



**HEAD OFFICE
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIVISION**

BANK OF INDIA DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) POLICY

JUNE, 2023

BANK OF INDIA DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) POLICY

1. Preamble:

- 1.1 Bank of India, (hereafter referred to as the 'Bank') founded on 07th September, 1906 is a leading public sector bank in India, headquartered at Mumbai. The Bank is committed to strict compliance of Government of India instructions as advised from time to time, for empowerment of its employees. It has been the endeavour of the Bank to eliminate any form of discrimination and ensure equality, freedom, justice and dignity to all its employees. The employment decisions are made without regard to race, gender, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, colour, creed, religion, origin, age, physical or mental disability or medical condition, genetic information, marital status, culture, ancestry, veteran's status, socioeconomic status, or any other basis prohibited by law. Banks strive to provide inclusive work environment to guarantee that all employees enjoy equality, dignity and respect at par with other employees.
- 1.2 We as a responsible corporate citizen have been following the legislative directives, policies & programmes of the government for promoting economic and social cohesion of the society. Diversity with itself brings new horizons and perspectives for socio-economic development leading to equity and inclusiveness. Banks, especially public sector banks in our country are not only the economic institutions but also the instruments of socio-economic change and transformation during the last decade.
- 1.3 The Constitution of India mandates equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all individuals and implicitly mandates an inclusive society for all including persons with disabilities, women, minority communities, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes and all sections of the society at large. Inclusion of a diverse set of people while developing as a nation is the constitutional enabler to the effects of long-standing discrimination against minority groups, women or any other unprivileged and underprivileged sections of society. This consists of policies, programs, and procedures that give limited preferences in job hiring, admission to institutions of learning, the awarding of government contracts, and other social benefits. There have been the consistent focus of legislative bodies to ensure better quality of life for every citizen of the country.
- 1.4 The Government of India through Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has been promoting EASE (Enhanced Access & Service Excellence) Reforms since January 2018, which is aimed at institutionalising CLEAN and SMART banking in Public Sector Banks (PSBs). One of the agendas of EASE Reforms is to promote gender diversity, especially in senior roles, and implement employee convenience-focused initiatives in Banks.
- 1.5 The DEI Committee shall be the designated authority with overall responsibility for the effective operation and implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Policy. Committee shall be authorised to lay down / implement operational guidelines issued by the Government of India for betterment of employees as advised from time to time.
- 1.6 It shall be the responsibility of every member of the Bank to implement this policy. Any employee who violates this policy, or in any manner discriminates against any person or commits any act of harassment which is in violation to this policy shall be construed

as having committed an act of misconduct liable to be dealt with as per Bank's laid down rules.

- 1.7 The H.R. Department of the Zones shall have the functional responsibility to ensure compliance of the policy.

2. Defining DEI:

- 2.1 **Diversity** is the presence of difference and is the collective mixture of differences and similarities that includes individual and organizational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, preferences, and behaviours. Diversity means to increase the representation of various populations – age, gender, education, health conditions, life stage, socioeconomic status, language, and so on, within our Bank.
- 2.2 **Equity** ensures fair and impartial treatment to all employees regardless of who we are. Equity means providing consistent, systematic, transparent, fair and impartial treatment to all employees. Equity differs from equality in a subtle but important way. While equality assumes that all people should be treated the same, equity takes into consideration a person's unique circumstances, adjusting treatment accordingly so that the end result is organizational harmony.
- 2.3 **Inclusion** is the achievement of a work environment in which all individuals with varying social and cultural backgrounds are socially accepted, welcomed, are treated equally, fairly, and transparently, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the organization's mission and vision. Without inclusive practices, diversity cannot be practiced. Inclusion refers to how the employees experiences the Bank as a workplace and the degree to which the Bank embrace all employees and enable them to make meaningful contributions.
- 2.4 **Belonging** refers to employees' sense that they are welcomed, accepted, valued, and empowered for their diverse backgrounds and experiences. An inclusive work environment helps to foster the sense of belonging.
- 2.5 If diversity and inclusion are the steps, then equity is the state which is realized while continuously treading those steps.

3. Relevance / Importance / Need of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

- 3.1 Bank believes in fostering the workplace culture that is inclusive and respects individual dignity as it is essential for our success. Collaboration of thousands of employees working from hundreds of offices across the globe, makes our Bank truly a multicultural and multiethnic organization. DEI leads to improvement in organisational performance and build competitive advantage by fostering productivity, innovation and loyalty at the workplace.
- 3.2 Our employees reflect the diversity of the communities in which we work and live which provides a better understanding of our customers' needs. Bank is committed to achieve short and long-term diversity, equity, and inclusion goals by providing equal opportunity of employment; creating, managing, and valuing diversity of our workforce; providing a safe work environment; and fostering a culture of belongingness where all employees are treated with dignity and respect, promoted on their merits, and placed in positions to contribute to our future success.

- 3.3 Diversity - Each individual in our Bank brings with them a diverse set of perspectives, work, and life experiences. These differences enable cross sectional learnings leading to increased productivity, increased creativity, increased innovation, faster decision-making, reduced turnover, higher employee engagement, and increased revenue. Just as understanding customer demographics will help us to expand and widen our reach, it will do the same when applied to our team. If we want to reach people of all backgrounds, our team should comprise people of all backgrounds.
- 3.4 Equity - Equity creates a sense of safety that contributes to employee engagement. When a state of equity is achieved, employees know that regardless of background, their future opportunities are going to be awarded based on performance / what they earn. When people know that future compensation increases, recognition, and promotions will be awarded based on the work they do and how well they do it, they are more likely to work hard and give their best effort. This also reflects in the figures of employee retention.
- 3.5 Inclusion - Inclusion fosters an environment where people feel respected and valued for who they are as individual or group. People feel a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that they can do their best at work. The process of inclusion engages each individual and makes people feel valued and essential to the success of the Bank. When people feel valued, they function at full capacity and feel deeply connected to the Bank's mission. This culture shift will help in creating an atmosphere in the Bank where motivation and morale can soar.

4. Scope:

- 4.1 This policy shall apply to all aspects of Human Resources management of the Bank, including but not limited to recruiting, hiring, training, talent development, skills enhancement, job assignment, working conditions, compensation, benefits, transfers, postings, promotions, employee retention, leaves available, policies and procedures, and succession planning.
- 4.2 This policy shall cover all employees of the Bank, including employees on probation and permanent employees employed with the Bank in any of its Branch / Office.
- 4.3 To promote DEI in our Bank, initiatives for betterment of employees working in our Bank and belonging to certain sections of the society should be initiated / reinforced. Some of these sections and respective initiatives are discussed further in this policy.

5. For Women Employees:

- 5.1 In compliance with the laid down provisions under various enactments by Government of India, and guidelines circulated by Ministry of Finance, Department of Financial Services, Indian Banks' Association and other statutory bodies from time to time, it is the Bank's responsibility to ensure that the work environment is free from any form of discrimination against women.
- 5.2 The Bank shall take appropriate action, as deemed fit, to ensure that an inclusive environment is provided to women employees to perform their roles and excel in doing so for achieving their potential.

- 5.3 Bank shall not discriminate against any women employee in any matter relating to employment and provide additional support to enable them to reach, aspire and aim for leadership roles in line with their counterparts.
- 5.4 The employment decisions with respect to women employees will be taken keeping in view the guidelines issued by the Government from time to time for preference in transfer and posting, special leaves, maternity benefits, allowances, and safety among others.
- 5.5 No opportunity shall be denied to any women employee merely on the ground of gender. Further, women employee will be encouraged to attend trainings as and when required to enhance their capabilities / competencies to enable them to effectively discharge their duties in the bank similar to their counterparts.
- 5.6 Bank shall strive to give convenient posting to women employees as per the guidelines issued by the Government from time to time and as per Bank's Transfer Policy. The requests for transfer / posting will be considered on priority to the extent possible for optimally utilising their services subject to administrative / business requirements of the Bank.
- 5.7 Bank will strive to initiate and implement Women centric reforms to improve the work environment for Women in our bank. Some of the initiatives are discussed below.
 - 5.7.1 Grievance Redressal Committees – In accordance with the directives of Government of India, several Grievance Redressal Committees have already been formed by the bank under different Acts at all levels. However access to the same should be available to all the Women employees working in every office of the Bank.
 - 5.7.2 Separate Washrooms – Bank will ensure that separate washrooms for male and female employees are available at every office in India, subject to major hindrance(s) if any which prevents the Bank from doing so. In such cases, hygiene and easy access of the same should be ensured to the Women employees / customers / visitors of the concerned office.
 - 5.7.3 Mentorship Programs – Bank will make every effort to design and implement Mentorship Programs exclusively for Women employees to enable them to acquire leadership roles in the Bank.
 - 5.7.4 Returning Mothers – Bank acknowledges that it is difficult for Women Employees returning from Sabbatical Leaves / Maternity Leaves to resume work due to disturbed physical health, state of mind or any other hindrance varying from person to person. Hence, Bank will strive to accommodate the concerned employee in the work culture slowly and by giving her time to regain her pace / quality of work. Bank will hold a compassionate view for the concerned employee.
 - 5.7.5 Single Mother – With paradigm changes in the society over the years, number of Single Mothers have increased due to various external factors. These Women need extra support in their working environment so that they can compete and deliver in line with their counterparts.

6. For Minorities:

- 6.1 Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jain and Zoroastrians (Parsis) have been notified as Minority communities under Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 & subsequent government / statutory notifications.
- 6.2 In compliance with the laid down provisions under various enactments by Government of India / statutory bodies from time to time, it is the Bank's responsibility to ensure that the work environment is free from any form of discrimination against Minorities and Comprehensive thoughts against the minorities should be eradicated from the minds of every employee of our Bank against Minorities.
- 6.3 Bank aims at improving every employment parameter which should result in improvement in opportunities provided to the new aspirants / employees belonging to Minority communities.
- 6.4 Any employee belonging to a Minority community should not be deprived of the benefit of opportunities for development as a result of discrimination.
- 6.5 Because of the difference in identity, the minority community develops the perception of sense of inequity. But since India is declared a 'secular' state, Bank will strive to make every employee feel equal.
- 6.6 No opportunity shall be denied to any employee merely on the ground of religion / caste or any other basis prohibited by law.
- 6.7 Grievance Redressal Committees – In accordance with the directives of Government of India, several Grievance Redressal Committees have been formed by the bank under different Acts at all levels. However access to the same should be available to all the employees of Minorities Communities working in every office of the Bank. Same should be ensured by the Zonal HR Offices in compliance of this Policy.
- 6.8 Bank shall try to place Liaison Officer in Head Office & Zonal Offices for ensuring seem less resolutions in the matters of the employees of Minority communities.

7. For SC/ST/OBC:

- 7.1 In compliance with the laid down provisions under various enactments and guidelines circulated by Government of India from time to time, it is the Bank's responsibility to ensure that the work environment is equal, fair and just towards employees belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC).
- 7.2 The Bank shall take appropriate action, as deemed fit, to ensure that the principles of equity and inclusion are implemented in letter and spirit with regards to the SC / ST / OBC employees of the Bank to perform their roles effectively without any prejudice.
- 7.3 Bank shall not discriminate against any SC / ST / OBC employee in any matter relating to employment and provide additional support to them to reach, aspire and aim for higher roles in line with their counterparts.

- 7.4 Recruitment of SC / ST / OBC employees will be done in accordance with the Reservation Policy and guidelines of the Government circulated and applicable from time to time.
- 7.5 Promotion Policy of the Bank shall include guidelines issued by the Government from time to time with respect to the SC / ST employees. Further, they will be encouraged to attend trainings as and when required to enhance their capabilities / competencies.
- 7.6 Liaison Officer in Head Office is already in place to resolve queries related to the SC / ST / OBC employees at faster pace.
- 7.7 Bank will make every effort to design and implement dedicated Mentorship Programs exclusively for SC / ST / OBC employees to enable them to deliver desired results for the Bank.

8. For Differently abled Persons:

- 8.1 Bank has already circulated Equal Opportunity Policy 2022 vide HOBC 116/153 dated 22.09.2022 which describes various provisions, benefits and opportunities available to Persons with Disabilities in our Bank.
- 8.2 Bank shall not discriminate against any differently abled person in any matter relating to employment. It shall ensure an accessible environment and availability of assistive devices and shall put in place proper systems and processes to enable the differently abled persons to effectively discharge their duties in the Bank.
- 8.3 It shall be the responsibility of every member of the Bank to implement DEI Policy / guidelines. Any employee who violates the Policy, or in any manner discriminates against any differently abled person or commits any act of harassment to such person shall be construed as having committed an act of misconduct liable to be dealt with as per Bank's laid down rules.
- 8.4 The manner of selection of differently abled persons for various posts, preference in transfer and posting, special leave, allowances and vacancies shall be governed by the guidelines issued by the Government from time to time. And Bank will give proper consideration to the same with reference to this Policy.
- 8.5 No opportunity shall be denied to a person merely on the ground of disability. Post-recruitment and pre-promotion training shall be imparted to differently abled persons. Further, differently abled persons are encouraged to attend trainings as and when required to enhance their capabilities/ competencies to enable them to effectively discharge their duties in the bank.
- 8.6 Bank shall strive to give convenient posting to the differently abled persons. The requests of differently abled persons in transfer/ posting shall be considered on priority to the extent possible for optimally utilising their services subject to administrative constraints.

9. General Points for Consideration:

- 9.1 Bank will not discriminate against Transgender community and will provide similar employment opportunities to them and also equal rights and facilities will be provided to them while working in the Bank.
- 9.2 Bank will strive to conduct Soft Skills Training for the employees who are not at par with others, so that a healthy culture of competitiveness is developed in the Bank and all the employees as a whole achieve the common goals and mission of our Bank.
- 9.3 Employee Engagement Surveys are being conducted through HRMS, which helps in gathering data and information from existing employees. Bank shall make efforts to include more engaging surveys that would provide insights about Bank's products and processes and would in turn help in improvement of the same.
- 9.4 Initiatives including Star Bonding, Star Performers (at various levels) are already in place to develop equity among employees. Bank endeavours to develop more Employee Engagement tools similar to the ones already in place in other organizations of the Indian Economy.
- 9.5 Bank affirms the recognition that its competitiveness is interlinked with the well-being of all sections of the Indian society.
- 9.6 Bank will not practice or support conscious discrimination in any form.
- 9.7 Bank's selection of business partners is not based on any considerations other than normal business parameters. In case of all business parameters being equal, the Bank will select a business partner impartially considering only the compatibility of the partner with Bank and capability of the partner to render services / products in partnership with the Bank.
- 9.8 Bank will have DEI Committee which will be led by Chief General Manager / General Manager – HR, with Chief General Manager / General Manager of BPR Department and senior most female Officer (GM / DGM) posted at Head Office as members to oversee and promote DEI policy and interventions.
- 9.9 Bank shall not promote Reverse discrimination while complying with the Reforms suggested by the Government / Other Statutory Bodies under this Policy. Reverse discrimination indicates a situation when the majority feels discriminated against as opposed to the minority.
- 9.10 All of us have a responsibility to take positive action to ensure an inclusive working environment that is free of discrimination and harassment.

10. Action Points

- 10.1 In compliance of this policy, following action points emerge which are discussed below.
- 10.2 **Learning & Development:**

- 10.2.1 To design and impart appropriate trainings to returning mothers and single mothers.
 - 10.2.2 Develop mentorship programs for women employees to aspire leadership positions.
 - 10.2.3 Extensive training programs / mentorship programs for SC / ST / OBC / Minority / PwDs employees to bring them at par with other employees.
 - 10.2.4 Conduct Offline training programs / develop online modules for developing Soft Skills of the employees.
- 10.3 **Transfer & Placement Division / Zonal HR:** Manpower planning assessment to be done and to place women employees, differently abled persons, and other employees under compassionate grounds carefully as part of regular transfer exercise and also in between the Financial Year in exigent cases.
- 10.4 **Recruitment:** To coordinate with other departments and recruit employees in accordance with the Government guidelines with respect to SC / ST / OBC / Minorities / PwDs.
- 10.5 **Promotion:** To provide opportunity for being considered for promotion in accordance with the Government guidelines with respect to SC / ST / PwDs. Also to ensure that no discrimination should take place in the promotion process and every employee to be promoted in terms of the Bank's promotion policy.
- 10.6 **HRMS Division / Zonal HR:** To maintain grievance redressal portals in HRMS and address the grievances related to women, SC / ST / OBC / Minorities / PwDs proactively.
- 10.7 **HR Department / Zonal HR:** To ensure that liaison officers are placed in Head Office / Zonal Office for grievances related to women, SC / ST / OBC / Minorities / PwDs as per the government guidelines issued from time to time.
- 10.8 **HRMS Division:** Provide reporting related to Women Representation Index on Annual basis.
- 10.9 **Corporate Services Department:** Provide accessible environment and availability of assistive devices to differently abled persons at their workplace.
- 10.10 **Concerned Offices:** To implement employee engagement tools at grass root level to ensure that team work, sense of belongingness, equity, and inclusion is developed amongst the employees towards each other.

11. Our Commitment to DEI

- 11.1 Under this policy, Bank is committed to create and maintain a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, sex/gender, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, colour, creed, religion, origin, age, physical or mental disability or medical condition, genetic information, marital status, culture, ancestry, veteran's status, socioeconomic status, or any other basis prohibited by law.
- 11.2 Bank is committed to provide equal opportunity to all employees, and will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment in the workplace.

- 11.3 Bank will take appropriate disciplinary action against any employee who engages in discriminatory or harassing behaviour, up to and including termination.
- 11.4 Bank is committed to promote diversity and inclusion at all levels. This includes recruiting, hiring, and promoting employees from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, as well as providing training and support to help all employees feel valued and respected.
- 11.5 Bank believes that fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace is essential for our success, and we are committed to support our employees in this effort. We encourage all employees to join us in creating a work environment that is inclusive and respectful of all individuals.

12. Reporting mechanisms

- 12.1 If any employee believes that they or another individual has been treated unfairly or has been discriminated against on account of any of the parameters mentioned in this policy or its intent, the employee is urged to bring this to the notice of HR Department of his / her controlling office.
- 12.2 All reported incidents will be investigated while keeping the source of the report confidential, with the disclosure of information as appropriate to facilitate the investigation or resolution of the matter.
- 12.3 The Bank will not tolerate threats or acts of retaliation of any kind against any individuals because they report conduct reasonably believed to violate this policy or in good faith provide information in connection with a report or investigation of any such conduct.
- 12.4 Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behaviour against others will be liable to disciplinary action

13. Review

- 13.1 The pursuit of equity, diversity, and inclusion is a journey towards a fairer and more prosperous Bank and not just an abstract ideal. Collective effort, bold strategies, and unwavering commitment from Bank and employees is required for it to success. This policy would need continuous revision, rectification and rewriting with the sole objective to empower people.
- 13.2 The Policy will be reviewed annually for any modifications/ improvement in the light of any statutory requirement. Notwithstanding, the Bank reserves the right to review, modify and amend the policy whenever deemed necessary.
