



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Our Commitment

Samaritans in Spain (SiS) complies with Spanish Comprehensive Law 15/22 and is committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued and where those with diverse experiences are able to contribute.

We recognise that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experience bring fresh ideas and perceptions and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and approachable. We recognise that this will enhance our effectiveness in carrying out our work.

We will foster a supportive and inclusive culture for:

- All those who need and use our services
- Our volunteers
- Other stakeholders

Policy Statement

SiS is committed to ensuring that no applicant, volunteer, staff member or service user is discriminated against directly, indirectly, by association or perception because of disability, gender (including transgender/ gender reassignment), race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, marital status or civil partnership, responsibility for dependents, sexuality, pregnancy or maternity, age, trade union activity, political or religious, agnostic or atheist beliefs and (unrelated to the post) criminal convictions.

SiS recognises the positive value of diversity, promoting equality and fairness, and challenging discrimination. We are committed to ensuring that we treat all our people with dignity and respect and will not tolerate any form of harassment, victimisation or discriminatory behaviour. Staff and volunteers will be supported to challenge unwanted behaviours, through training and referral to management teams.

This policy statement will be made available to all volunteers via the Vols Area on the SiS website.

SiS will keep its policies under review and will implement changes where these could improve equality of opportunity. This commitment applies to all the SiS's policies and procedures, not just those specifically connected with equal opportunities and diversity.

Services

SiS is committed to meeting the diverse needs of its users. We will take steps to identify the needs of service users in our community and develop services, policies and procedures accordingly.

We will ensure, as far as possible that service users:

- Are able to access our services in ways that suit them.
- Have their concerns listened to.
- Are treated fairly, with dignity and respect and without discrimination.

Volunteers

We recognise the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will continually take steps to ensure that:

- We endeavour to recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates possible.
- Opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit.
- Where appropriate, positive action measures are taken to attract applicants from all sections of society and especially from those underrepresented.
- All volunteers are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Selection for all training and development opportunities will be purely on the basis of merit and organisational priorities.

Implementing the Policy

Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for implementing the policy rests with the Board of Trustees.

The BoT will appoint a senior person within it to be responsible for the operation of the policy.

Managers

Managers are responsible for promoting this policy and ensuring it is understood and complied with by all volunteers in their area, dealing with breaches and complaints seriously, speedily, sensitively and confidentially and contributing ideas for the advancement of diversity principles within SiS. Managers are expected to be proactive in identifying circumstances in which elements of the policy can benefit individual members of staff and encourage and support staff in making use of such benefits.

All Volunteers

At all levels of SiS volunteers are expected to have read and understood this policy, to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles and requirements, to encourage the same level of behaviour in colleagues and immediately report any breaches witnessed, whenever it is reasonable for them to do so.

Complaints

SiS will treat seriously all complaints under this policy made by volunteers, service users or other third parties and will take appropriate action.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the SiS's Complaints and Grievances Procedure, as appropriate and the complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures.

SiS does, however, encourage staff to resolve misunderstandings and problems informally wherever possible, depending on the circumstances. Whether dealt with informally or formally, it is important for staff who may have caused offence to understand that it is no defence to say that they did not intend to do so, or to blame individuals for being over sensitive. It is the impact of the behaviour, rather than the intent, that counts and that should shape the solution found both to the immediate problem and to preventing further similar problems in the future.