



Survivors'
Network

Survivors' Network Trans Staff, Volunteers and Service Users Policy

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Trans Staff, Volunteers and Service Users Policy

Definitions

Under this policy we define “self-identifying woman” as an individual that feels their gender identity is a woman, irrespective of the gender they were assigned at birth. This will therefore include transgender women.

Survivors' Network offers a range of services for survivors of sexual violence and their supporters. Some of these services are open to people of any gender and some are only open for self-identifying women.

We believe that it is essential to have self-identifying women-only spaces, and these services are always inclusive of all self-identifying women. We will continue to consult with all of our service users, volunteers and staff in order to get direct feedback around barriers and issues in service provision. Where possible, we will tailor our service provision accordingly, and we will continue to seek additional funding streams in order to provide this.

Survivors' Network recognises that there is no universal experience of being transgender, and that the wide spectrum of gender identity is more complicated. Within this policy, trans* is used as an umbrella term for people whose identity differs from the gender they were assigned at birth. This will also include individuals who describe their gender as non-binary, as well as those with other gender-variant identities who may or may not identify as trans.

Trans service users

In the Equality Act 2010 a person has the characteristic of ‘gender reassignment’ if the person: “is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.” Survivors’ Network supports this non-medicalised model and is committed to ensuring that anyone who does not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth is treated fairly and respectfully, like all other service users.

We also acknowledge that specific actions must be taken to ensure trans service users have equal access to our services. These include:

- Providing regular training at all levels (staff and volunteers) on how to support trans service users
- Service staff will not disclose trans users’ gender history without their permission (unless, in rare circumstances, it conflicts with SN Confidentiality Policy). Wherever possible, permission will be sought before making any disclosures.
- Service staff will use correct and respectful language about trans service users’ identity (e.g. they will ask which pronouns and/or names the service user prefers).
- Service staff will challenge transphobia by other staff members, volunteers and service users. We recognise that is our job, not the service user’s job, to challenge discrimination.
- Access to gender neutral toilets will be provided
- Publicity material will be inclusive: services that are open to women only will be advertised as for “self-identifying women”, and services open to anyone will be advertised as open for “any gender”
- If a service user is worried how their gender identity may impact the use of a service, they can contact the office and they will be offered a space to discuss any concerns
- If a service user is transitioning and worried about how that may impact their access to our services, they will be offered a space to have a confidential discussion with a staff member about how we can support them to access the appropriate services while they are transitioning
- All policies, procedures and forms will reflect our trans inclusive ethos (e.g. gender as a free text field in equality forms)

Employees and Volunteers

Survivors’ Network values the unique contribution of all staff, including individuals who identify outside the gender binary. We understand that there are many different identities which fall under the trans umbrella, and Survivors’ Network are committed to treating everybody’s gender identity with dignity and respect. A person does not have to hold a Gender Recognition Certificate or be at any particular stage of transition in order to be treated with dignity and respect.

If a staff member or volunteer notifies their manager that they are considering transitioning, whether as a ‘social’ transition, a ‘medical’ transition or any other kind of transition, a meeting should be held between that member of staff and their line manager to discuss in confidence how they wish to deal with transition and to agree and follow a process with which they are comfortable. A member of the Management Committee or other staff representative can be present if requested.

We feel strongly that a change in gender doesn't alter the value, standard, or skills of an employee. If a volunteer or staff member identifies as trans and wishes to transition, their line manager will be the first person to contact within the organisation for support. The manager will offer a meeting at an early stage. Key elements of this meeting should include:

- whether the employee wishes to inform colleagues themselves, or would prefer this to be done by someone else
- whether the employee wishes to be called by a different name and/or pronoun
- whether the employee/volunteer can stay in their current post or be redeployed, on a temporary or permanent basis. If they no longer identify as female and work in a women-only service, they will not be able to stay in their current post, as per Equality Act 2010 on gendered services, and redeployment will be offered if possible.
- amendments to records and systems to take account of the change of personal details
- use of any facilities and spaces e.g. toilets that match their gender identity, access to building when women-only

Following this meeting, a Support Plan can be drawn up, which should be signed by both parties and updated regularly.

Survivors' Network strive to ensure that trans staff and volunteers do not suffer discriminatory treatment at work. If colleagues are unsure of the staff member/volunteer's pronoun, first and foremost they should listen to the individual themselves and any others close to the individual who may use the correct pronoun. If in any doubt, a colleague should respectfully ask which pronoun the person uses. If a colleague accidentally uses an incorrect pronoun, they should apologise and carry on. Repeatedly and purposefully using the incorrect pronoun constitutes bullying and harassment and could result in the colleague's dismissal as per Survivors' Network Dignity At Work Policy. Should a staff member wish to initiate a formal complaint due to transphobic harassment or bullying, they should do so in accordance with the Dignity At Work policy.

Women-only spaces

Survivors' Network reserves the right to employ (as employees and volunteers) self-identifying women only for women-only spaces. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010, Schedule 9, Part 1, Paragraph 1.