



clever solutions | beyond class

## CIRCULAR Guidelines for Shipowners to avoid age discrimination on board ships

The International Chamber of Shipping issues new Guidelines for Shipowners to avoid age discrimination on board ships to help to eliminate age discrimination and to improve the working environment on board ships.

[Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators | Surveyors/Auditors](#)

C20007 | 29 January 2020

The **Guidance** intends to help the elimination of age discrimination and to improve the working environment on board ships. Age discrimination (ageism) is a potential form of unfair treatment at work given that the age gap between employees in the workplace can now be as much as 50 years.

Under the International Labour Organization (ILO) Maritime Labour Convention 2006 each member state must satisfy itself that the provisions of its laws and regulations respect the fundamental right to the elimination of all forms of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Age discrimination can seriously affect the physical and emotional health of employees and job applicants. It can lead to decreased motivation and increased sickness and can compromise cohesive and effective teamwork. It can also negatively affect companies resulting in potential organisational, economic and legal consequences.

A ship is often a seafarer's home for many months. It is therefore essential to ensure that there is a conducive living and working environment to avoid seafarers feeling isolated and vulnerable.

Factors to consider include:

- Protection against unfair treatment because of someone's actual age, the age they are thought to be, or the age of someone they are associated with;
- Protection against harassment because of age; and
- Different treatment because of age being allowed in limited circumstances, e.g. cadets.

The guidelines aim to assist shipowners, managers, and HR professionals to:

- Avoid age discrimination in all activities;
- Appreciate the benefits of a workplace free of age discrimination;
- Make workplaces inclusive so that staff feel they belong, irrespective of age, and are not disadvantaged or under-valued;

- Develop measures, policies and plans for active use to eliminate age discrimination and improve the working environment on board;
- Involve employees or their representatives in this process;
- Recognise examples of age discrimination;
- Know how to handle age discrimination should it occur;
- Identify potential grievances which may result in company grievance procedures being activated;
- Respect employees that raise concerns on behalf of other employees;
- Consider incorporating corporate age discrimination policies into collective bargaining agreements, where appropriate taking into account national laws and regulations; and
- Recognise that the shipowner should be made aware of discriminatory actions and that, if reasonable preventable actions are not taken, they may become liable.

### Act now

Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators are invited to take into consideration these Guidelines in order to avoid age discrimination on board ships.

For further information, please contact our Marine Division at [marine@dromon.com](mailto:marine@dromon.com)