

Policy: Membership of the Separation Network (2026-2027)

1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out the criteria, processes, and expectations for membership of the Separation Network. The policy aims to ensure transparency, support GDPR compliance, strengthen sector engagement, and clarify the distinction between Executive Members and the wider membership of frontline practitioners who engage with the Network's work.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All frontline practitioners who opt into the Separation Network mailing list.
- Members of the Separation Network Executive.
- Staff and volunteers responsible for managing the Network, training activities, communications, and data protection.

This policy does **not** apply to parents, service users, or members of the general public, as membership is restricted to professionals in the sector.

3. Definitions

3.1 Executive Membership

A core group of appointed representatives who govern, lead, and oversee the strategic development of the Separation Network, including delivery of the Annual Action Plan, setting priorities, and guiding resource and research activity.

3.2 General Membership (Practitioner Membership)

Frontline practitioners who opt into the Separation Network mailing list through the Eventbrite training registration process or other approved opt-in mechanisms. This membership provides access to:

- Mailing updates on training opportunities
- Network resources and research
- Invitations to events or practitioner engagement opportunities

General members do not hold governance or decision-making responsibilities.

4. Membership Offer and Eligibility

4.1 Executive Membership

- Limited to individuals appointed by the organisation or Network governance structure.
- Members must have relevant expertise or represent key partners.
- Participation involves meetings, planning, and contribution to the Annual Action Plan.

4.2 General Practitioner Membership

Eligibility:

- Open to frontline practitioners working in child and family services, education, youth services, social care, mental health, domestic violence support, mediation, and related fields.
- Membership is **not** open to parents, family members, or members of the public.

Practitioners become members by:

- Opting in at the point of training registration via Eventbrite, or
- Requesting membership directly through the Network Coordinator.

5. GDPR and Data Protection

- At the point of opt-in, practitioners are informed why their data is being collected and how it will be used.
- A welcome email is issued on first contact, reiterating:
 - Why they are on the mailing list
 - What type of information they will receive
 - That they may opt out at any time by contacting the Network Coordinator
- Personal data is stored securely and used only for Network communications and activities.
- Unsubscribe requests are processed promptly.

6. Membership Rights and Limitations

6.1 Rights of General Practitioner Members

Members may:

- Receive email updates, training news, and resource announcements
- Participate in training events and open practitioner activities
- Engage with consultation or engagement elements of the Annual Action Plan

6.2 Limitations

General members:

- Do **not** hold any decision-making authority within the Network
- Do **not** participate in Executive governance or internal planning meetings
- Do **not** represent the Network publicly
- Cannot access confidential Executive materials
- Cannot be parents or service users in that capacity, to safeguard professional boundaries

7. Growing the Network

The Network will continue to grow practitioner membership throughout 2026 using:

- The Eventbrite training registration opt-in
- Direct sign-up opportunities at events
- Web-based membership expression of interest forms

Any additions to the webpage should clearly describe:

- The purpose of the Network
- The distinction between Executive and Practitioner Membership
- Eligibility criteria
- GDPR and opt-out information

8. Review of Policy

This policy was approved by the Executive after review at the 2026 Annual Development Day and will be reviewed again at the 2027 Development Day. Updates will be published on relevant webpages and communicated to all members.