

 Ústav experimentální medicíny AV ČR, v.v.i.	GUIDELINE	Reference Number: 21/2021
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Gender Equality Guideline		Effective date: 29 December 2021
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This Guideline lays down an ensemble of fundamental values, principles, and rules relating the gender equality for all IEM employees, where the objective is to establish fair conditions in terms of gender-related issues. This Guideline is formulated to reflect requirements laid down under laws and regulations in effect, including, without limitation, Act No. 262/2006 Coll., the Labor Code, Act No. 435/2004 Coll., the Employment Act, and Act No. 198/2009 Coll., Act on Equal Treatment and Legal Protection against Discrimination and on Amendment to Certain Acts, as in effect ("Anti-Discrimination Act"), and all international treaties pertaining to gender-related issues, which have been ratified by the Czech Republic.

This Guideline does not aim to lay down an exhaustive, all-inclusive list of all rules and principles applicable to the employer and to employees pertaining to gender-related issues.

This Guideline is available to every employee in electronic form on the Intranet of the Institute of Experimental Medicine CAS (Ústav experimentální medicíny AV ČR, v.v.i.).

This Guideline enters into effect and into force on 29 December 2021.

Date of approval: 29 December 2021

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Miroslava Anděrová, Director

Enclosures

This Guideline has no enclosures.

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1. Scope of Applicability

- 1.1. This Guideline applies to employees working on the basis of regular employment as well as to job candidates who are approached or who take part in the selection process for vacant positions.
- 1.2. This Guideline applies commensurately to persons working for the employer based on an agreement for performance of work on a basis other than employment, to independent contractors, and to persons hired based on another contractual arrangement.
- 1.3. In addition, the gender-related rules and principles laid down in this Guideline apply commensurately to students, external associates, and other entities wherewith the IEM interacts.

2. Definitions

Gender refers to the social characteristics of men and women, which are subject to cultural and social conditions and constructs that vary in time and in different localities. Such characteristics do not constitute natural, invariable characteristics attributable to men and women, but reflect the state of social relation between them. As such, gender is in contrast to the biological differences between men and women.

Gender equality is a state of affairs where neither of the two, or other, sexes as well as no sexual orientation is considered superior. Gender equality is an effort aimed at fair, non-discriminatory treatment.

Gender stereotypes are concepts portraying the roles of men and women, which may change over time, but continue to be interpreted as established and unvarying based on biological considerations. Likewise, gender stereotypes reflect the fact that the majority of people believe that characteristics attributed to either of the sexes are inherent and invariable, and therefore correct. As a result, it is assumed that such attributes apply to all members of one or the other sex. Such a stereotypical attitude constitutes a basis for a different treatment of men and women, and for attributing certain traditional characteristics to

the two sexes. Such stereotypes are reflected in societal views of the role of men and women in the family, at work, and in social interactions.

Gender mainstreaming refers to securing necessary services with a view to contributing to the same quality of life of both men and women, where such services may not necessarily be identical.

Direct discrimination means deliberate or negligent action, where an employee is treated in an inferior or less beneficial manner than another employee as a result of differentiation based on identified discriminatory reasons. Direct discrimination embodies a biased action based on such discriminatory characteristic as sex, ethnic characteristics, age, etc.

Indirect discrimination means deliberate or negligent action, where a seemingly neutral decision, differentiation, or approach on the employer's part provides an employee with detrimental or beneficial conditions vis-à-vis another employee as a result of differentiation based on identified discriminatory reasons. In committing indirect discrimination, the discriminating person does not intentionally aim to commit a discriminatory action based on identified discriminatory reasons, but discrimination nevertheless takes place.

3. Guarantee of Equal Treatment in consideration of Sex

- 3.1. The equality of men and women is one of the fundamental values of the modern European democratic society. Conditions allowing men and women to have equal access to education, employment, political participation, and other aspects of life are regarded as a matter of fundamental justice. The employer creates a working environment and conditions that guarantee employees the same conditions in relation to gender equality and prevents all forms of direct or indirect discrimination relating to gender.
- 3.2. The employer considers it important to provide all employees with a fair and equitable working environment in consideration of gender mainstreaming. The principles of equal treatment of all employees as regards their selection for vacant positions, the establishment of fair working conditions, remuneration, access to education, and career advance are incorporated in individual internal policies and guidelines, compliance wherewith is mandatory for all IEM employees.
- 3.3. The employer pays close attention to maintaining impartiality and offering equal opportunities regarding all employees and rejects any form of discrimination based on sex, sexual identification, sexual orientation, and the like. All forms of discrimination relating to pregnancy, motherhood, fatherhood, or sex, including the third gender are considered to constitute sexual discrimination.
- 3.4. The employer tolerates no conduct on the part of employees liable to be perceived as discrimination, harassment, violence, insult, or defamation of another employee or a third party, wherewith an employee interacts as part of performing work.
- 3.5. The employer supports gender-related variety and general diversity in work teams, but rejects appointments to committees, boards, bodies, managerial positions, and the like that would prefer certain employees to the detriment of others, solely based on sex, gender, or the need to fulfill quotas. The main parameter for selection is always the fulfillment of requirements, education, experience, competences, and the like.

- 3.6. The employer is committed to creating conditions for gender mainstreaming in conformity to employee's needs by facilitating the return of mothers, or fathers, from maternity/parental leave to their original position, offering part-time working arrangements aimed at facilitating work-life balance, allowing the use of flexible working hours where allowed in view of operating conditions, assisting employees in finding accommodation within the IEM complex, supporting preschool services for children of employees within the IEM complex, and improving working conditions in an ongoing manner.
- 3.7. The employer is committed to using a gender-neutral language wherever possible.
- 3.8. In completing selection procedures and in filling vacancies, the employer is committed to maintaining gender neutrality so as to prevent prejudging the preferred sex of persons sought for given positions, where sex must not constitute any of the decisive criteria. Likewise, it is recommended that the selection boards conducting interviews be gender diverse and varied, imparting an environment of objectivity and esprit de corps to candidates.

4. Employee Protection Procedures

- 4.1. An employee who feels discriminated against from the viewpoint of gender, or witnesses conduct in his/her coworkers or line manager, can resort to several methods of reporting and dealing with the situation.
- Employees can file a complaint, in writing (mail, electronic means) or verbally, with their line manager describing the nature of the actions that have transpired.
 - In case that the line manager is the subject of a complaint, the complaint is forwarded to the IEM Director.
 - In case that the IEM Director is the subject of a complaint, the complaint is forwarded to the IEM Board.
 - Starting in 4/2022, an internal reporting (whistleblowing) system will be made available, which will anonymize the complainant and will require the employer to respond within 30 days after receiving a report. In substantiated cases, it will be permissible to extend this time limit by 30 days on a maximum of two occasions.
 - In addition, employees can file a report through representatives of the trade union, without being a member thereof, or with the employee ombudsman who will be appointed in 2022.
- 4.2. The recipient of a complaint must investigate the content of the complaint and respond in writing to the complainant within a basic time limit of 30 days. If a complaint proves to be substantiated, the employer proceeds in accordance with the Labor Code or adopts other measures.
- 4.3. Moreover, the department head must inform his/her supervisor of the receipt of a complaint and its nature, and subsequently inform the supervisor of the nature and outcome of the investigation and, where applicable, measures adopted in the framework of the department with the aim of preventing the reported events from recurring, in case that the complaint is found substantiated. If the recipient of a complaint is a trade union representative, the complaint is forwarded to the IEM Director, who determines the investigation method.
- 4.4. The employer treats all reports and their content as confidential information.
- 4.5. The employer is committed to protecting the identity of the complainant. No retaliatory action will be taken against the complainant.

5. Miscellaneous Provisions

- 5.1. This Guideline is mandatory for the employer and all employees, including persons working on the basis of work arrangements other than employment. Likewise, this Guideline applies to job candidates, students, and the other persons referred to in *Article 1 Scope of Applicability*.
- 5.2. Any and all matters not expressly defined under this Guideline are subject to the applicable provisions of the Labor Code, the Anti-Discrimination Act, and other relevant laws and regulations.
- 5.3. Supervisory employee must inform all staff under their management of this Guideline.
- 5.4. This Guideline will be posted on the IEM intranet. IEM employees have the right to examine this Guideline.
- 5.5. The intent to issue this Guideline has been duly reported to the Trade Union of Science and Research Workers, ZO - ÚSTAV EXPERIMENTÁLNÍ MEDICÍNY AV ČR on 16 December 2021.