

Information For Volunteers

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Introduction

Welcome

Thank you for offering to give some of your time and experience to assist us. We rely on volunteers to help achieve our objectives.

We provide equal opportunities and are committed to the principle of equality regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We will apply policies that are fair, equitable and consistent with skills and abilities. Volunteers can assist by supporting us in implementing these policies to ensure equality of opportunity.

General Information

Changes in Personal Details

We have a duty of care to anyone who volunteers, we may need to contact you or someone on your behalf in the case of an emergency so please notify us of any emergency details you may want us to have and then any change to those details.

Statements to the Media

Volunteers are requested to not make any statement to reporters from newspapers, radio, television etc. in respect of our organisation. Any enquiries should be directed to your Team Leader.

Protective Clothing

Where appropriate, you may be loaned protective clothing. This must be returned to us after use.

Volunteers' Property

No liability is accepted for any loss of, or damage to, property brought onto our premises, or our clients' premises. You are advised not to take any personal items of value to the volunteer premises or to leave any items at the volunteer premises overnight.

Standards of Dress

Within your volunteer tasks, you may come into contact with customers and members of the public. It is important that you present an acceptable image in terms of appearance and standards of dress. You should wear clothes appropriate to your tasks, and they should be kept clean and tidy at all times.

Time Commitment

If you are unable to attend at any of the times when you have arranged to help us, due to ill health or other commitments, please let your Team Leader know as soon as possible as we may need to make arrangements for cover.

Expenses

You are entitled to claim the following expenses incurred during volunteering with us:

- a) Travel to and from home to the place of volunteering.
- b) Travel costs incurred during volunteering.
- c) Meal costs when working 4 hours or more on Redbridge Foodbank activities up to a max amount of £4 per day

Expenses must be claimed on an expense claim form and be supported by receipts, ticket stubs or other evidence wherever practicable. We only reimburse actual expenses incurred. (See Expenses Policy for further information).

Record Checks

If your volunteering position involves the care of children or adults at risk, the following is necessary:-

- a) Your written consent to obtaining a standard/enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service/Disclosure Scotland or an approved umbrella body.
- b) Such disclosure being acceptable to us.
- c) Proof of identity – Birth and or marriage certificate (where appropriate), passport or a new style driving licence.
- d) Satisfactory written references.
- e) That you will supply a photograph of yourself for retention in your records.

Insurance

During your time with us you are covered under our insurance policies against any injury you suffer or cause while volunteering.

Housekeeping

All areas must be kept clean and tidy at all times.

Training

We only provide the training necessary for the tasks you have volunteered for and any further volunteering activities that is agreed you can undertake.

Problems

Should you have any problems related to your treatment by us, our employees, other volunteers or the people we serve, please raise these with your Team Leader who will attempt to resolve the issue. If you are unhappy with the outcome, you may raise the issue with your Team Leader's superior.

Other Information

- 1) We reserve the right to allow third parties to chair any meetings. We will seek your consent at the relevant time to share relevant 'special categories of data' where it is necessary for the purposes of that hearing.
- 2) We reserve the right to record any meetings whether conducted by us or a third party, a copy of the recording can be made available on request.

Standards

Volunteers are expected to behave responsibly while with us. Normally we would bring any difficulties to your attention informally. However, the behaviour listed below would result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

- a) grossly indecent or immoral behaviour, deliberate acts of unlawful discrimination or serious acts of harassment;
- b) dangerous behaviour, fighting or physical assault;
- c) incapacity or poor performance caused by intoxicants or drugs whilst volunteering;
- d) possession, supply or use of *drugs;
- e) *For this purpose, the term 'drugs' is used to describe both illegal drugs and other psychoactive (mind-altering) substances which may or may not be illegal.
- f) taking part in activities which result in adverse publicity to ourselves.
- g) theft or unauthorised possession of money or property, whether belonging to us, one of our employees, another volunteer or a third party;
- h) destruction/sabotage of our property, or any property on the premises;

- i) serious breaches of the health and safety rules which endanger life;
- j) maltreatment of service users;
- k) failure to report an incident of abuse, or suspected abuse of a service user by an employee, other volunteer or a member of the public;
- l) convictions for any offence which might affect your suitability for the volunteering duties you are involved in.

Security

Rights of Search

We have the right to carry out searches of volunteers and their property (including vehicles) whilst they are on our premises or business. These searches are random and do not imply suspicion in relation to any individual concerned.

If you should be required to submit to a search, you will, if practicable, be entitled to be accompanied by a third party to be selected from someone who is on the premises at the time. This right also applies at the time that any further questioning takes place.

You may be asked to remove the contents of your pockets, bags, vehicles, etc.

Whilst you have the right to refuse to be searched, refusal by you to agree to being searched could result in us refusing to accept any further voluntary assistance from you.

We reserve the right to call in the police at any stage.

Confidentiality

All information that:-

- is or has been acquired by you during, or in the course of your volunteering duties, or has otherwise been acquired by you in confidence,
- relates particularly to our business, or that of other persons or bodies with whom we have dealings of any sort, and
- has not been made public by, or with our authority,

shall be confidential, and (save in the course of our business or as required by law) you shall not at any time, whether before or after ceasing to volunteer, disclose such information to any person without our prior written consent.

You are to exercise reasonable care to keep safe all documentary or other material containing confidential information, and shall at the time of ceasing to volunteer with us, or at any other time upon demand, return to us any such material in your possession.

You must make yourself aware of our policies on data protection in relation to personal data and ensure compliance with them at all times.

Use of Computer Equipment.

In order to control the use of the organisation's computer equipment and reduce the risk of contamination the following will apply:

- the introduction of new software must be checked and authorised. You cannot introduce new software of any kind without approval from your Team Leader.
- only authorised individuals will have access to our computer equipment.
- only authorised software may be used on the organisation's computer equipment.
- only software that is used for business applications may be used.
- you may not bring software onto or remove it from our premises without prior authorisation from your Team Leader.
- unauthorised access to the computer facility may result in termination of your relationship with us.
- unauthorised copying and/or removal of computer equipment/software will result in us refusing to accept any further assistance from you.

Virus Protection Procedures

In order to prevent the introduction of virus contamination into the software system the following must be observed:

- unauthorised software including public domain software, USBs, external hard drives, CDs or internet downloads must not be used; and
- all software must be virus checked using standard testing procedures before being used.

E-Mail and Internet Policy

Internet

Where appropriate, duly authorised volunteers may make use of the Internet as part of their volunteering duties. You may only release information via the internet with the prior agreement of your Team Leader. The use of the internet to access and/or distribute any kind of material which is offensive or unrelated to your tasks will result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

E-Mail

You may only use the e-mail system with the prior approval of your Team Leader and unauthorised use may result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

Volunteers using the e-mail system should observe the following points:

- they comply with our communication standards (your Team Leader will advise you of these).
- e-mail messages and copies should only be sent to those for whom they are particularly relevant.
- Flame mails (i.e. e-mails that are abusive) must not be sent. Hasty messages sent without proper consideration can cause upset, concern or misunderstanding.
- if e-mail is confidential the user must ensure that the necessary steps are taken to protect confidentiality. The organisation will be liable for infringing copyright or any defamatory information that is circulated within the company or externally.
- offers or contracts transmitted by e-mail are as legally binding on the organisation as those sent on paper.

We will not tolerate the use of the e-mail system for unofficial or inappropriate purposes including:

- any messages that could constitute bullying, harassment or other detriment.
- personal use (e.g. social invitations, personal messages, jokes, cartoons, chain letters or other private matters).
- on-line gambling.
- accessing or transmitting pornography.
- transmitting copyright information and/or any software to the user.
- posting confidential information about other volunteers, workers, employees, the company or its customers or suppliers.

Health, Safety, Welfare And Hygiene

Safety

Your Team Leader will advise you of the health and safety requirements and any hazards associated with your responsibilities.

You must not take any action that could threaten the health or safety of yourself, other volunteers, workers, employees, customers or members of the public.

You should report all accidents and injuries at the volunteer premises, no matter how minor, in the accident book. Your Team Leader will advise where this is kept.

Rest Room¹, Refreshment Making Facilities/Vending Machine

We provide a rest room, refreshment making facilities and vending machine. Please keep these facilities clean and tidy.

Smoking Policy

Our policy of not smoking in service users' premises or other than in designated areas on our sites must be observed at all times.

Alcohol & Drugs Policy

We have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety and welfare at work of volunteers, employees, workers and, similarly, you have a responsibility to yourself and your colleagues. The use of alcohol and drugs may impair the safe and efficient running of the business and/or the health and safety of our volunteers, workers, employees and other parties.

If, during volunteering with us, your performance or behaviour are affected as a result of alcohol or drugs, or we believe you have been involved in any drug related action/offence, you may be subject to further action and, dependent on the circumstances, this may lead to termination of your relationship with us.

Lost Property

Articles of lost property should be handed to your Team Leader who will retain them whilst attempts are made to discover the owner.

Parking

Please Park only in the designated parking areas. No liability is accepted for damage to private vehicles, however caused.

¹ Rest room at Broadmead warehouse only

Hygiene

Any exposed cut or burn must be covered with a first-aid dressing.

If you are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness such as rubella or hepatitis you must not report for volunteering without clearance from your own doctor.

Contact with any person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease must be reported before commencing your volunteer duties.

Hygiene For Food Handlers

You must wash your hands immediately before commencing your volunteer duties and after using the toilet.

Any cut or burn on the hand or arm must be covered with an approved visible dressing.

Head coverings and overalls/uniforms, where provided, must be worn at all times.

You should not wear excessive amounts of make-up or perfume.

If you are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness, or have a bowel disorder, boils, skin or mouth infection, you must not report for your volunteer duties without clearance from your own doctor.

Contact with any person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease must be reported and you must have clearance from your own doctor before returning to volunteering.

You must report to your Team Leader or the Volunteer Coordinator before returning to volunteering.

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Statement of Policy

The terms equality, inclusion and diversity are at the heart of this policy. 'Equality' means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination. 'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution. 'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforce. We will actively support diversity and inclusion and ensure that all our employees are valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in our business to reach their potential.

We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and equality of opportunity is a feature of our practices and procedures. Breaches of this policy will lead to investigation and, if appropriate, further action up to and including termination of your

relationship with us.

The aim of the policy is to ensure that volunteers are not discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for organising volunteers and a copy of the policy will be made available for all volunteers.

We will maintain a neutral environment in which no volunteer feels under threat or intimidated.

Selection

We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making decision with regards volunteers will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of voluntary opportunities.

We will not confine our process with regards to obtaining volunteers to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, volunteer applicants of a particular group.

All those who ask to volunteer for us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on the contribution they can make.

All those involved in the volunteer process will periodically review their criteria to ensure that they are related to volunteering requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Discussions will be related to the requirements of the volunteering activity and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

We will not disqualify any volunteer because he/she is unable to complete any forms unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the volunteering activity.

Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Policy and Procedure

Introduction

Harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is unacceptable.

Discrimination and harassment can take many forms but, whatever form they take, they are always serious and totally unacceptable.

Policy

The Company deplores all forms of discrimination and harassment and seeks to ensure that the environment is sympathetic to all of our volunteers.

COMPLAINING ABOUT DISCRIMINATION/PERSONAL HARASSMENT

Informal complaint

If you are the victim of minor discrimination/harassment you should make it clear to the discriminator/harasser, on an informal basis, that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask the harasser to stop. If you feel unable to do this verbally then you should hand a written request to the discriminator/harasser.

Formal complaint

Where the informal approach fails, or if the discrimination/harassment is more serious, you should bring the matter to the attention of your Team Leader or Volunteer Coordinator as a formal written complaint.

The person dealing with the complaint will carry out a thorough investigation. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be treated as a serious matter.

On conclusion of the investigation, which will normally be within ten working days of the meeting with you, the decision of the investigator, detailing the findings, will be sent in writing to you.

General Notes

If the decision is that the allegation is well founded, the discriminator/harasser will be subject to appropriate action.

If you bring a complaint of discrimination/harassment you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. However, if it is concluded that the complaint is both untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, it will result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

Signed by:  _____
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Position: Chair of Trustees

Date: 4/13/2025