



The specialist union for social workers

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING A MEMBER OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS UNION AND BASW?

Membership of the Social Workers Union is an additional benefit to members of BASW (The British Association of Social Workers) and our membership fee is £30.00 per year (or £10.00 per year for students and unwaged). **SWU is an independent trade union and is proud to be associated with BASW but our legal status as a Trade Union means that SWU members are better protected and their rights to representation in any meeting with an employer are safeguarded. (Subject to eligibility criteria.)**

**Only Membership of SWU will guarantee employment representation from a TRADE UNION.** BASW members are not guaranteed employment representation if an employer does not recognise BASW or refuses access. **This is why it is important to join SWU or to continue your membership to make sure it does not lapse.** SWU and BASW work together through a cooperation agreement to provide a highly beneficial and cost effective optional joint membership.

Our two organisations are committed to offering this because we consider it to be the best offer we can make together for Social Workers. We believe it enables us to be strong for professional development and voice, strong for ethics and human rights, strong for representation of social workers when needed, and strong in influencing government and employer policies in the long term. Together in cooperation we are building a social work-led movement.

Becoming a member of the Social Workers Union is optional and we respect every choice but we believe this offers the best cover and security for social workers and their profession. If you are unsure whether you have opted into being a member of SWU you can ask Member Services (0121 622 8401) or check online via [www.swu-union.org.uk](http://www.swu-union.org.uk) \* see one-month rule below.

### ***\*The one-month rule explained:***

The one-month rule will mean that a new BASW member who has not joined SWU will not be offered Trade Union representation from SWU until **after one month of continued SWU membership and provided the issue was not pre-existing at the time of joining SWU or becomes active within the first month of membership.** The new rule will help to prevent misuse of membership - similar to "trying to buy insurance after the crash". This is an important change as not all employers previously recognised or authorised BASW Advice and Representation (A&R). **Only membership of SWU guarantees Employment Representation. (Subject to the eligibility criteria as per the one-month rule above.)**