

Supporting a person under suspension: the liaison role

Introduction

A person who has been suspended from Scouts is entitled to an independent Scouting colleague to provide some personal contact so that they are not entirely disconnected from Scouting. This guidance sets out the responsibilities that the liaison role covers.

The suspending authority, following discussions with the suspended person, appoints the liaison person. This is an informal role within Scouting. It is part of the support offered to an adult, during what may be a difficult time.

The liaison role

The liaison person gives direct support to the suspended person usually for the duration of the suspension, but this may be extended if required.

The liaison person is appointed by the suspending authority at the request of and with the agreement of the suspended person.

It is the liaison person's role to provide a listening ear and to help the suspended person feel less disconnected from Scouting. Remember that the suspended person must not be involved in Scouting apart from the contact required for the suspension process itself.

The suspension process is managed by the suspending authority who will keep the suspended person updated on the status of the process. The suspending authority may delegate this to a Suspension Lead. The liaison person has no responsibility for the running of the suspension process.

The liaison person will not be involved in any way with any allegation, or with any subsequent Scout investigation, and will not take part in the process. The liaison person is not expected to enter into any legal, financial or personal commitment, for example bail, surety, binding over, or be involved in court proceedings.

The liaison person should not discuss or advise on any details of any alleged incident, or champion the suspended person's case. The liaison person will remain neutral and should always remember their role is to provide personal support only. They should keep in regular contact with the person they are supporting. This may involve meeting the person or telephoning them. The frequency of any contact will depend on the suspended person's wishes and may vary as the situation develops and should be agreed with the suspended person.



Things to consider

Some points for the liaison person, when considering or undertaking this role:

- Do say early on if you think you cannot do the role.
- Do keep an open mind.
- Do offer support in a proactive way – don't wait to be asked.
- Do maintain confidentiality. If you feel you need to share anything you're told, for example a breach of POR, or an allegation of an offence, tell the person you're supporting and report it to the appropriate person/team.
- Do regularly consider whether the role is still appropriate for you.
- Do not get involved with any investigation.
- Do not get personally involved. You have been appointed for your ability to remain objective.
- Do not give legal / technical advice but you can suggest where the person can get advice and support.
- Speak to the suspending authority if you are unable to continue in this role for any reason.
- Provide details of other organisations where people can get support for mental wellbeing. Details can be found on the [Mental Health organisations webpage](#).
- Maintain contact with the suspending authority about the suspended member and escalate matters if you are concerned about their welfare.

Further information

- [Notes for a person under suspension](#)
- [The Suspension Process](#)
- [Mental Health organisations webpage](#)

