

 <b>ORDER OF MALTA IRELAND</b>	<b>Order of Malta Ireland</b>	<b>Policy no:</b>	TRA-POL-006
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## 1. Introduction

The Order of Malta Ambulance Corps (“the Corps”) is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and equitable environment for all. This policy outlines the Corps’ principles and procedures relating to **access, equality, diversity and inclusion** across all activities, including membership, training, volunteering, and employment.

The Corps will treat all individuals with equal respect, irrespective of **gender, civil or family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, membership of the Traveller community, or nationality**, in line with the **Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015** and the **Equal Status Acts 2000–2018**.

Equality and compassion are rooted in the ethos of the Order of Malta and in the four cardinal virtues symbolised by the Maltese Cross — **Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Fortitude**.

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## 2. Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no person engaging with the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps — as a student, member, staff member, or volunteer — receives less favourable treatment, is harassed, or is disadvantaged, on any of the protected grounds under Irish equality legislation.

This policy seeks to:

- Promote equality of opportunity in all areas of activity;
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- Provide reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities;
- Promote positive action to enhance participation of underrepresented groups.
- Support a culture of inclusion, dignity, and respect.

## 3. Mission Statement

We, the volunteers and staff of the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps, strive to make a difference in society by providing community care, first aid and nursing services, youth and personal development in a **Christian, caring and non-discriminatory environment**.

We recognise that diversity enriches our organisation and strengthens our mission to serve all people with compassion and integrity.

## 4. Legislative and Policy Framework

This policy is guided by the following legislation and frameworks:

- Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015
- Equal Status Acts 2000–2018
- Disability Act 2005
- Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (Section 42, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014)
- EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (Articles 20–26)
- Relevant PHECC and safeguarding standards

## 5. Access and Participation

### 5.1 General Principles

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Membership and participation in training are open to people from all sectors of society. Admission and selection procedures must be transparent, equitable, and consistent. The Corps will take reasonable steps to accommodate individual needs and ensure that equality of opportunity is upheld in all decisions.

All members and students will be supported to achieve their full potential in an inclusive and respectful learning environment.

### **5.2 Access for Members and Students with Disabilities**

The Corps is committed to ensuring equitable access for people with disabilities. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to facilitate participation in training, volunteering, and operational activities, in accordance with the **Disability Act 2005** and **Section 42 of the IHREC Act 2014**.

Training materials, facilities, and communications should be made accessible where practicable. Members and students with disabilities will be encouraged and supported to acquire the skills necessary for advancement and leadership within the Corps.

### **5.3 Safety, Health and Evacuation Procedures**

The Corps recognises that members with disabilities may require specific support in the event of an emergency. Local units must identify individual needs and implement appropriate evacuation and alarm arrangements to ensure everyone's safety. All safety and evacuation procedures must explicitly reference support for members and students with disabilities.

## **6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commitments**

The Corps will:

- Promote a culture of dignity, respect, and inclusion.
- Take proactive measures to prevent discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
- Ensure recruitment, selection, and promotion are based on merit and fairness.
- Provide equal access to training, development, and progression opportunities.
- Encourage the participation of underrepresented groups, including women, young people, and persons with disabilities.
- Provide ongoing training on equality, diversity, and inclusion to all officers, staff, and volunteers.

## **7. The Volunteer Charter**

The Volunteer Charter defines the mutual rights and responsibilities of the Corps and its volunteers. It affirms the Corps' commitment to providing a rewarding, respectful, and non-discriminatory volunteering experience for all.

See **Appendix 1** for the full Volunteer Charter.

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## 8. Career Path and Training Access

Members of the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps may pursue one or more training or leadership pathways. Eligibility criteria for courses are defined and transparent, ensuring fair access and opportunity.

All criteria for course entry and progression (e.g., age, prior qualifications, membership duration) must be applied consistently and reviewed periodically to ensure fairness and accessibility.

## 9. Data Protection and Confidentiality

All personal information gathered for the purposes of membership, training, or reasonable accommodation will be handled in accordance with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **GDPR**. Information will be used solely for legitimate organisational purposes and will remain confidential.

## 10. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Responsibility for implementing this policy lies with the **National Director** and **Unit Officers-in-Charge**, supported by the **National Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead**.

The Corps will:

- Monitor equality performance indicators and training participation data.
- Respond promptly to any complaints of discrimination or harassment.
- Conduct an annual review of equality and access measures.
- Review this policy every three years or sooner if required by legislative or organisational change.

## 11. Summary

The Order of Malta Ambulance Corps is committed to ensuring full and equitable access to all aspects of the organisation. Equality, dignity, and respect are central to its ethos and operations. Continuous vigilance will be maintained to identify and remove barriers to participation, learning, and advancement.

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## 12. Revision History

<b>Version</b>	<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Revised By</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
1.0	June 2015	National Team	Development of policy
2.0	July 2025	HQ	Policy reformatted
3.0	October 2025	Asst Director For Learning and Development	Substantive policy update and legislative alignment

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### 13. Appendix 1 – Volunteer Charter

*(To remain as per current approved version or updated under separate review.)*

The **Order of Malta Ambulance Corps** is defined by time and effort given freely by its members, as **volunteers** in this charitable organisation. The organisation greatly appreciates the level of commitment shown by all **volunteers** and acknowledges that each person's level of commitment is determined by their own personal circumstances, which change over time. With this in mind we gladly accept your offer to **volunteer** in the **Order of Malta Ambulance Corps**.

To help make your experience both rewarding and enjoyable we have developed a “**Volunteer Charter**” which may help you to understand the relationship, rights and responsibilities, which exist between our **volunteers** and the Organisation (Order of Malta Ambulance Corps).

#### Volunteers' Rights

- ✘ To be given meaningful work to do
- ✘ To be entitled to wear uniform when appropriate
- ✘ To know what is expected from them
- ✘ To be offered appropriate training
- ✘ To be thanked and have their voluntary contribution recognised
- ✘ To receive supervision and support
- ✘ To get personal satisfaction from their work
- ✘ To know where to go if there is a problem
- ✘ To be reimbursed for agreed out of pocket expenses incurred when volunteering
- ✘ To make mistakes and learn from them
- ✘ To be made aware of any disciplinary and grievance procedures
- ✘ To be treated fairly and not to experience discrimination
- ✘ To have safe working conditions, including insurance cover
- ✘ To be informed about and given the opportunity to play an active part in the organisation as a whole.
- ✘ To be able to leave without feeling guilty.

#### Volunteers' Responsibilities

- ✘ To respect the values and aims of the organisation
- ✘ To demonstrate an agreed level of committed
- ✘ To be reliable
- ✘ To be punctual

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- ✘ To attend training, Unit meeting and undertake duties
- ✘ To undertake the work to a high standard
- ✘ To be genuine if there are difficulties and help solve them
- ✘ To respect confidentiality
- ✘ To leave when asked if your actions are considered to hinder the organisation achieving its goals
- ✘ To abide by the members code of conduct
- ✘ To abide by the regulations & policies
- ✘ To be aware of and abide by Regulatory Compliance requirements



### Organisation's Responsibilities

- ✘ To ensure the overall volunteering experience is a rewarding one
- ✘ To ensure equal access and not to discriminate
- ✘ To define clear meaningful roles for volunteers
- ✘ To have policies and procedures for volunteers
- ✘ To be available for volunteers
- ✘ To provide training as necessary
- ✘ To thank and value all volunteers
- ✘ To provide insurance cover
- ✘ To inform volunteers of any legal liabilities
- ✘ To supervise and to provide support
- ✘ To reimburse agreed out of pocket expenses
- ✘ To provide a safe working environment
- ✘ To take cognisance of the safety, health and welfare of members
- ✘ To be genuine if there are difficulties and help resolve them
- ✘ To respect the integrity of all volunteers
- ✘ To respect the confidentiality of the individual

### Organisation's Rights

- ✘ To look for certain qualities and skills in volunteers
- ✘ To select volunteers who are suitable for the work
- ✘ To make rules and regulations
- ✘ To expect volunteers to follow approved protocols
- ✘ To ask for a satisfactory level of commitment
- ✘ To ask for reliability
- ✘ To ask for punctuality
- ✘ To manage disciplinary, grievance and other matters effecting the organisation
- ✘ To ask volunteers to leave if their involvement hinders the organisation achieving its goals
- ✘ To require volunteers to wear the uniform correctly

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-  To expect volunteers to abide by the regulations
-  To expect volunteers to respect the mission and core values of the organisation

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