EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Hot Box Live CIC · 28-29 Viaduct Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1TS

hotboxlive.co.uk · contact@hotboxlive.co.uk · +44 1245 415952

VERSION 10.3 · 19 SEPTEMBER 2026

1. OUR COMMITMENT & VISION

At Hot Box Live CIC, we believe music and creativity belong to everyone. Aligned with Arts Council England's 'Let's Create' vision, we maintain a fair, safe, accessible, and inclusive environment for staff, artists, and patrons.

We ensure that no job applicant, employee, or volunteer receives less favourable treatment based on the **nine protected characteristics** defined by the UK Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

2. WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy applies to all core staff, casual workers, volunteers, freelancers, contractors, partners, and performing artists at our venue.

It governs how we interact with each other, our suppliers, and the public. Everyone working with or representing Hot Box Live CIC shares a legal and ethical responsibility to uphold these standards.

3. UNACCEPTABLE WORKPLACE BEHAVIOUR

We operate a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, bullying, and victimisation. The following actions are strictly prohibited:

- **Direct Discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic (e.g., refusing to hire a sound engineer because of their gender).
- **Indirect Discrimination:** Having a rule or practice that applies to everyone but disadvantages a specific group without a valid business reason.
- **Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates a hostile, degrading, or offensive environment. This includes offensive "banter", inappropriate jokes, or comments about an individual's appearance.
- **Bullying:** Offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that undermines or humiliates an individual.
- **Victimisation:** Treating someone badly because they have made a complaint or supported someone else's complaint under this policy.

4. HOW WE APPLY FAIRNESS IN OUR VENUE

Hiring & Working Together

- **Objective Choices & Representation:** Hiring, recruitment, and promotion are strictly based on ability and merit. We

actively track demographic data to ensure fair representation and combat under-representation across our team.

- **Fair Pay:** We ensure equal pay for equal work across our team.

Booking Artists & Programming

- **Diverse Programming & Keychange Pledge:** We commit to gender balance and diverse representation—including the Global Majority—across our programming and artist line-ups.
- **Respect for Creatives:** Artists and touring crew are treated with the exact same respect, professionalism, and fairness as our core staff.

Accessibility & Inclusivity

- **Social Model of Disability:** We follow the Social Model of Disability to proactively remove physical, digital, and social barriers. This includes offering BSL interpretation, childcare support, and translation as a funded addition where possible, since our small team doesn't have the in-house capacity or skills to provide these directly. We also provide accessible digital content and reasonable physical adjustments as standard.
- **Safe Space for Gig-Goers:** We actively protect our patrons. Any discrimination, harassment, or abuse from customers towards staff or other gig-goers will result in immediate removal and potential lifetime bans from the venue.
- **Removing Economic Barriers:** We offer clear pricing, subsidised community tickets, and free tickets for carers, and we are developing a "No Walls" Community Outreach Programme so that financial hardship never stops anyone from attending our events or accessing our resources.

5. WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A PROBLEM

Reporting a Concern

If you feel you have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied, please raise it immediately.

- Report concerns directly to Deborah Hughes (HR) or David Hughes (Director).
- If your complaint involves either person, speak to an appointed alternative contact or senior team member.

How We Handle It

- We will take every complaint seriously, handle it confidentially, and investigate it quickly and fairly.
- Any breach of this policy is treated as misconduct under our disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches (including sexual harassment or discriminatory abuse) constitute gross misconduct and will result in immediate dismissal.

6. REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months to ensure it stays relevant to our venue's operations.

VERSION CONTROL

Version	10.3
Date	19/09/2026
Description	Updated for AA accessibility and alignment with Hot Box Live CIC diversity commitments
Author	Dave Hughes

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF HOT BOX LIVE CIC

Name	David Hughes
Date	19/09/2026
Position	Director