



**South Essex
Rape & Incest
Crisis Centre**

Document Review and Control Procedures

SERICC Document identity			
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Document reference: 015

Location: Evesham SERICC Policy and Procedure

Introduction

South Essex Rape & Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC) is responsible for developing and implementing policies to manage the organisation.

To ensure fair representation of the interests of women & girls that have or are experiencing sexual violence, these policies are developed through a consensus process that SERICC facilitates in an open, consultative environment. SERICC is responsible for documenting and disseminating the policies that result.

This document describes the policies and procedures to be followed by SERICC in meeting its documentation responsibilities.

Scope

This document describes the policies and procedures that apply to SERICC official documents. It relates to the development, revision, translation, accessibility, and archiving of these documents.

Definitions

Official documents

Official documents are documents created by SERICC to describe:

- policies;
- service procedures;
- legal relationships; and
- other matters directly affecting the interests and operations of the service.

Documents that are not official documents include:

- reports, proposals and presentations;
- brochures and similar informational materials;
- forms; and
- general web site content.

Document review

In this document, "document review" refers to the process of creating, developing, or revising official documents.

Public drafts

Public drafts are the drafts of official documents that SERICC makes public on its web site or through consultation with service user groups.

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Active date

The active date of a document is the date at which the document is considered as implemented. From the active date, the contents of the document become active as official SERICC policies or procedures.

Provisionally active

Provisionally active documents are those that may be relied upon in draft form before the end of the review period.

Objectives

With these document review policies and procedures, SERICC's objectives are:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Fairness | to ensure that development of SERICC documents fairly represents the interests of service users and staff; |
| Openness | to ensure that all service users have the opportunity to participate in the development of SERICC documents; |
| Certainty | to ensure that all members can make informed decisions, on the basis of a clear and predictable system for review of official documents. |

Language

With these document review policies and procedures, SERICC's objectives are:

Official language

To provide the fairest possible access to SERICC information and resources across, all SERICC official documents will be published in English.

Translated documents

SERICC allocates resources from fundraising for the translation of SERICC documents into other language. It may not be possible to translate all SERICC documents or provide translations in all of the languages. If a language is specifically requested, SERICC will endeavour to have the policy translated.

Regardless of any translations made, the English language version published by SERICC will remain the official document.

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Document review procedure

Propose review

SERICC proposes a document review. This can be done by request of staff, management team, service user group, or by requirements due to changes in the law.

Call for comments

SERICC issues a call for comments by posting a notice on the SERICC web site, SERICC staff meetings and SERICC service user group. (See Schedule B for the requirements of Calls for Comments.)

Incorporating comments

Following the close of a call for comments, SERICC will consider all the comments received and prepare a revised draft of the document. SERICC will also prepare a summary of the comments received the amendments made from the previous draft.

SERICC will publish the revised draft and the summary of comments.

[Depending on the category of review (see Schedule A), steps 2 and 3 may be repeated]

Final call for comments

Depending on the review category (see Schedule A), the final iteration of this review process will commence with a "Final Call" for comments. The contents of the Final Call will be similar to a normal call for comments, but it will include details of SERICC's intention to prepare a final version of the document for approval and implementation

Approval of document

SERICC will prepare a final version of the document.

If the review was conducted under categories A or B, SERICC will present the final version to the Management Team to consider. The Management Team may either approve the document, request particular amendments, or request a further round of revision.

In the case of documents reviewed under category A, the Management Team may require that approval of the final document be subject to a vote.

If the review was conducted under category C, SERICC may approve the document without seeking further approval.

Implementing documents

Once a document has received final approval, it will be assigned an active date in accordance with Schedule A.

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At any stage in a review, SERICC may make a document provisionally active; however, in the case of category A and B reviews, SERICC must first seek the consensus of the SERICC Management Team. A document will not be made provisionally active unless SERICC (or the Management Team, as the case may be) is satisfied that no service users are likely to be adversely affected.

Obsolete documents

If the approved document is intended to replace an existing document, then that former document will remain active until the approved document is implemented.

Publishing documents

SERICC official documents will, in most cases, be printed and available on request. Others will be available via the SERICC web site

In some cases, particular layout requirements may require that the official document is published in Portable Document Format (.pdf).

During the review process, all public drafts and summaries of comments produced will be available on the SERICC web site for public reference.

Labelling documents

SERICC official documents will be labelled with the following information:

- document name;
- SERICC document reference number;
- approval date;
- active date;
- scheduled date for next review, if applicable;
- list of any documents made obsolete by implementation.

Categorising documents

SERICC recognises that a responsible document review process must balance the need for general progress with the need to consider impacts on service users. Therefore, when SERICC starts a document review, it will first determine the nature of the review in terms of the following categories:

- a. Substantial revisions affecting areas of significant core policies and procedures, financial obligations, or major issues affecting service users;
- b. Minor revisions affecting policies and procedures;
- c. Error correction, typographical and stylistic revisions, document labelling, and revisions and developments affecting minor procedures and guidelines.

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General category guidelines

When evaluating the review category, SERICC will consider a range of factors relating to the significance of the review, including:

- the impact upon service users;
- the length and complexity of the relevant document (including the impact that may have on translation needs);
- the nature of the content under review (that is, whether it amends policies, improves procedures, or merely provides explanatory information);
- the urgency of the review, in response to changes within the law;

These factors are to be used as guidelines only and are not intended to be subject to strict definition.

Summary of categories (schedule A)

Category	Total review period	Expected no. of calls for comment	Period for each call for comment	When implemented?
A	6 months	at least 2 plus final cfc*	6 weeks (can be 4 weeks for final cfc)	active date set 3 months from approval
B	4 months	at least 1 plus final cfc	4 weeks	active date set 1 month from approval
C	1 month	at least 1, which may be a final cfc	4 weeks	effective from date of approval

* cfc = call for comments

Form of calls for comments

The announcement and notice for a call for comments will:

- identify the document to be revised, or, if no current document exists, the nature of the document to be developed;

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- briefly describe the reasons for the proposed review;
- invite comments and suggestions from interested parties;
- nominate a review category;
- set out a schedule for the review, including deadlines for comments;
- provide copies of any related documents.

The contents of the final call will be similar to a normal call for comments, but it will include details of SERICCs intention to prepare a final version of the document for presentation to the Management Team.

Requesting a further review

If those commenting believe that any of the objectives in section 4 will not be served by proceeding with a final call for comments, then they may request further review of the document, in writing, to SERICC.

If SERICC receives such a request then it may either announce an additional call for comments (including the details of the request in the summary of comments), or decline the request.

If SERICC declines the request, it will provide a written explanation to the submitter of the request. If the submitter disputes that explanation then SERICC will immediately refer the request to the Management Team, which will have the final decision as to whether to proceed with the final call for comments or to require an additional call for comments.