

Participant Selection Policy & Procedure

Organisation: The Anchor Room CIC

Policy Name: Participant Eligibility, Selection & Referral Policy

Date: 14/01/2026

Review Date: Annually

Approved by: Directors / Trustees

1. Purpose of This Policy

This policy outlines how The Anchor Room CIC selects participants for its programs in a **fair, transparent, trauma-informed and non-judgemental way**, while ensuring the safety, readiness, and effectiveness of the support offered.

Our programs are designed to support women who are **ready and willing to move forward**, rebuild confidence, and take responsibility for creating positive change in their lives - particularly through confidence building, self-employment, and independence.

2. Program Intent & Values

The Anchor Room CIC exists to support women who are:

- Rebuilding their lives after separation or adversity
- Seeking confidence, stability, and independence
- Ready to take **active responsibility** for their next chapter

Our work is grounded in the following principles:

- Empowerment over rescue
- Readiness over crisis response
- Responsibility over dependency
- Compassion without judgement

- Forward movement, not stagnation

3. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants **must meet all** of the following criteria to be considered:

Essential Criteria

Applicants must:

- ✓ Be **out of immediate crisis**
- ✓ **Not be living with the perpetrator** of abuse
- ✓ Be emotionally and practically able to engage in group-based support
- ✓ Be **willing and able to travel** to and from the venue independently
- ✓ Commit to **arriving on time and attending consistently**
- ✓ Show readiness to take responsibility for making positive changes
- ✓ Demonstrate a willingness to engage, reflect, and participate fully

Programme Focus

Priority is given to women who:

- Have **limited or no current support**
- Show a **high level of commitment and motivation**
- Express a desire to build confidence towards financial independence and sustainable work aligned with family life.

4. Priority Considerations

Where demand exceeds available spaces, priority will be given to applicants who demonstrate:

- Minimal existing support networks
- Social isolation
- Financial vulnerability
- Clear motivation to move forward
- A strong alignment with the program's purpose

Selection is **not based on severity of past experiences**, but on **readiness and ability to engage safely and productively**.

5. Exclusion Criteria (At This Time)

To ensure participant safety and program effectiveness, we **cannot accept applicants** who:

- Are in **immediate crisis**
- Are currently **living with the perpetrator**
- Require emergency intervention or intensive therapeutic support or are currently receiving counseling or therapy
- Are unable to travel to the venue or attend reliably
- Are unable or unwilling to commit to timekeeping and participation

This is **not a judgement** on the individual, it is a boundary to ensure the right support is offered at the right time and so that there is no conflict of interest/ information or support.

6. Application Review Process

Step 1: Application Submission

Applicants complete an application form outlining their situation, support needs, and readiness.

Step 2: Non-Judgemental Review

Each application is reviewed by at least one trained team member using a **consistent assessment framework** that considers:

- Level of existing support
- Readiness and motivation
- Alignment with program outcomes
- Practical ability to attend

All reviews are conducted with care, dignity, and respect.

Step 3: Selection Decision

Applicants will be:

- ✓ Accepted
- ✓ Placed on a waiting list
- ✓ Signposted to more appropriate services

7. Commitment & Responsibility Expectations

Successful applicants are expected to:

- Attend sessions consistently and punctually
- Engage respectfully with facilitators and peers
- Take responsibility for their own progress
- Participate actively rather than passively
- Communicate in advance if issues arise

This program is **not a passive support service** — it is a space for women who are ready to step forward.

8. Employer Support Letters

Where an applicant wishes to attend but has concerns about work commitments:

- The Anchor Room CIC can provide a **support letter to employers**
- The letter will request reasonable time allowance for participation
- Letters will:
 - Protect confidentiality
 - Focus on wellbeing and development
 - Not disclose personal history

Provision of a letter does **not guarantee employer approval**.

9. Signposting & Referrals

If an applicant is not suitable for the program at this time, we will:

- Provide clear, compassionate feedback
- Signpost to appropriate services (e.g. crisis support, specialist agencies)
- Encourage re-application when readiness changes

No applicant is dismissed or judged - only redirected to support that better meets their current needs.

10. Safeguarding & Duty of Care

- Participant safety is paramount
- Facilitators reserve the right to pause or withdraw participation if risk arises
- Any safeguarding concerns will be managed in line with the organisation's Safeguarding Policy

11. Equality & Non-Discrimination

Selection decisions are never based on:

- Race, ethnicity, religion
- Disability or neurodivergence
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Immigration status

Decisions are based solely on **readiness, safety, and program suitability**.

This program is a **women-only, single-sex service** designed for biological women rebuilding their lives after experiences of male-perpetrated abuse.

This restriction is necessary to ensure participant safety, shared lived experience, and the therapeutic integrity of the group.

Applicants who do not meet this criterion will be respectfully signposted to alternative support.

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Program scope changes
- Safeguarding requirements evolve
- Funding requirements update