



## *Volunteer Policy*

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### **Suicide Bereaved Network (SBN) Volunteer Policy**

#### **Introduction**

SBN is a membership-based organisation which exists to provide peer support to people bereaved by suicide.

In line with this mission SBN seeks to involve volunteers to:

- ensure our services meet the needs of the bereaved
- to ensure our support groups provide a safe space for those who are grieving
- provide new skills and perspectives
- increase our contact with the communities we serve
- ensure that we represent our members' interests

#### **Principles**

This Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- SBN will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to SBN's work
- SBN does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff

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- SBN expects that staff will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work
- SBN recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- In particular, SBN is mindful that many volunteers are themselves bereaved. SBN will strive to provide support to volunteers in managing their own bereavement, as well as supporting them to support others.

### Practice guidelines

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers. More detailed information, including copies of the various documents referred to, is provided in SBN's Volunteers' Handbook [*in progress 12/09/2108*].

### Recruitment

All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.

### Volunteer agreements and voluntary work outlines

Each volunteer will have a volunteer agreement establishing what SBN undertakes to provide them. In addition, they will agree to a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking. Neither of these documents is a contract; SBN has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers. Each volunteer will also receive a Volunteers' Handbook [*in progress 12/09/2108*].

### Expenses

All volunteers will have their travel and other expenses reimbursed. Volunteers working a minimum of five hours per day will be able to claim expenses for lunch (for details see the Volunteers' Handbook [*in progress 12/09/2108*]).

### Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction into SBN and their own area of work. Training will be provided as appropriate. Where possible

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volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff.

### **Support**

All volunteers will have a named Trustee as their main point of contact. They will be provided with regular supervision to feed back on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

### **The volunteer's voice**

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning SBN and its work.

### **Insurance**

All volunteers are covered by SBN's insurance policy whilst they are engaged in any work on SBN's behalf.

### **Health and safety**

Volunteers are covered by SBN's Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which is in the Volunteers Handbook *[in progress 12/09/2108]*.

### **Equal opportunities**

SBN operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. A copy is in the Volunteers' Handbook. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy.

### **Problem solving**

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers. A copy of the procedure is included in the Volunteers' Handbook *[in progress 12/09/2108]*.

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. In view of the sensitive nature of suicide bereavement, all volunteers will receive specific training on Data Protection, GDPR and confidentiality as part of their induction training.