



**Survivors'
Network**

Survivors' Network Equality and Diversity Policy

Key Contact: CEO

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SN Equality and Diversity Statement

Survivors' Network aims to be inclusive of all people and their intersecting identities. We want to build a workforce that is reflective of our diverse society, provides services that are survivor centred and accessible for all and embodies our core values and mission.

We want to work somewhere that gives us the freedom and flexibility to be ourselves, which recognises the great value in our differences, and supports us to succeed, based on our individual strengths and encompassing our core values of empowerment and collaboration.

As a community and a staff team, we know that this is not something that can be achieved overnight, but is rather an ongoing practice of reflection, learning and action.

We will provide support to all our staff, volunteers and leaders to ensure we continue to improve the way in which we demonstrate our commitment to diversity and inclusion in our everyday activities, roles and functions.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to communicate Survivors' Network's approach to equality and diversity. Survivors' Network is committed to promoting equality and diversity and to tackling all forms of discrimination and inequality in the workplace and the services it provides.

Survivors Network aims to be an inclusive organisation that actively values difference and recognises the value that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring to the charity. It is committed to preventing all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in the work environment and to providing equal opportunities throughout employment, including recruitment, training and staff development.

Equality & Diversity at SN

At Survivors Network, we believe that equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating unlawful discrimination, ensuring equal opportunity and access to employment and to the survivor centred services we provide in the community and embedding our core values in everything we do.

We recognise and celebrate diversity amongst our staff and service users. Our policy is to ensure that no member of staff, volunteer, trustee, job applicant or service user receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of ethnicity, faith/religion, age, gender identity, marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, disability, maternity or pregnancy, or that they are disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown as justifiable.

Survivors' Network is fully compliant with current Equalities legislation and other legislation around the Gender and Equality Duty and CEDAW. In accordance with the standards of Rape Crisis England and Wales, our senior management team (i.e., the roles with a strategic overview and responsibility within the organisation) and our trustee board are all self-identifying women. Survivors' Network reserves the right, when appropriate, to only recruit women. This has legal verification under the Sexual Discrimination Act 1975 Section 7(ii) (e); amended in 1986 and 2008.

See the Equality and Diversity Glossary of Terms within Appendix 2.

Scope

Who does this policy apply to?

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all volunteers and staff, whether part time or full time on a substantive or fixed term contract, and also to Trustees and associated persons such as secondees, contractors and others employed under a contract of service.

You are expected to read and familiarise yourself with this policy and ensure it is fully complied with. This policy is particularly relevant to managers and other staff involved with recruitment, training and other employment decisions that affect others.

Responsibilities:

Staff at Survivors Network all have a responsibility to:

- embed our core values within all that we do
- respect and promote equal opportunities for all people
- encourage a culture of compassion and understanding in the workplace
- recognise and challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination behaviour
- remove both outward and hidden discrimination
- enable differences to become positive and enriching attributes
- promote an environment where all can share equally in the opportunities offered
- understand what is expected of us in terms of performance, behaviour and conduct towards others
- not discriminate against service users or colleagues (both paid and unpaid)
- participate in training and development activities from time to time that encourage and promote the principles of this policy.

Breach of policy

Where a staff member or volunteer is found to be in breach of this Policy, action may be taken, including but not limited to compulsory attendance at any training deemed necessary; review of work practices and records; disciplinary warnings and in some cases dismissal.

Where a volunteer, including a trustee, is found to be in breach of this Policy, they will face the same sanctions as paid staff members.

Service users found to be acting in a discriminatory manner to other service users or members of staff will have this Policy explained to them and their behaviour challenged in a respectful and appropriate manner. If they continue to engage in discriminatory behaviour, they may be asked to leave the organisation if it is believed their actions limit the ability of others to access services, or place other people at risk in any way.

Our Commitment

Survivors' Network is committed to creating and safeguarding an inclusive environment, where discrimination on any grounds is challenged and equality of opportunity is promoted. We will constantly strive to create an environment representative of and responsive to the communities in which it works, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed in their work and gain access to services.

Survivors' Network will actively work towards eliminating unlawful discrimination against staff, contractors, job applicants, visitors or service users on the grounds of a **protected characteristic** which include age, disability, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion/belief, marriage/civil partnership, maternity and pregnancy. Discrimination within Survivors' Network will be challenged at all levels of the organisation, including Management Committee, paid staff, volunteers and service users.

Discrimination on the basis of work pattern (part time working, fixed term contract, flexible working), which is unjustifiable will also not be tolerated.

Survivors Network will:

- Endeavour to ensure our services are known, accessible and relevant to potential service users from all sections of the community
- Create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff/volunteers are recognised and valued, and everyone who has contact with the organisation experiences an environment that promotes dignity and respect for all
- Commit to embedding our core values into all that we do.
- Make every effort to ensure that training, development and career opportunities are available to all staff and, as appropriate, to all volunteers
- Assess equality impact and undertake regular reviews (of policies, practices and procedures) to identify and tackle any unintentional discrimination we may find in the provision of our services and internal practices
- Challenge discrimination in all its forms, in line with our organisational values
- Ensure our recruitment processes for staff, volunteers and trustees are fair, transparent and open in line with our Recruitment and Selection Policy. Due to the nature of some roles at Survivors Network, consideration will be given to whether there is a genuine occupational requirement for a role to be filled to be woman. Recruitment selection will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.
- Decisions to promote members of staff will be made on the basis of ability and merit.
- Make clear that every person volunteering or working for SN has a personal responsibility for implementing and promoting our principles in their day-to-day dealings with everyone – including members of the public, other volunteers and staff

- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure equality of access to services and employment
- Provide training opportunities to all staff and volunteers that support the principles of this policy.
- Training and development opportunities will be made equally available to all staff and volunteers as appropriate.
- We will monitor the make-up of the workforce information such as age, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief and disability with the aim of meeting the commitments set out in this policy. No information will be distributed internally or externally, except for anonymised information used for the express purposes of monitoring
- We will review the terms and conditions of employment, benefits and facilities available to all staff and volunteers on a regular basis.

Grievances

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you may use the grievance procedure to make a complaint. For types of unlawful discrimination, please see the appendix to this policy. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, please also refer to the [Dignity at Work](#) policy.

Survivors' Network will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Disciplinary Action

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedures. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct, resulting in dismissal without notice.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

If you believe you have suffered discrimination you should raise the matter through the Grievance Procedure or the Dignity at Work policy.

Individuals can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, Survivors' Network for any act of unlawful discrimination. Staff who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

False allegations of a breach of this policy, found to be in bad faith, will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy.

When does this policy apply?

We are an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aims of this policy are to ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. We value people as individuals with diverse options

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, casual workers, agency workers and all areas of employment. This applies to the working environment and also to conduct outside of the working environment that is related to your work including:

- Off-site meetings
- Networking events
- Social events with colleagues
- Working from home or off site
- Communication online, including social media that can be linked to Survivors Network

All Managers will set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage understand and adhere to the policy and will promote our aims, values and objectives with regards to equal opportunities.

If you have any doubts about the application of this Policy, or have other questions related to it, please contact your line manager, the CEO or the Chair of Trustees as appropriate.

Related Policies:

[Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)

[Dignity at Work Policy](#)

[Sexual Harassment Policy](#)

[Grievance Procedure](#)

[Disciplinary Procedure](#)

Appendix 1

Types of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a person because they are pregnant.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement, e.g., when providing a women-only space. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic (although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by indirect sex discrimination) such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership), and (according to guidance from the Government and ACAS) pregnancy and maternity.

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Victimisation occurs where a member of staff is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, a member of staff is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Appendix 2

Equality & Diversity - A Glossary of Terms - In Equilibrium (in-equilibrium.co.uk)

A brief explanation of the main terms used when discussing Equality & Diversity:

Equality

Fair treatment of individuals or groups, ensuring they are treated equally and no less favourably in areas including those of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, and maternity.

Direct Discrimination

Treating a person less favourably than another is being treated, or would be treated, because of their protected characteristic(s). Direct discrimination also includes:

Associative Discrimination – when an individual is discriminated against because of their connection with someone who has a protected characteristic(s).

Perceptive Discrimination – being discriminated against because it is believed an individual possesses a protected characteristic(s). It applies regardless of whether the individual possesses the protected characteristic(s) or not.

Diversity

Acknowledging, valuing and respecting people's psychological, physical and social differences in order that their full potential and contribution can be realised.

Inclusion

A sense or feeling that an individual or group are welcome, respected, supported and valued in order that their unique needs, working and learning styles are met. An inclusive environment will embrace differences and offer respect both verbally and in actions to ensure that everyone can fully participate.

Indirect Discrimination

Happens when an organisation's conditions, policies, or practices which, on the face of it appear neutral, have an impact that particularly disadvantages those who share a protected characteristic(s); unless whoever applied it can provide 'objective justification.'

Harassment

The Equality Act 2010 defines harassment as, *"unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual."*

Harassment applies to all the protected characteristics except, Marriage and Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity. Employees can complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them and they do not possess the relevant protected characteristic themselves.

Positive Action

Is distinct from unlawful positive discrimination (which involves the practice of favouring an individual who belongs to a group which suffer discrimination). Positive action is lawful when an employer takes steps to counteract the disadvantages it believes people who shared a protected

characteristic face. Any decisions taken following positive action must then be made on merit (unless section 159 of the Equality Act 2010 applies).

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 specifies 9 features which, for the advancement of equality and opportunity, are afforded protection from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. In alphabetical order they are: Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation.

Reasonable Adjustments

The duty to make reasonable adjustments is covered in the Equality Act 2010 to ensure positive steps are taken to remove the barriers those with disabilities face so they are not substantially disadvantaged. The 3 main areas organisations and establishments need to consider are:

1. To change provisions, criteria or practices which may provide a barrier unless it is unreasonable to do so
2. To change a physical feature of a business or premises which may make access or use difficult for those with disabilities
3. To provide auxiliary aids or services, which may include additional services, in order to help a person with a disability to either access or do something

Stereotype

A widely held, positive or negative, image or idea which an individual believes about the characteristics of a certain group.

Victimisation

Occurs when an individual is singled out for unfair treatment or discrimination as a result of making a complaint/grievance, threatening to make a complaint/grievance, or supporting a complaint/grievance made by a third party.

Appendix 3

Equal opportunity policy statements

Age

We will:

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that people are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

We will:

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities. If we feel that a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will discuss this with you and try to find an alternative solution where possible
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation
- If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate
- We will keep the physical features of our premises under review to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

Race

We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents and
- actively promote race equality and inclusion in the Company
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same.

Gender

We will:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same and
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transgender people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

Sexual orientation

We will:

- ensure that we take account of the needs of everyone, including the LGBTQ+ communities
- promote positive images of the LGBTQ+ communities
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the LGBTQ+ communities
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone and

- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same.

Religion or belief

We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity during pregnancy or maternity leave
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about pregnancy or maternity and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged during pregnancy or maternity leave and that we take account of the needs of our employees' during pregnancy or maternity leave.

Marriage or civil partnership

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity regardless of marriage or civil partnership status
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of their marriage or civil partnership status.

Part time and fixed term work

Part time and fixed term staff should be treated the same as comparable full time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Equal pay

We will ensure that all employees have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

Equality and Diversity Declaration:

I have read and understood Survivors' Networks Equality and Diversity Policy and agree to work to the expected standards as outlined. Regardless of my background and circumstances, I agree to treat all colleagues, services users and visitors with respect and dignity while carrying out the duties and responsibilities of my role at Survivors Network.

Signature**Print Name****Date**

(Please return this signed declaration to the Office Manager.)