

SAMARITANS

Tel: +44 (0)20 8394 8300 Out-of-hours press phone: +44 (0)7943 809162 www.samaritans.org

Samaritans Volunteering Policy

Introduction

Samaritans mission is to be available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

In line with this mission and to meet our vision and values Samaritans seeks to involve volunteers to ensure that our service meets the needs of our callers striving for an ever higher quality of service by placing a high value on the recruitment, selection, training and development of volunteers.

Principles of the policy

The Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the policies and procedures of Samaritans, the Essential Qualities of Samaritans' service and by the following principles of volunteering:

- Samaritans will endeavour to ensure that volunteers are able to contribute fully to the organisation and are properly integrated into the structure and ethos of the organisation.
- Samaritans expects that volunteers and staff at all levels will work positively together to fulfil the mission, vision and values of the organisation
- Samaritans recognises that volunteers have personal and development needs and will seek to help volunteers to meet those needs as well as providing them with the training to work effectively
- Samaritans is committed to the effective support and management of volunteers

Practice Guidelines

The following guidelines deal with some of the practical aspects of the volunteer's involvement with Samaritans:

Recruitment & Selection

All prospective volunteers will be recruited and selected following Samaritans principles of selection and good practice to ensure their appropriateness for their volunteer role.

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Commitment & Role Outlines

Each volunteer will sign a commitment pledge establishing their commitment to Samaritans and what Samaritans will provide for them. In addition they will have a written outline of the role they are expected to fulfil. This is not a contract and Samaritans has no intention of creating a contract with a volunteer. Each volunteer will receive a Volunteer Handbook and have access to the Guide to Volunteering.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are bound by the requirement of confidentiality as stated in the policies of Samaritans.

Training

All volunteers will receive sufficient training to fulfil their role in line with Samaritans Guidelines. Training is provided as appropriate and in line with the organisation's Guidelines.

Support

All volunteer roles in Samaritans are supported. Listening volunteers have access to a volunteer care team and to a leader when on shift. They will be provided with regular supervision to feedback on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

Expenses

Volunteers should not be out of pocket because of their voluntary work and can have their travel and other out of pocket expenses reimbursed.

The Volunteer's Voice

Samaritans is a volunteer led organisation and volunteers have representation in all areas of the work of Samaritans. Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Samaritans. Forums for this are shown in the Guide to Volunteering and the Volunteer Handbook.

Insurance

Volunteers are covered by Samaritans insurance policies in accordance with our policy documentation.

Health & Safety

Volunteers are covered by the Branch Health & Safety Policy.

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

Samaritans, Incorporated in England and Wales, a Company limited by guarantee Registered Number 219432, and a Registered Charity Number 219432, having its Registered Office at The Upper Mill, Kingston Road, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 2AF

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Diversity and Equality Policy

Samaritans has a Diversity and Equality Policy in respect of volunteers and staff. A copy of this can be found in the Guide to Volunteering. Volunteers & staff should have an understanding of and commitment to our Diversity and Equality Policy.

Problem Solving

We aim to solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A Grievance procedure and a Disciplinary procedure have been drawn up for dealing with these issues. A copy of the procedures is included in the Guide to Volunteering.

Representing the Samaritans

As a Samaritans volunteer you have a responsibility to uphold the name and reputation of the organisation at all times.