



# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedures

## 1. General Statement of Intent

1.1 Survive's ethos is that everyone is equal. At Survive, we respect differences whilst embracing diversity.

1.2 Survive is committed to:

- developing, maintaining and nurturing a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion for service-users, staff, volunteers and trustees;
- responding to the needs of individuals in a fair and equitable manner;
- providing an environment free of stereotyped and oppressive beliefs, attitudes and practices;
- protecting individuals from discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- investigating complaints in relation to these matters, and where necessary, taking decisive action, which may include disciplinary action (see Appendix 1).

1.3 Survive recognises that this work is an ongoing process of review, reflection and critical thinking which will, at times, necessitate new ways of working.

1.4 This policy ensures that Survive meets the requirements of current legislation and states that no prospective or existing service-user, employee, volunteer or trustee will be treated less favourably on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics as defined by Equality Act 2010 (unless there is an objective justification for doing so) and will not be subject to harassment or victimisation as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

## 2. Scope of the Policy

2.1 This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees and service-users and highlights the circumstances in which Survive may not directly support a service-user or may withdraw a service.

## 3. Definitions

### 3.1 Protected characteristic (*Equality Act 2010*)

These are defined by the Equality Act 2010 as: age, disability, gender reassignment (trans), marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Equality Act 2010 also highlights protection from discrimination relating to pregnancy and maternity.

### 3.2 Equity and Equality (*NCVO<sup>1</sup>*)

Equality means ensuring every individual has equal opportunities. By being conscious of and actively challenging bias or prejudice we make sure no-one is treated less favourably because of who they are or what makes them different from other people. This requires a

<sup>1</sup> NCVO (2021). Get started with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Accessed 4 October 2021. Available at: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/organisation/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/get-started-with-equity-diversity-and-inclusion>

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proactive approach to make reasonable adjustments that address the visible and invisible barriers people face.

Equity means treating people in ways that make sure they are not unfairly prevented from accessing resources and opportunities nor that others have an unfair advantage. Simply providing the same opportunities to everyone is not an effective way to create equality of outcomes. Equality of outcomes highlights rather than giving everyone the same thing, it is about giving people what they need for fair access. This is about removing inequalities to make sure everyone has the chance to realise their ambitions.

### **3.3 Diversity (NCVO<sup>2</sup>)**

Diversity means having differences within an organisation or setting. Diversity recognises we are all different in many ways. People with differing identities, backgrounds and experiences should all have equitable access to resources and decision-making. Some people prefer to use the term 'representation' to focus on how organisations should be reflective of the society we live in and the communities we serve.

### **3.4 Inclusion (NCVO<sup>2</sup>)**

Inclusion means being proactive to make sure people of different backgrounds, experiences and identities feel welcomed, respected and fully able to participate. It is not only about creating a diverse environment but also about ensuring a culture exists where individuals can be their full selves.

### **3.5 Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989)**

Intersectionality is a term to describe the unique and complex discrimination that an individual may experience due to the interconnectedness of their social identities (e.g. a Black woman may experience both sexism and racism combined, resulting in a unique form of discrimination that requires a meaningful and appropriate support response).

3.5.1 Survive acknowledges and understands that this interconnectedness of social identities may create:

- unique and complex experiences of discrimination
- barriers to accessing and engaging with our services
- barriers to working or volunteering for Survive

3.5.2 Survive is committed to learning about the intersectional experiences of prospective and current service-users, staff, volunteers and trustees to ensure that everyone is able to access support from or work or volunteer for Survive.

### **3.6 Bullying and harassment**

3.6.1 Survive believes that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at Survive.

3.6.2 Harassment is *“unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”* (Equalities Act 2010). The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race,

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<sup>2</sup> NCVO (2021). Get started with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Accessed 4 October 2021. Available at: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/organisation/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/get-started-with-equity-diversity-and-inclusion>

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religion or belief, sex, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and sexual orientation.

3.6.3 Bullying is characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)).

3.6.4 Bullying or harassment may be obvious or it may be insidious. Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unacceptable to the individual. Examples may include:

- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone by word or behaviour (particularly on racial, sexual or disability grounds);
- copying material that may be critical of someone and distributing it to others who do not need to know;
- ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail
- exclusion or victimisation;
- preventing an individual's progress by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities;
- deliberately undermining a competent worker by constant criticism and overloading with work;
- unfair treatment.

3.6.5 Survive acknowledges that individuals are responsible for their own behaviours and expects:

- all staff, volunteers and trustees to show respect towards each other and towards service-users at all times and adhere to this policy;
- all service-users to show respect towards those they come into contact with whilst accessing Survive's services including other service users, staff, volunteers and trustees and adhere to this policy.

### **3.7 Dual experience**

Dual experience refers to survivors of sexual violence who have also perpetrated sexual offences.

## **4. Protected characteristics**

### **4.1 Age**

Survive supports all adult survivors of rape, sexual assault and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA). Survive does not support children or young people under the age of 18 years of age affected by rape, sexual assault and CSA, however, will try and facilitate access to alternative support.

### **4.2 Disability**

Survive recognises that a number of service-users, staff, volunteers and trustees will have a visible or invisible disability defined as a physical and/or a mental health condition which has a substantial and long-term impact on their ability to do normal day-to-day activities. Survive will not discriminate against those with physical or mental health conditions, and where necessary, will make reasonable adjustments. Where Survive premises are not accessible to individuals with mobility issues, Survive will hire an accessible location or offer an alternative to face-to-face counselling (e.g. telephone, online).

### **4.3 Trans (gender reassignment)**

Survive welcomes and will not discriminate against, harass or victimise service-users, employees, volunteers or trustees who are trans meaning their gender identity is

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different from the sex assigned to them when they were born. Survive respects an individual's pronouns. In line with the Gender Recognition Act 2004, Survive will not disclose protected information relating to an individual's application for or approval of gender reassignment.

#### **4.4 Marriage and civil partnership**

Survive welcomes and will not discriminate against, harass or victimise service-users, employees, volunteers or trustees based on their relationship status (i.e. whether married, co-habiting, in a civil partnership status or single).

#### **4.5 Race**

Survive welcomes and will not discriminate against, harass or victimise service-users, employees, volunteers or trustees based on their race (including colour, nationality, citizenship, ethnic or national origin).

#### **4.6 Religion, belief or non-belief**

Survive welcomes and will not discriminate against, harass or victimise service-users, employees, volunteers or trustees based on their religious, philosophical or spiritual beliefs or non-belief. Survive will not tolerate any form of religious/spiritual discrimination, such as, islamophobia, antisemitism etc.

#### **4.7 Sex**

The Equality Act defines sex in binary terms of man or woman, however, Survive acknowledges that some service-users, employees, volunteers or trustees may self-identify as non-binary or gender-fluid meaning their gender identity may change over time. Survive will not discriminate against, harass or victimise service-users, employees, volunteers or trustees based on their gender and pronouns. Survive respects an individual's pronoun. Survive will not tolerate any form of misogyny; violence against women and girls; or sex discrimination towards staff, volunteers, trustees and service-users.

#### **4.8 Sexual orientation**

Survive welcomes service-users, employees, volunteers and trustees from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual and additional communities (LGBTQIA+). Survive will not discriminate against, harass or victimise service-users, employees, volunteers or trustees based on their sexual orientation. Survive recognises that sexual violence can occur in any relationship and is not limited to heterosexual relationships. Survive will not tolerate any form of homophobia, transphobia or bisexual erasure.

#### **4.9 Pregnancy, maternity and parenting**

Survive welcomes and will not discriminate against, harass or victimise service-users, employees, volunteers or trustees who are pregnant and/or parenting and where necessary, make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs.

### **5. Non-protected characteristics**

#### **5.1 Economic status**

Outside of contractual arrangements, access to all Survive services will be free of charge. Service-users will be invited to make a contribution, however, Survive will never stop anyone unable to make a contribution from accessing our specialist services.

#### **5.2 Enhanced DBS checks and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**

Survive supports vulnerable adults. All employees, volunteers and trustees at Survive are subject to an Enhanced DBS check so that any criminal background (including police

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cautions, bind-overs, or any criminal convictions that would otherwise have been considered “spent” under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) are disclosed to the organisation.

### **5.3 Sexual offending**

5.3.1 As a survivor focussed organisation, Survive will not appoint staff, volunteers or trustees who have perpetrated any sexual offence - whether as a juvenile or adult.

5.3.2 Survive may offer a service directly or indirectly to ‘dual experience’ service-users in limited circumstances and based on a case-by-case basis with all information taken into account (see Interim Dual Experience Policy).

### **5.4 Data collection relating to protected characteristics**

5.4.1 To ensure we are meeting the needs of a diverse group of survivors in our community and identify gaps in our service, Survive will collect, collate and may share aggregated and non-identifying data in relation to a person’s: age; disability; gender identity; marital status; race; sex; and sexual orientation.

5.4.2 Survive will not collect data in relation to a person’s religion, belief or non-belief.

5.4.3 All personal data will be stored and handled in accordance with our Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Data Protection policy.

### **6.1 Internal and external communications and partnerships**

6.1.1 In order to promote equality of access to Survive services and equality of access to opportunities within Survive, we will advertise our services and any employment and volunteering opportunities in places accessible to all communities (i.e. disabled people, LGBTQIA+ community, BAME community).

6.1.2 Survive will strive to provide internal and external communications (including information and resource materials) which are written jargon-free and free from oppressive language (e.g. ageist, ableist, racist, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, homophobic, transphobic etc) or sexist images, language or attitudes or any other discriminatory practices.

6.1.3 Where necessary, Survive will support service-users via interpreters and signers and will make information available in accessible formats (e.g. audio file or large print) on request.

6.1.4 Survive will strive to work together with others who specialise in supporting marginalised communities locally and nationally to better understand and meet the unique and intersectional needs of our service-users, staff, volunteers and trustees.

## **7. Development of services and facilities**

Survive aims to actively encourage feedback from marginalised, underrepresented and minority groups and communities in order to improve our service delivery. This should cover all aspects of our service, including: management practice, recruitment, employment, volunteer involvement, training and development, publicity / publications and access to resources.

## **8. Monitoring performance**

Survive acknowledges that sexual violence exists in all communities. Service-users, employees, volunteers and trustees should reflect the demographics of the communities we serve. Survive will monitor the demographics of service-users, employees, volunteers and trustees in order to better understand which communities are struggling to access our

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support and which communities are underrepresented within Survive. Survive will process any personal data collected in accordance with the Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Data Protection policy.

## **9. Equity, diversity and inclusion training**

9.1 Survive is committed to keeping staff, volunteers and trustees up-to-date with any equity, diversity and inclusion training so that they are better able to support service-users from marginalised, underrepresented and minority groups and have an understanding of their intersectional experiences.

9.2 Survive commits to mandatory online Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training as part of employee, volunteer and trustee inductions processes. Refresher training will be provided to staff, volunteers and trustees every 3 years.

## **10. Access and review**

10.1 All staff, volunteers and trustees will receive a copy of this policy during their induction.

10.2 A hard copy of this policy will be kept in the policy folder in the Survive office and a soft copy will be stored in the policy folder on Sharepoint and the Company Documents folder on HR Breathe. A copy is also available to service-users on our website.

10.3 The Board of Trustees will review this policy every 3 years. Any significant updates will be communicated to the team in between this time, as necessary.

## **Links to other policies**

Code of conduct

Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Data Protection Policy

Complaints policy

Disciplinary policy

Grievance policy

Interim Dual Experience policy

Leave policy

Recruitment

Safeguarding vulnerable adults

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Whistleblowing policy

## **Appendix 1**

### **Overview of complaints procedure**

#### **Step 1**

Raise informally with CEO or Chair of Trustees (if the complaint relates to CEO)

Discussed / resolved via telephone, email or meeting (complainant can be accompanied)

#### **Step 2**

Raise formally in writing with CEO or Chair of Trustees (if the complaint relates to CEO)

Receipt of complaint acknowledged within 5 working days

Discussed / resolved via telephone, email or meeting (complainant can be accompanied)

Outcome shared within 8 weeks

Complainant can seek appeal within 4 weeks of outcome

Nominated trustee assigned as Appeal Manager

Receipt of request for appeal acknowledged by Appeal Manager within 5 working days

Discussed / resolved via telephone, email or meeting (complainant can be accompanied)

Outcome shared within 8 weeks

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