



SHREE SORATHIA PRAJAPATI COMMUNITY UK

श्री सोरठीआ प्रजापति ज्ञाति मंडल यु.के.

# Shree Sorathia Prajapati Community

## Confidentiality Policy

This Policy was approved by the National Executive on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2011

This Policy will be reviewed by 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2012



## SSPC Confidentiality Policy

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**Where Shree Sorathia Prajapati Community [SSPC] is stated, this is inclusive of National and Local Branch committees unless where otherwise stated.**

### 1. General principles

- a) SSPC recognises that colleagues (employees, volunteers, interns, trustees) gain information about individuals and organisations during the course of their work or activities. In most cases such information will not be stated as confidential and colleagues may have to exercise common sense and discretion in identifying whether information is expected to be confidential. This policy aims to give guidance but if in doubt, seek advice from your committee executives.
- b) Colleagues are able to share information with their committee executives in order to discuss issues and seek advice.
- c) Colleagues should avoid exchanging personal information about individuals with whom they have a professional relationship.
- d) Colleagues should avoid talking about organisations or individuals in social settings.
- e) Colleagues will not disclose to anyone, other than their executive committee members, any information considered sensitive, personal, financial or private without the knowledge or consent of the individual, or an officer, in the case of an organisation.
- f) There may be circumstance where colleagues would want to discuss difficult situations with each other to gain a wider perspective on how to approach a problem. The organisation's consent must be sought before discussing the situation, unless the colleague is convinced beyond doubt that the organisation would not object to this. Alternatively, a discussion may take place with names or identifying information remaining confidential.
- g) Where there is a legal duty on SSPC to disclose information, the person that is affected will be informed that disclosure has or will be made.



## SSPC Confidentiality Policy

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### 2. Why information is held

- a) Most information held by SSPC relates to Individuals or service users, members, employees, trustees, and volunteers.
- b) Information is kept to enable SSPC colleagues to understand the needs of Individuals or service users in order to deliver the most appropriate services.
- c) Information about users may be kept for the purposes of monitoring our equal opportunities policy and also for reporting back to funders.

### 3. Access to information

- a) Information is confidential to SSPC as an organisation and may be passed to volunteers, committee members or trustees to ensure the best quality service for users.
- b) Where information is sensitive, i.e. it involves disputes or legal issues, it will be confidential to the person dealing with the case and their executive committee members. Such information should be clearly labelled 'Confidential' and should state the names of the colleagues entitled to access the information and the name of the individual or group who may request access to the information.
- c) Colleagues will not withhold information from their executive committee members unless it is purely personal.
- d) Users may have sight of SSPC records held in their name or that of their organisation. The request must be in writing to the Director giving 14 days' notice and be signed by the individual, or in the case of an organisation's records, by the Chair or Executive Officer. Sensitive information as outlined in para 3.2 will only be made available to the person or organisation named on the file.
- e) Any Employees may have sight of their personnel records by giving 14 days' notice in writing to the executive committee.
- f) When photocopying or working on confidential documents, colleagues must ensure they are not seen by people in passing. This also applies to information on computer screens.



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### 4. Storing information

- a) General non-confidential information about organisations can be kept in unlocked filing cabinets with open access to all SSPC colleagues.
- b) Information about volunteers, interns and other individuals will be kept in filing cabinets by the committee member directly responsible. These committee members must ensure executive committee members know how to gain access.
- c) Employees' personnel information will be kept in lockable filing cabinets by committee members and will be accessible to the executive committee only.
- d) Files or filing cabinet drawers bearing confidential information should be labelled 'confidential'.
- e) In an emergency situation, the executive committee may authorise access to files by other people.

### 5. Duty to disclose information

- a) There is a legal duty to disclose some information including:
  - b) Child abuse will be reported to the Children's Services Department
  - c) Drug trafficking, money laundering, acts of terrorism or treason will be disclosed to the police.
  - d) In addition colleagues believing an illegal act has taken place, or that a user is at risk of harming themselves or others, must report this to the executive committee who will report it to the appropriate authorities.
- e) Users should be informed of this disclosure.



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### 6. Disclosures

- a) SSPC complies fully with the CRB Code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.
- b) Disclosure information is always kept separately from an applicant's personnel file in secure storage with access limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. It is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.
- c) Documents will be kept for a year and then destroyed by secure means. Photocopies will not be kept. However, SSPC may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, and the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

### 7. Data Protection Act

- a) Information about individuals, whether on computer or on paper, falls within the scope of the Data Protection Act and must comply with the data protection principles. These are that personal data must be:
  - Obtained and processed fairly and lawfully
  - Held only for specified purposes
  - Adequate, relevant and not excessive
  - Accurate and up to date
  - Not kept longer than necessary
  - Processed in accordance with the Act
  - Kept secure and protected
  - Not transferred out of Europe

### 8. Breach of confidentiality

- a) People who are dissatisfied with the conduct or actions of other colleagues or SSPC should raise this with their executive committee using the grievance procedure, if necessary, and not discuss their dissatisfaction outside SSPC.
- b) Anyone accessing unauthorised files or breaching confidentially may face legal action.



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### 9. Whistleblowing

- a) Where the local Treasurer or executive committee has concerns about the use of SSPC funds, he or she may refer directly to the National Executive Chair or Treasurer outside the usual grievance procedure.

These guidelines are by no means to hinder any SSPC role or responsibility. They are simply to clarify the position and ensure SSPC and the staff and volunteers are working to good standards. Please sign below to acknowledge receipt of a copy of the above and return to SSPC for filing.

Signed:..... Date:.....