



Confidentiality Policy

Samaritans in Spain (SiS) is committed to providing a Listening and Support Service for people experiencing emotional difficulties, feelings of despair and/or suicidal ideas.

This Confidentiality Policy exists in order to protect **all** who use our Service (Service Users) as well as **all** of our Volunteers and the Organisation itself.

It is vitally important to ensure that confidentiality is maintained with in our Service because any breach of confidentiality, whether intentional or unintentional, will weaken or in some cases, destroy trust between individuals and/or the Organisation.

1 Service User Definition

The term 'Service User' is intended to cover anyone who accesses our service for emotional support, either by phone, face to face, email or letter.

2 Volunteers

- a)** The term 'Volunteer' is intended to cover **all** those who are involved in the work of SiS on a continual basis, i.e. Listeners, **all** Non-Listeners, Shop Workers/Mangers, Trustees, Trainers, fund raisers, Branch Manager, Recruitment Team, Mentors and Leaders.
- b)** All Volunteers will sign a Declaration of Confidentiality and are expected to abide by this Confidentiality Policy even **after** leaving the Organisation. **All** Volunteers are to confirm that they have read, and agree to the content of this Policy, by signing the sheet in the Policy Document file, which is held in the bottom draw of the filing cabinet in the Drop -In Centre.
- c)** Volunteers may discuss calls and face-to-face contacts amongst themselves, but only in so far as to provide support for Service Users or the Volunteers involved. It is important that these conversations take place in a private environment, in order to avoid conversations being over heard by members of the public.
- d)** On occasions, None-Listening Volunteers will over hear such discussions or dialogue with or about Service Users. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.
- e)** Volunteers have the right to remain anonymous and other than a preferred name **no** Volunteer will divulge personal details to a Service user.
- f)** The identity of active Volunteers and their role within the Organisation must be protected at all times and never disclosed out side of the Organisation, without expressed consent of the Volunteer involved.

g) If a Volunteer finds that he/she recognises a Service User, the Volunteer should make this clear to the person and ask if they would prefer to speak to another Volunteer. Alternatively the Volunteer might decide that he/she would prefer a call or face to face contact be dealt with by another Volunteer and, in this case, he/she should tell the Service User that this is happening and that it is standard practice.

3 Disclosure of Service User Information

a) Only in the most exceptional circumstances will a Volunteer disclose to someone outside of the Organisation information about Service Users. Namely:

i) Where a Service User gives information relating to an act of terrorism.

ii) Where a Service User gives traceable information relating to a crime.

In both cases, the Service User should be made aware of SiS's policy on Disclosure of information, but that it does not preclude a **willingness to listen**.

The Volunteer will not make the decision to inform the appropriate authorities without first discussing with the Duty Leader and where appropriate, the Branch Manager

4 Records

a) Generally, Volunteers will not ask for identifying details during calls, face to face contact or any other form of contact, but any info freely offered by a Service User may be briefly recorded on the record log sheet. E.g. a first name. The logbook should not be removed from the Listening Room.

b) Statistical information may be shown or disclosed outside of SiS **only** with permission of a Trustee and **never** discussed with the public or family and friends.

c) Any information that may identify a Service User i.e. emails and letters, will be kept in a secure place.

5 Staffing

a) All personal information relating to past, existing or potential Volunteers of SiS will be treated as confidential. It will be disclosed only to members of the Recruitment Team in order that they may fulfill their operational roles.
These records will be kept in a securely locked place.

6 Training

a) Training provided by SiS will reinforce this Confidentiality Policy and will guard against unintentional 'casual disclosure' to any person outside the Organisation. The disclosure of information about a Service User, whether to a family member, friend, or any other person or body who is not an active member of SiS, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.



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- b)** Service User contact interventions may be used to facilitate training sessions but identity must **always** be concealed.

7 Publicity

- a)** No information will be given to the press without the full agreement of the person(s) involved, and with the agreement of a Trustee or the Marketing & Fundraising Manager.

- b)** Examples of Service User contacts may be used in talks and fundraising, but under **no** circumstances are names or other identifiable features to be divulged. Any such activities must have the prior agreement of a Trustee or the Marketing & Fundraising Manager.

8 Visitors to the SiS Branch

- a)** It is important that **all** Volunteers are mindful of the need to maintain confidentiality in the Branch as they go about their SiS duties, especially when visitors are in the vicinity. For example, members of the public who may be in in the Charity Shop or workmen/contractors who may be in the Branch.

9 Undertaking Duties Outside of the Branch

- a)** Maintaining confidentiality is equally important when Volunteers go about their SiS duties outside of the Branch i.e. when prison visiting, facilitating clinics, undertaking walkabouts, attending charity events, or manning one of our stalls.

The interests of our Service Users, all of our Volunteers and the Organisation itself are sacrosanct.

Any breach of this Confidentiality Policy will be regarded as an extremely serious, disciplinary matter, which will lead to suspension, possible dismissal and could result in legal action being taken against you.