

Trans Inclusion Policy



Date of implementation: January 2022

Overview

This policy seeks to align SATEDA with the pursuit of equitable and fair access to services specifically enabling trans women to seek support from domestic violence and domestic abuse agencies without fear of discrimination. In this, SATEDA recognises that justice, liberation, and the empowerment of all women subject to violence requires that we uphold principles that facilitate a safe and inclusive environment in both the services we offer and within the workplace.

SATEDA acknowledges that systemic and societal barriers can lead to trans women self-excluding from services offered in the women's sector, limiting their ability to move safely in the world with dignity and respect. SATEDA is committed to supporting trans women in our programmes, activism, campaigns, and across our staff and senior leadership.

This policy applies to all members of SATEDA staff, trustees, and volunteers without reservation.

Definitions and responsibilities¹

Bullying – Repeated inappropriate or offensive behaviour which often results from an abuse of power or position. It can be direct or indirect, either verbal, physical or otherwise. Bullying can be conducted by one or more persons against another or others in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. Examples of conduct that may constitute bullying can be found in the SATEDA Handbook (pp.41-42).

Cis-gender (Cis) - Describes people whose gender identity aligns with the sex or gender they were assigned at birth.

Gender - A social construct often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity which is largely determined by culture. This includes the assumed characteristics of men and women along with the roles, relationships, and norms associated with them.

Gender Binary – A classification of two opposing genders consisting of 'man' or 'male' and 'woman' or 'female'. The binary is reinforced by cultures and societies which view gender and sex as distinctly opposite, or opposition, to one another.

¹ Definitions are guided by the 'Trans Inclusion: Definitions and Terminology Guidance' published by Queen Mary, University of London in consultation with sources that include Stonewall and the Gender Identity Research and Education Society.

Gender Identity - A person's innate sense of their own gender which may or may not align with the sex or gender they were assigned at birth. Gender identity is not visible to others and is only the individual's own to declare or to self-identify.

Gender reassignment - The legal term used in the Equality Act 2010 to protect transgender people. The term has since become considered to be inadequate and antiquated.

Harassment – Unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment may take many forms. It can range from extreme forms, such as violence, to less obvious actions, such as persistently ignoring someone. Examples of conduct that may constitute harassment can be found in the SATEDA Handbook (p. 41).

Hetero-normative – A worldview which promotes and endorses heterosexuality as the 'normal' or 'preferred' sexual orientation.

Non-binary - Describes people whose gender identity falls outside of the gender binary of 'man' and 'woman'. Non-binary is used often as an umbrella term for diverse genders (e.g., genderqueer, gender fluid, pangender, and so forth), as well as being used to identify a distinct gender in and of itself.

Non-binary femme/feminine - Describes non-binary people who express their gender through conventionally feminine aesthetics without identifying explicitly as women.

Sex - Assigned to people at birth based on primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions.

Sexual orientation - Describes each person's own sexual, romantic, or emotional attractions to another person(s).

Transgender (Trans) - Describes people whose gender identity does not align with the sex or gender they were assigned at birth

Transgender Man (Trans Man) - A person whose sex was assigned female at birth but who identifies and lives as a man.

Transgender Woman (Trans Woman) - A person whose sex was assigned male at birth but who identifies and lives as a woman.

Statement

SATEDA believes that by changing attitudes, we will change lives. The organisation recognises the lived experiences of trans-women and the barriers that can lead to self-exclusion from services where survivors can be confident, in seeking support, that their safety will be prioritised. Trans-women are subjected to male violence and affected by domestic abuse, domestic violence, and (trans) misogyny at a higher rate than cis-gender women. We maintain that all women, cisgender and transgender, are entitled to be free from abuse and violence. Gender-based violence is a by-product of misogyny and patriarchal oppression which consequently also enforces a binary view of gender. Cis-male partners

and ex-partners are the most common perpetrators of the murder of trans women globally.² Sharing a common perpetrator, it is vital that we are united to end violence against women together.

The Charity is committed to supporting and embedding solidarity with trans women in our services, programmes, activism, campaigns, and as an employer. SATEDA unreservedly welcomes trans women to approach and access services recognising their gender identity as theirs to declare. Declaring one's gender identity, whether that aligns with their sex assigned at birth or not, is an act of self-actualisation that should be treated with respect and dignity. Trans women have the right to access and be supported by services that they feel address their needs and personal lived experiences. We are obligated to ensure that we are not creating, enforcing or contributing to the sustainment of systemic inequality as it affects the trans community.

Fulfilling SATEDA's responsibility to survivors

Trans women experience domestic abuse at a higher rate than cisgender women, are at a greater risk of homelessness, and made especially vulnerable within the women's sector. We believe that it is our duty to ensure our services are accessible to trans women without fear of harassment or discrimination.

Trans women and cis women may face similar patterns of abuse by perpetrators, but trans women may additionally face specific forms of abuse related to their trans identity. SATEDA commits to ongoing training to educate on the specific forms of abuse trans women are subject to and how we can improve our services to meet the needs of this survivor group. We are invested in campaigning on behalf of survivors who are trans women and for trans equality in our public education efforts, as well as making ourselves accessible to these communities in our outreach initiatives.³

Right to privacy and disclosure

All service users have a right to privacy. When service users declare their gender identity, if they are compelled to do so, SATEDA takes this to be honest, factual, and will offer services based on the individual's declaration or self-identification.

SATEDA welcomes all trans women into our services regardless of their stage of transition. Their right to privacy will be upheld, respected, and their safety prioritised first in all circumstances. This includes their right to retain autonomy over their own bodies and to be confident that their declared gender identity will in no way be attempted to be confirmed, examined, or interrogated by SATEDA staff or their peers.

SATEDA services are developed, designed, and aimed to address the gendered nature of abuse and violence to the benefit of those who identify as women. Those who identify as men, cisgender or transgender, are welcome to contact SATEDA for signposting to services and resources that are designed to support men who have experienced domestic violence and domestic abuse. SATEDA is not equipped to advise or support men beyond the first stage of contact. Where we are contacted by

² Faye, S. (2021) *The Transgender Issue*, p. 56.

³ These commitments are aligned with the recommendations issued in the Stonewall Trans Report 2018 for domestic violence services: https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt_in_britain_-_trans_report_final.pdf, p. 15.

a male survivor, one of our trained staff members or volunteers will re-direct to an appropriate service that can offer further support.

This is not to minimise, malign, or marginalise the experiences of men who survive domestic violence and domestic abuse. Rather, we believe that knowledge and expertise where it relates to gender-based violence is crucial to the delivery and mechanisms that allow service users to be confident in their choice to seek out support in the first place. As our delivery and services are not designed for this group, we will refer to agencies who are knowledgeable of the unique and complex circumstances of men or male survivors.

Training

Staff and senior leadership at SATEDA are committed to undergo ongoing training from LGBTQIA+ groups and 'by and for' services to elevate our knowledge of domestic abuse and violence as it impacts trans women.

Training will be recorded and overseen by the EDIA sub-group and senior leadership. The EDIA sub-group will make every attempt to obtain training directly from individuals employed by organisations with lived experience and of diverse identities.

Policy and Procedure

We acknowledge that the language of policies such as those concerning maternity and paternity leave are designed within a hetero-normative construct using terms that cover relationships consisting of two members of the opposite sex.

SATEDA maintains that no person will be discriminated against due to their gender identity or sexual orientation with respect to these policies. Please speak to your Line Manager should you wish to know your entitlements and rights if you are expecting a child biologically or by adoption.

We will be reviewing policies on an on-going basis to adopt gender-inclusive language where this is necessitated.

Trans bullying harassment and discrimination⁴

The Charity is committed to creating a harmonious and safe working environment, which is free from harassment and bullying and in which every employee is treated with respect and dignity. The Charity is committed to ensuring that individuals do not feel apprehensive because of their gender identity, political opinion, marital/civil partnership status, or sexual orientation to engage in services, seek employment, or engage in activities offered by SATEDA. Any allegations of bullying, harassment, and discrimination directed towards trans people, whether service users or staff, are a serious matter and will be investigated to deter further incidents from occurring.

⁴ What follows under the guidance for bullying, harassment and discrimination as it affects trans people is in line with the Positive Work Environment Policy included within the SATEDA Handbook (pp. 40-43).

Allegations of bullying, harassment, or discrimination

Discrimination and hostility towards the trans-community are breaches of the Positive Working Environment Policy and constitute unacceptable behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour will be treated as misconduct, which may include gross misconduct warranting dismissal.

It is important to remember that while you may make comments outside of work or volunteering, for example on social networking sites, the Charity may use such evidence in investigations on bullying and harassment matters.

Employees are responsible for ensuring their behaviour is beyond question and could not be considered in any way to be harassment or bullying. This behaviour and conduct is unacceptable and those experiencing bullying and/or harassment will be supported in making a formal complaint.

If you believe that you are a victim of unlawful discrimination of any kind, you may raise the issue through the grievance procedure. All staff members directly, indirectly, or witness to acts or attitudes of discrimination have an obligation to report this as it occurs to their Line Manager or senior leadership.

Procedure⁵

Complaints can be made both formally and informally. Informal complaints consist of addressing the person responsible, if you are safe and comfortable in doing so, explaining that you feel uncomfortable with the way they are acting towards you.

However, it is understood that to make an informal complaint can and will be difficult in most cases where bullying, harassment, or discrimination is concerned. Therefore, there should be no hesitation in referring in the first instance to the formal complaints process.

A formal complaint must be submitted and reviewed according to the grievance procedure. All complaints will be handled in a timely and confidential manner with a thorough investigation conducted as a result. You will be protected from intimidation, victimisation, or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. Retaliation for complaining about harassment or bullying is a disciplinary offence or may result in permanent dismissal from SATEDA activities.

If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, prompt attention and action will be taken, designed to stop the behaviour immediately and prevent its recurrence. In such circumstances, if relocation proves necessary, every effort will be made to relocate the harasser or bully rather than you as the victim. However, the Charity will endeavour to relocate you if this is your preference.

Relevant Policies

The following policies and procedures can be found in the SATEDA Handbook.

- Equal Opportunity Statement

⁵ This is in line with the Procedure for Dealing with Alleged Harassment or Bullying included within the SATEDA Handbook (p. 43) which cover incidents of harassment or bullying directed towards trans people.

- Positive Working Environment
- Pregnancy and Maternity Rights Policy
- Complaints Procedure

Date policy adopted by the Board 12. 1. 2022

Date policy to be reviewed January 2023