

Isles of Darkness – Wellbeing Supporters Guide

The Basics:

- Wellbeing Supporters act as an approachable point of contact for members to raise concerns or ask questions regarding wellbeing or conduct.
- You should have knowledge of the Society's Wellbeing Policy.
- You have the power to ban members from the rest of a game/game day on the spot if they do not follow guidance regarding conduct.
- You are a neutral party for gathering evidence during disputes.
- Wellbeing Supporters are advocates for the volunteers as much as the players.

What you are NOT responsible for:

- You are not a certified mental health professional and should a member approach you about a mental health concern please direct them to one of our Mental Health First Aiders or see other support avenues here: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>
- Rules queries or accusations of cheating would be ruled on by the Story Telling team

What you are responsible for:

- Maintaining a safe Out Of Character space

Every venue should have an Out Of Character area for members to decompress from In Character interactions or retire to in the event that an aspect of the game is uncomfortable or distressing for them. Wellbeing Supporters should strive to keep the Out of Character area Out of Character and encourage positive discussion following games so any In Character conflicts are put into perspective.

- Recognising plots that may be triggering for players

The World of Darkness games contain themes of supernatural horror and fantasy violence. Although it is normal for Story Tellers to check in with players about what plots may be sensitive, Wellbeing Supporters should monitor and highlight this and be responsive to player reactions. If a player feels reluctant to approach a Story Teller about a plot they have found distressing then you can be used as mediator. You should let the StoryTeller know, where appropriate, without naming the member with the concern.

- Raising concerns about volunteers

If a player has a concern about a volunteer's conduct then they might be reluctant to approach the volunteer team. You would act as a listening ear and discrete point of contact to resolve whether this needs to be escalated as a dispute or if changes can be made to maintain a safe and enjoyable game for members and volunteers.

- Supporting Volunteer Welfare

No Wellbeing Supporter should ever put themselves in a situation which makes them feel uncomfortable. The Wellbeing Supporters are not single officers with one domain or game under their wing, it is a network of all of the volunteers, so you can always reach out to another Supporter for advice/soundboarding where you may want or need it.

Support of fellow volunteers is as important as player support. You help monitor any issues that may arise regarding demands on volunteer's time and effort in order to avoid burnout or mediate the possibility of conflict. In the same way a player might need a neutral listening ear, the volunteers may be in need of someone to vent to.

Volunteer welfare should trump their society commitments. For example, you may offer to help organise one-off Story Tellers for a game in order to give a volunteer a month's break, or keep an eye on particular volunteers taking on multiple roles and needing support.

- Reporting

Reporting unlawful discrimination that is experienced or seen happen to others is encouraged and if you don't feel comfortable doing it alone, please reach out to the Supporters network.

Where to go for support:

- The member of the society responsible for the overall wellbeing of volunteers and members is the Society Lead.
- The Society Lead has the power to sanction or remove members for breaches of the conduct and wellbeing policy so they act as the final point of contact for matters of member conduct.
- We do not tolerate harassment or intimidation of volunteers. If you witness or are subjected to any, please report this to any senior volunteers present and make sure the Society Lead is made aware.

Training

- If you would like to be put forward for some online training on Mental Health in the workplace, that may offer skills and suggestions for how to spot certain behaviour and how to best handle those situations, please let the Society Lead know

Some examples:

<https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/courses>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/training-consultancy/e-learning/>

<https://www.ihasco.co.uk/courses/detail/mental-health-awareness-training>

- It is universally understood that OOC trumps IC for volunteers as well as players

Safeguarding Notes

We have a duty of care to our members and volunteers. Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and rights. It is everyone's concern and we should be aware of and report on concerns of abuse. Abuse is not just physical but can be psychological/emotional, including verbal humiliation, coercion, and isolation.