



The advisory board for ethical guidelines regarding voluntary telephone and online help accepted the following guidelines at its meeting on 28 March 2006:

The ethical guidelines regarding voluntary telephone and online help:

1. The service and its quality is the responsibility of an administrator, such as an association, foundation or a religious community. The operations are for the public good, and the administrator does not obtain any financial benefit.
2. The users of the service are given the opportunity to express their opinions on issues regarding the service in question. The service is confidential, anonymous and respects the persons using it.
3. The person on duty is either a voluntary or paid employee selected and trained by the administrator. The person receives support and guidance in the assignment from the administrator. The person on duty is entitled to remain anonymous and can refuse to communicate on any issues unrelated to the service.

1 The objective of the service

The users of the service are given the opportunity to discuss¹ anonymously and confidentially with a voluntary or a paid employee about issues covered by the service in question.

The objective of a supporting discussion is that the employee listens to what the person has to say and provides an experience of sharing things together, while respecting the right of the person to make his or her own decisions without pressing her. If necessary, the user is steered forward to other services.

2 The rights and obligations of users

First and foremost, users are entitled to be heard and engage in interaction and discussion that promotes equality and human dignity. Users are entitled to remain anonymous.

The autonomy of the user is supported, taking the age and level of development into account if the user is a child.

¹ Here, "discuss" refers to interaction via telephone or the Internet.

The user is entitled to receive information about the service administrator, the service, privacy protection, the processing of personal data and possible fees.

The user is expected to behave in a matter-of-fact way towards the person on duty. The user must also keep in mind the purpose for which the service is intended.

3 The rights and obligations of the service administrator

Service administrators can be associations, foundations and religious communities. The administrator is responsible for the service, organising the operations and supplying the necessary resources. The administrator monitors and maintains service quality. The administrator chooses, recruits and trains the persons on duty, and also ensures their well-being and expertise.

The administrator determines the service's form of activity and the target group. The administrator provides the service within the limits of its resources.

The administrator is responsible for maintaining adequate privacy protection and information security. The service must not produce any financial gains for the administrator.

4 The rights and obligations of the persons on duty

The person on duty participates in basic and advanced training arranged by the administrator. He or she is also entitled to receive work-related support and guidance on a continuous basis. The person on duty is entitled to remain anonymous and can refuse to communicate on any issues unrelated to the service. If the situation so requires, the person on duty is entitled to limit the duration of the contact according to the guidelines set out by the administrator.

The person on duty is obliged to follow the operational guidelines provided by the administrator and the service. The person on duty is obliged to observe secrecy and is not allowed to benefit from user-related information in any way. The person on duty must adhere to the values and guidelines of the service in question and promote them in his or her work.

The person on duty is entitled to waive the obligation to observe secrecy for a very weighty reason, such as a crime under consideration or a serious situation related to child welfare. When the person on duty waives the obligation to observe secrecy, he or she must notify the user.

The person on duty must not exert pressure on the user. Operational guidelines include fairness, impartiality, tolerance and respect for the user.

In conversation, the main task of the person on duty is to listen. The persons on duty must not address their own personal issues in the conversation, express opinions on ideological questions or make decisions on behalf of the user.