

SKILLS & VOLUNTEERING CYMRU (SVC)



Problem-Solving Procedure

Reviewed April 2020

	Problem-Solving Procedure
1.0	Introduction
1.1	<p>This procedure outlines how SVC will aim to solve problems which may arise, and deal with any staff or volunteer complaints.</p> <p>Whilst working, or volunteering for SVC, it is hoped that all staff and volunteers will experience an environment where they are comfortable and happy. However, from time to time, individuals may experience situations and circumstances which give rise to unhappiness or discomfort.</p> <p>This procedure will ensure that you know how to deal with problems if they arise. It will help you find the most appropriate solution to the problem.</p> <p>SVC wishes to assist in resolving any issues that may arise during the course of your employment or volunteering. We will ensure that any concerns raised are reviewed fully, efficiently and transparently.</p> <p>All complaints and concerns should be dealt with openly, fairly and quickly to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · protect you · minimise any disruption to our beneficiaries and project delivery · demonstrate that we respect our staff, volunteers and beneficiaries · protect our reputation
2.0	Scope of Policy
2.1	<p>This policy applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All SVC volunteers; • All staff who support SVC; • The Trustees of SVC; • SVC beneficiaries; • SVC partner organisations.
2.2	<p>It is hoped that all your questions relating to this policy have been clearly answered. If you have any questions which remain unanswered then please contact the SVC manager.</p>
3.0	Procedure
3.1	Resolving things Informally
3.1	<p>At SVC, we hope, where possible, to resolve issues informally. Very often, discussion of the matter – perhaps with the help of an external person (mediation) – is sufficient to clear things up to the satisfaction of all.</p> <p>If you have a concern or a complaint to make regarding activities within SVC, the behaviour of someone you work with or, in fact, anything at all, you should raise the issue with your supervisor.</p> <p>If an SVC <i>staff member</i> has an issue or concern regarding their <i>employment</i>, they should initially discuss it informally with the SVC manager.</p> <p>If the problem concerns the SVC manager, the SVC staff member should initially discuss it with either the SVC Chairperson, or the Human Resources (HR) Department at Innovate Trust (as the employers of SVC staff).</p> <p>If an SVC <i>volunteer</i> has an issue or concern regarding their <i>volunteering</i>, they should initially discuss it informally with either their Lead Volunteer, or their</p>

	<p>SVC Project Coordinator – whichever is most appropriate. However, if you feel uncomfortable raising your concern with either your Lead Volunteer or your Project Coordinator, then please contact the SVC manager.</p> <p>Whoever you speak to will ensure that your complaint is looked into, and that any steps needed to rectify the situation are taken. They will also ensure that you are given a clear explanation of what has happened. It may be that this stage is carried out by letter or email.</p> <p>We are committed to providing an environment free from discrimination and mistreatment, where everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect. All complaints of bullying or harassment will be taken seriously and will be investigated fairly and independently.</p> <p>If your concern has a safeguarding element to it, your supervisor will refer to the SVC manager.</p> <p>For more information on our safeguarding policies please visit our online policy area at – https://www.svcymru.org/pages/policies-and-procedures</p>
3.2	Problem-Solving Procedure (Formal)
3.2	<p>If you are not satisfied after raising a matter informally, or if you think the matter is too serious to be managed informally, then you should raise your concerns formally. To do this, either speak with, or write to the SVC manager, explaining the issue, providing full details and asking for it to be dealt with formally. If required you can ask another person to do this on your behalf.</p> <p>The SVC manager will acknowledge your concern/complaint within seven working days and tell you the timescale for providing you with a response, normally within 21 working days from the date the complaint is received.</p> <p>Following their investigation, you will receive a formal response to your concern/complaint, which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · details of the investigation carried out; · a decision about whether or not your complaint was upheld or your concern was found to be valid; · the reason for the decision; · any appropriate redress that will be offered, e.g. an apology or help with accessing support from another source; · information about any other actions to be taken as a result of your concerns/complaint. <p>If, for any reason, more time is required to deal with the issue, the SVC manager will tell you the reasons for this and give you a date by which they will respond.</p>
3.3	Review
3.3	<p>If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint or concerns raised, you may ask for a review. You should write a letter setting out the reasons that you are dissatisfied and send it to the Chairperson or the HR manager of Innovate Trust if you are an SVC staff member). Contact details are available from the SVC manager.</p>

	<p>They will either carry out the review of your case or appoint one or more Trustees (or HR staff members – please see Innovate Trust’s Grievance Procedures and Disciplinary Policy) to carry out a review. The Chairperson will acknowledge your request for a review within seven working days and will inform you of the name and contact details of the person(s) who will be handling the review, and the timescale for providing you with a response – this is normally within 21 working days from the date that the review request is received.</p> <p>The review will examine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · the original complaint or issue raised. · the way it has been investigated. · the decision made and any agreed actions. <p>When the review has been completed and they have considered their findings, the Chairperson will write to you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · tell you the outcome of the review and the reasons for this. · inform you of any actions that we will be taking as a result. <p>The outcome of this review is final and no further action is allowed under the problem-solving procedures.</p>
4.0	If Someone Complains about you as a Volunteer
4.1	Resolving things Informally
4.1	<p>Your volunteer supervisor (SVC Manager, Project Co-ordinator or Lead Volunteer) will discuss the complaint with you. They will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • try to resolve the matter by talking to you. • find out more from you about the issue and what might be causing any problems. • identify any goals and any changes needed to help you. • offer you extra support and training where necessary. • agree a deadline to review the situation with you. <p>Your volunteer supervisor will maintain confidentiality regarding your personal experience and any private or sensitive information. Your volunteer supervisor will, however, keep the complainant informed of any measures taken to rectify a situation.</p>
4.2	Problem-Solving Procedure (Formal)
4.2	<p>If the issue has not been resolved through informal discussions – or where the volunteer supervisor thinks that the problem is too serious to deal with informally – they will refer the issue to the SVC manager who will deal with the issue formally.</p> <p>The SVC manager will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issue you with written details outlining the complaint. • give you the opportunity to state your case. You will be allowed to be accompanied by a person of your choice, who is not directly linked to the issue. • make recommendations depending on the nature of their concerns and what they find out about the issue, set further objectives, offer further help and/or make changes to the role and how you are managed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involve a Trustee at this stage if appropriate. <p>In serious cases, or where problems remain unresolved after the above attempts have been made, you will be asked to leave your volunteer role. If we decide to do this, you can ask for that decision to be reviewed.</p> <p>Staff issues will be dealt with following the Policies & Procedures of Innovate Trust, as the employers of SVC staff.</p>
5.0	Unacceptable Behaviour
5.1	<p>In the following circumstances an individual may be asked to leave SVC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Acts of violence towards another volunteer, a beneficiary, a staff member or a member of the public. <input type="checkbox"/> Convictions of a criminal offence that undermines a volunteer's suitability for work with SVC. <input type="checkbox"/> Deliberate falsification of expense claims. <input type="checkbox"/> Deliberate falsification of income received by SVC. <input type="checkbox"/> Disclosure of confidential information relating to SVC or SVC's beneficiaries. <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment. <input type="checkbox"/> Malicious damage to property belonging to SVC, another volunteer, a beneficiary, a staff member or a member of the public. <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of false personal information, or failure to disclose information relevant to his/her work as a volunteer. <input type="checkbox"/> Theft of property belonging to SVC, another volunteer, a beneficiary, a staff member or a member of the public. <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation Several people may be involved in this decision including the SVC manager, SVC Board of Trustees and Innovate Trust as the employers of SVC staff.
6.0	Code of Conduct
6.1	<p>Please note that SVC requests all volunteers abide by the SVC Conduct Agreement Form. Each volunteer is required to sign this form, which details the expectations of SVC volunteers. Additionally, SVC has a responsibility to ensure all volunteers receive high standards of support and volunteer management, as outlined in our Service Conduct Agreement Form.</p> <p>If you feel that SVC is in breach of their commitments to you as a volunteer, then in the first instance please report this to the SVC manager and/or the SVC Board of Trustees.</p>
6.2	<p>Standard of conduct SVC expects from its volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be committed to your project by turning up to sessions, being punctual and ensuring to tell your Lead Volunteer(s)/ Project Co-ordinator/ external contact if you are unable to make a session. A lack of commitment can be harmful to both our beneficiaries and the project as a whole. <input type="checkbox"/> You are responsible for ensuring your attendance is being recorded e.g. making sure your logbook is signed each session, or by signing the project register. <input type="checkbox"/> Treat everyone with fairness and respect. <input type="checkbox"/> Dress appropriately for your volunteering environment, and also be aware of the language you use – remember that you are acting as a role model for SVC. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not share any personal contact information (including social media details) with beneficiaries.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do not arrange to meet beneficiaries outside of volunteering. <input type="checkbox"/> Attend all necessary training or meetings that are required for your project. <input type="checkbox"/> Respect the confidentiality of those you are supporting. On certain projects you may be privy to personal and confidential information about beneficiaries. You should not discuss details about participants with family, friends or others not involved in the project. If you have any concerns, or are worried about something, please talk to an SVC staff member. <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a Duty of Care to the people you work with by disclosing to SVC staff any information a beneficiary tells you that suggests they are at risk of harm or abuse. Following Child Protection and POVA procedures at all times. <input type="checkbox"/> If you have any concerns, or issues, regarding your project, or simply don't think it is right for you, then please talk to your Lead Volunteer or SVC Project Co-ordinator.
6.3	<p>The standard of conduct and performance volunteers can expect from SVC means that volunteers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be fully advised about their volunteering role, what is (and what is not) expected of them. <input type="checkbox"/> Have adequate support in their volunteering. <input type="checkbox"/> Receive appreciation and recognition. <input type="checkbox"/> Be insured appropriately, to ensure they are safe in their volunteering roles. <input type="checkbox"/> Know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong. <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers will receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses on presenting their receipts to the SVC office, this includes travel and project costs. <input type="checkbox"/> Receive appropriate training. <input type="checkbox"/> Free from discrimination and mistreatment. <input type="checkbox"/> Be offered the opportunity for personal development. <input type="checkbox"/> Receive updates on Board meetings, Charity developments and upcoming events.
7.0	Other Policies relating to this Procedure
	<p>Please also see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SVC's Equal Opportunities Policy - SVC's Protection & Safeguarding of Youth Volunteers Policy - SVC's POVA Policy - SVC's Data Protection Policy - SVC's Social Media Policy - <p>SVC staff members should also see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovate Trust's Grievance Procedures - Innovate Trust's Disciplinary Policy - Innovate Trust's Bullying & Harassment Policy