
| No multiple identity categories identified. |

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

|  |
| --- |
| n/a |

**PART 3 - SCREENING DECISION**

If the decision is **not** to conduct an **equality impact assessment**, please provide details of the reasons.

|  |
| --- |
| There is no negative impact identified for any for the S75 groups. |

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be **mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced**.

|  |
| --- |
| Mitigations are in place in the form of exemption allowances. The guidance could go further by actively encouraging managers to look for opportunities to make the workplace better for people with disabilities, e.g. encourage Teams meetings instead of in-person meetings where attendees may be wearing face coverings (this may be a better alternative for people with a hearing impairment). |

If the decision **is to** subject the policy to an **equality impact assessment**, please provide details of the reasons.

|  |
| --- |
| n/a |

All public authorities’ equality schemes must state the authority’s arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

**Mitigation**

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

|  |
| --- |
| n/a |

**Timetabling and Prioritising**

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been **‘screened in’** for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Priority Criterion** | **Rating (1-3)** |
| Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations | Choose an item. |
| Social need | Choose an item. |
| Effect on people’s daily lives | Choose an item. |
| Relevance to a public authority’s functions | Choose an item. |

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**PART 4 - MONITORING**

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission’s Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

|  |
| --- |
| Where there are significant changes to this policy, the SHE team will review the equality impacts and present the revised equality screening document to the Equality Working Group.  Impacts will be monitored and feedback at regular intervals. |

**PART 5 - APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Policy Title:** | **Face Covering Guidance** | **Version No:** | **1** |
| **Print Name** | **Signature** | **Position/Job Title** | **Date** |
| **Screened By:** | | | |
| Elaine Osborne | Elaine Osborne | SHE Advisor | 13-11-2020 |
| **Approved by:** | | | |
| John Thompson |  | CR and Safety Manager |  |

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority’s website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

**APPENDIX 1**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | **Part Title** | **Description** |
| **1** | [**Policy Scoping**](#Part1) | Asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations |
| **2** | [**Screening Questions**](#Part2) | Asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues. |
| **3** | [**Screening Decision**](#Part3) | Guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or tointroducemeasures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations. |
| **4** | [**Monitoring**](#Part4) | Provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring. |
| **5** | [**Approval and Authorisation**](#Part5) | Verifies the public authority’s approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy. |

Policy Scoping

* + Policy
  + Available data

Screening Questions

* Apply screening questions
* Consider multiple identities

Screening Decision None/Minor/Major

Mitigate

Publish Template

Re-consider screening

Publish Template for information

Publish Template

EQIA

Monitor

**‘None’**

Screened out

**‘Major’**

Screened in for EQIA

**‘Minor’**

Screened out with mitigation

Concerns raised with evidence

Concerns raised with evidence re: screening decision