

Costa Blanca Samaritans *operating as* Samaritans in Spain (SiS)

Internal Regulations for the Management of Samaritans in Spain

1. Legal Registration

Costa Blanca Samaritans was registered with the Generalitat Valencia on 16th April 2008 and on 26th October 2016 obtained national registration. SiS is a not for profit organisation and all its workers are Volunteers.

The registered office is: Samaritans in Spain, Centro Comercial Punta Marina, local 13, 03185 Torrevieja (Alicante), España.

The President, The Secretary, the Treasurer and the Vice-President [if any] comprise “*La Junta Directiva*” of SiS (“The Executives”) and are supported in their work with other Trustees who together comprise the board of trustees (BoT) of SiS. The number of members of BoT will not exceed 7.

SiS is working under a licence from Samaritans UK (SUK) with an agreement to use the name “Samaritans” (SUK own the trademark for the word “Samaritans”). Following a decision taken by the Trustees to ensure English speakers across Spain would feel free to access the services offered, in 2011 the organisation adopted the “trading name” of Samaritans in Spain (SiS).

2. Objective

Emotional problems that can lead to despair and ultimately suicide are an increasingly common phenomena found in most societies. The objective of SiS is to provide a professional support service to people who are experiencing such emotional difficulties, with the intention of increasing levels of wellbeing in the community and reducing levels of suicide and attempted suicide by allowing callers to explore their feelings without judgement or prejudice.

SiS is a totally not for profit, charitable organisation and no individual Volunteer shall benefit directly or indirectly as a result of their position within the organisation.

3. Geographical Operation

Sis will provide the telephone support and e-mail services across the whole of Spain and the drop in centre for people within travelling distance of the base in Torrevieja.

SiS also have a satellite centre based at the British Embassy in Madrid and according to the strategy explores the possibility of opening new drop in centre(s) in other areas.

4. Activities

A confidential, telephone-based service will be provided 24 hours a day 7 days a week as will the e-mail service. The drop in centre in Torrevieja (and any satellites) will be open at times, as approved by the BoT .

SiS are also operating a prison visiting scheme at the request of the British Ambassador to Spain, as well as issuing a letter contact pack via the various consulates.

SiS are involved in Community Awareness Raising at exhibitions, conferences and other places where they are invited to attend.

The order and extent to which these services are implemented or withdrawn will be dictated by need and viability and be at the sole discretion of BoT.

5. Affiliations

- SiS is an independent organisation offering support to all members of the community seeking to use the service.
- SiS may work in conjunction with other independent or statutory organisations that offer related services to the community.
- SiS will work with people regardless of their nationality, economic status, religious or political beliefs or sexual orientation and as an organisation has no political or religious agenda or affiliations.
- SiS is affiliated to “Befrienders Worldwide”, which is the international body of similar independent “samaritans” groups.

6. How people become volunteers.

a) Listener:

Following the initial application a documented selection process follows consisting of informal and formal interviews. Where people pass through this successfully a training programme commences. When this is successfully completed a probationary period begins under the supervision of trained mentors answering the help line. At successful completion of probation, which can be extended if necessary, the individual becomes a Listener and continues to have a mentor for support for the rest of their listening career.

b) Other volunteers:

Other volunteers perform important tasks in the shop, as Trustees or with other practical tasks. Any volunteer must live up to SiS's standards of confidentiality and code of conduct to protect the reputation of Samaritans.

7. How we decline volunteer status.

This can occur at any stage of the selection status, prior to the award of volunteer status. This will occur because:

- The person does not display the skills and capacities required of a Samaritan, nor the potential for development into a Samaritan.
- It is felt that it is not the right time for someone to become a listener (eg. due to unresolved personal life issues the individual may not be able to sufficiently separate their issues from those of a caller, so either or both run the risk of being harmed by the experience).
- The applicant feels SiS service is not for them.

A declined individual may re-apply to become a volunteer not earlier than 6 months from the date they were declined.

8. How we censure

Behaviour or conduct

- i. in contravention of the published policies or processes
- ii. which is contrary to decisions taken by BoT
- iii. which is contrary to decisions taken by a Branch
- iv. which is contrary to the interests of the organisation of SiS (or Spanish Law)

may be reported by any Volunteer, or any member of the public observing or discovering that fact. It will be investigated and reviewed in accordance with the SiS “Complaints and Grievances Policy” or if appropriate the SiS Whistleblowing Policy.

9. Sanctions against inappropriate behaviour

a) Noting article 8 above, censure steps may include, but not be limited to:

- i. A renewed and specified probationary period.
- ii. A requirement for a listener to undertake re-training.
- iii. A loss of managerial role within SiS.
- iv. Termination of Volunteer status of SiS where this will usually, but not necessarily be a SiS management decision, subject always to ratification by BoT. Individuals who have had their Volunteer status terminated under the terms of these Internal Regulations will not be permitted to re-apply (under the terms of Spanish law and SiS’ statutes).

b) If the alleged behaviour or conduct is that of a member of the Management team, the matter will be investigated and appropriate action decided by BoT's Standards and Conduct Committee (SCC).

c) If the alleged behaviour or conduct is that of a Trustee, the matter will be investigated and appropriate action decided by BoT's SCC.

d) SCC is established ad hoc by the BoT and usually comprised of 2 – 4 persons chaired by a trustee. Other members of SCC may be non-trustees if appropriate. The specific terms of reference for the SCC are decided when the SCC is established.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SiS

Board of Trustees

a) SiS is managed by a Board of Trustees (BoT) which is legally responsible for the management of the organisation in accordance with statutes granted under Spanish Law.

b) The Trustees of SiS are jointly and severally responsible for:

- The overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation and its financial health.
- The probity of its activities.

- The development of the organisation's aims, strategy and objectives in accordance with the *Estatutos*, and with legal and regulatory guidelines.

c) The BoT, which may consist of up to seven members, has the following statutory positions:

President

- The principle responsibility of the President is to successfully ensure the proper and effective functioning of BoT and thus solving the tasks according to the statutes. The President must ensure an appropriate governance framework for SiS operations, and be the primary leading figure for SiS both internally and externally.
- The President is supported in his/her work by members of BoT who jointly own the multiannual Strategic Plan from which the Annual Operating Plan is distilled.
- The President can delegate tasks and responsibilities, but under Spanish law the President has a number of legal responsibilities, principally financial, which cannot be devolved.
- The President together with BoT must ensure compliance with SiS 'statutes.
- The President will be elected by the General Assembly, usually by recommendation from BoT.

Vice President [if any]

- The Vice President is to deputise for the President according to the Statutes. Thus the Vice President will be the first choice Deputy for the President and chair BoT should the President not be present.

Treasurer

- The principle responsibility of the Treasurer is to ensure the financial probity of the organisation.
- The Treasurer will be elected by the General Assembly, usually by recommendation from BoT, and with specific responsibility to the organisation as a whole for its sound financial regime.
- The Treasurer will oversee the financial matters of SiS in line with good practice and in accordance with the *Estatutos* and legal requirements. The Treasurer will ensure that effective financial measures, controls and procedures are put in place and are appropriate for the organisation as a whole and for all its operational units.

Secretary

- The principle responsibility of the Secretary is to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the meetings of the Board of Trustees (BoT) and any sub-Groups to the BoT, providing assistance and support to its members.
- The Secretary will be elected by the General Assembly, usually by recommendation from BoT, with specific responsibility to the organisation as a whole for its sound governance and for the guidance of the BoT in the responsible and effective execution of its duties.

d) The BoT determines Standing Operating Procedures for the Trustees with regulatory framework for the BoT's functions and responsibilities in accordance with the Statutes.

Vacancy on BoT

Any vacancy which occurs on The Executives will be covered in the first General Assembly to be held. However, the BoT may provisionally cover any vacancy by appointing another member until the next General Assembly.

Management

BoT decides how to manage and execute the operations of SiS as a whole and appoints the senior management officers who may be trustees or non-trustees. It is a crucial task for BoT at all times to ensure the best possible management structure and to appoint qualified officers to the most important SiS positions - and thus enable SiS to:

- successfully manage the operations of the organisation, while delivering the objectives and targets outlined in the Annual Operating Plan;
- deliver services to users (“callers”) in accordance with SiS policies and standards;
- provide oversight of the listening service throughout the organisation according to the SiS standards and procedures and including the welfare of volunteers;
- ensure that procedures are in place to provide proper training of new listeners, volunteer teams and trainers;
- coordinate events, training of volunteers etc. throughout the organisation;
- manage all SiS business appropriate to the charity shop(s) in accordance with SiS policies, procedures and decisions of BoT.

Annual General Meeting of the Volunteers

- a) Each year BoT will present to the Volunteers of SiS at the Annual Volunteers Meeting:
 - (i) the President’s annual report;
 - (ii) the Treasurer’s annual report including the annual accounts & balance sheet for the latest financial year;
 - (iii) the Secretary’s annual report, including any changes to the legal status of SiS;
 - (iv) the current strategic plan and explain changes;
 - (v) the annual reports from the management team.
- b) In addition, other reports requested by BoT may be presented as appropriate, e.g. on fundraising, training etc. The Annual Report and Accounts will be available to all volunteers via the Volunteers section of the SiS website or other media.