



# Gender and Equality Policy

Policy No: BLT – GRP - 0016

Approval			
Designation	Name	Signature	Date
Chief Executive Officer	Mark Levy		
Group Executive: Human Capital	Antoinette Roberts		
Board of Directors	Larry Nestadt		

*These signatures represent that this policy has been accepted, approved and adopted by the Blue Label Telecoms Executive Committee and Risk Committee and is in effect from date of signature.*

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## **Purpose**

Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture but our reputation and organisational achievements as well.

The Board of Directors ("Board") of Blue Label Telecoms Limited ("Blue Label") has resolved to document a policy framework which shall govern the manner in which Blue Label and its subsidiaries ("Group") shall be required to promote the diversity attributes of gender, race, culture, age, field of knowledge, skills and experience, qualifications and the like, so as to enhance the diversity of views expressed and oversight of the Group at the Blue Label board.

## **Scope**

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, colour, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

## **Policy Detail**

### **1. Application**

The policy applies to all employees of the Group. We also appeal to our customers, business partners, suppliers, and other stakeholders to uphold the guidelines outlined in this document, thereby assisting us to live our values and principles. We aim to abide by and promote equality legislation by following both the letter and the spirit of it in this area. We try to avoid unjustified discrimination which we recognise is a barrier to equality, diversity, inclusion, and human rights.

### **2. Implementation**

- 2.1. The executive of the Group shall be required to consider inequality on each occasion a member is appointed to a board, on each occasion a staff member is employed and on each occasion an opportunity is afforded a person or entity and on each occasion resources are allocated to persons or entities. The provisions of this policy document shall then be applied.
- 2.2. On an on-going basis the Board shall consider its gender, race, culture, age, field of knowledge, skills and experience, qualifications and the like, as well as size composition and the relationship between executive and non-executive directors, with a view to making sustainable progress towards ensuring that the Board is sufficiently diverse and inclusive and has the necessary skills to competently discharge its duties having regard to the strategic direction of the Group.
- 2.3. The Board shall further consider broader diversity at board level, specifically focusing on the promotion of the diversity attributes of gender, race, culture, age, field of knowledge, skills and experience, qualifications and the like, so as to enhance the diversity of views expressed and oversight at board level, something that becomes critical when a company has dominant and charismatic directors.

### **3. Objectives**

The objective of this policy is to communicate the requirements and guidelines for:

- 3.1. Creating a positive and inclusive working environment for all employees and stakeholders.
- 3.2. Protecting all employees from being discriminated against because of one or more of the characteristics that apply to them.
- 3.3. Providing equal opportunity for all employees, no matter their background or characteristics.
- 3.4. Ensuring and promoting diversity and inclusion within the Blue Label Group.

#### 4. **Principles driving Gender Equality**

- 4.1. It is a fundamental tenet of the Bill of Rights of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) that all persons, irrespective of race or gender, are entitled to equal and inalienable rights. A progressive Constitution which, together with the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998, sets out to promote women's participation in the private and public sectors.
- 4.2. As at the date upon which this policy is adopted statistical data provides evidence that women account for a minority of members of parliament, a minority of political decision makers, a minority of managers in the work environment and the minority own the country's private wealth.
- 4.3. In South Africa inequality has been systemic and is entrenched in the structures, norms, values and perspectives of the state and civil society insofar as gender, race, culture, age, field of knowledge, skills and experience, qualifications and the like are concerned. It is pervasive but it is also often hidden and complex. Blue Label recognises this and shall actively address these inequality issues in the manner set out below in order to integrate considerations and concerns into words, action, and assessment.

#### 5. **Policy Tenets**

##### 5.1. **Equality of Opportunity**

Equal opportunity is a fundamental human right embedded in the Constitution of South Africa. The Blue Label Group shall promote the achievement of equality of opportunity, in access to and share of employment opportunities, services and resources as well as in equality of treatment of service providers in relation to gender, race, culture, age, field of knowledge, skills and experience, qualifications and the like.

##### 5.2. **Equality of Treatment**

Blue Label shall however progressively seek to address the needs of different categories of persons without favour or prejudice insofar as gender, race, culture, age and the like whilst ensuring equal treatment and equal access to opportunities for all.

#### 6. **Blue Label Group's commitment to Diversity and Inclusion**

- 6.1. We are committed to recruiting and retaining a talented workforce that is truly representative of all sections of society, our customers and stakeholders, and the varied environments in which we conduct business. We believe in leveraging diverse capabilities, experiences, and perspectives of our people at all levels of in all that we do to ensure a sustainable business growth and performance.
- 6.2. The Group is committed to understanding, valuing, and working constructively with diversity to enable fair and full participation in our work and activities through:
  - 6.2.1. ensuring that there is no unjustified discrimination in our recruitment, selection, performance management and other processes,
  - 6.2.2. ensuring action that promotes equality, this includes reviewing the impact of policies and functions and progressing diversity action plans,
  - 6.2.3. treating individuals with whom we work with fairness, dignity, and respect,
  - 6.2.4. playing our part in removing barriers and redressing imbalances caused by inequality and unjustified discrimination.

## Administration

### 1. Policy Review and Update Process

Employees should clearly understand that although the development, review and update process reside with a single department, the content thereof is authorised, enforced, and supported by Board and executive Management. This policy can be reviewed and updated at any given time, as Blue Label sees fit.

### 2. Policy Communication

The Human Capital department is responsible for the distribution of the policy to employees. All policies and procedures are stored on Blue Label's and are easily accessible by all employees. Notification will be sent to all employees should any update, change or exception be added to this policy.

### 3. Policy Violations

Any employee who does not comply with this policy or abuses any privileges afforded to them in terms of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Blue Label also reserves the right, should it be considered necessary, to advise appropriate legal officials of any illegal activities relating to any misconduct in terms of this policy.

### 4. Policy Acknowledgement

Employees are required to abide by this policy and all related procedures and guidelines, as may be defined by management from time to time. Employees are therefore required to read and understand the contents of this policy, and agree that they will adhere to this policy, and may be required if considered appropriate to sign an acknowledgment form. The acceptance of this policy is deemed to be voluntary and unconditional.

### 5. Change Review History

No.	Description of Change/Review	Version No	Date Changed	Changed By	Effective Date
1.	Initial Issue – Review and inclusion of Policy on Gender and Race Equality	BLT-GRP-0016	August 2020	Janine Van Eden Brigitte Chetty	August 2020