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**Volunteer Handbook**

Welcome to (add name of organisation)!

Thank you for giving your time to volunteer with us.

This handbook should have all the information you need to be a volunteer here at (add name of organisation).

Please read through everything carefully. If you feel we have not been able to answer all your questions or if there is anything that you are not sure of, please contact (add staff member), who will be pleased to help.

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**1. Introduction to (add name of organisation)**

Add a brief description of your organisation and the services you offer here:

**2. Volunteering Essentials: What You Need to Know**

1. **Dress Code**

Add details of what dress code is appropriate here.

1. **Training and Support**

We provide training and support to volunteers, this includes:

* An induction to (add name of organisation) and your volunteer role.
* Safeguarding training (if applicable)
* Ongoing support from xxx (add staff member who will be overseeing the volunteer here).
* A reference for future employment or training.

1. **Time Commitment and Reliability**

We ask all our volunteers to make a minimum time commitment of xx weeks.

If you can’t make it to a session for whatever reason, please let (add name of staff member) know as soon as possible so that cover can be arranged.

We appreciate that personal circumstances may change and that you may not always be able to continue volunteering with us. If your circumstances change and you can no longer continue in your voluntary role, please be aware that we need **at least xx weeks’ notice**.

1. **Claiming Expenses**

We appreciate and greatly value the time that our volunteers give freely to support our service users. In return (add name of organisation) does its best to cover volunteer expenses:

* We will reimburse the cost of your travel to and from (add name of organisation), up to £xx per day.
* If you volunteer for more than five hours, your meal expenses will be reimbursed to the value of £xx.
* All (add name of organisation) premises are equipped with tea/coffee making facilities, and all volunteers are welcome to help themselves to hot drinks and water while they are volunteering.

**How to claim**

* Complete a (add name of organisation) Expenses Form.
* Attach matching receipts (the date of your receipt will need to clearly match your volunteering date).
* Hand the Expenses Form to your (add name of staff member) who will process the form.

**How to obtain receipts**

*Oyster and contactless cards*

* You can register your Oyster or contactless card by creating a contactless and Oyster account on the www.tfl.gov.uk website. This will allow you to access your journey and payment history for up to 12 months, clearly showing which tube stations or bus routes were used and whether the journey was paid for with pre-pay or covered by a travel card.
* Please highlight any details relating to journeys to and from (add name of organisation) and attach this to your Expenses Claim Form.

*Cars and Motorbikes*

* We can reimburse petrol costs for cars at 45p per mile and motorbike/scooters at 24p per mile[[1]](#footnote-2).

**Payment of expenses**

* All expenses are paid by BACS (amend to payment method used by your organisation).
* Claims must be submitted within xx months of the original payment unless there are exceptional circumstances which prevent this.
* Any claims made xx months after the original payment, and not affected by exceptional circumstances, will not be reimbursed.
* All expense claims must be submitted on the appropriate form and be supported by the appropriate receipts or invoices. No payment can be made without these.
* Forms correctly submitted by the xxth of the month will be paid by the xxth of the same month. Forms correctly submitted by the xxth of the month will be paid by the xxth of the same month.

**3. Safeguarding**

(Add name of organisation) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

**Disclosure & Barring Service Check**

Please note you will need to adapt this section according to the volunteering opportunities in your organisation.

All volunteer positions at (add name of organisation) are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding. Volunteers are required to complete a criminal background check known as a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) as part of their induction process.

The DBS application takes approximately 1-2 weeks to process, and you will be sent a certificate to your home address once this process is completed. Upon receipt, you can register your certificate online with the certificate number via this link: (add link).

**Safeguarding Policy and Training**

You will be asked to read the (add name of organisation) Safeguarding Policy as part of your induction, and to complete safeguarding training online.

If you have any questions about safeguarding children, please ask (add details of safeguarding lead).

If you have any questions about vulnerable adult safeguarding, please ask (add details of safeguarding lead).

**If a child or vulnerable adult discloses something to you:**

**DO:**

* Listen very carefully to what the child or vulnerable adult tells you, treat any allegations extremely seriously and always act towards the child or vulnerable adult as if you believe what they are saying.
* Tell the child or vulnerable adult they are right to tell you. Reassure them that they are not to blame. Be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
* Tell the child or vulnerable adult what you are doing and when and keep them up to date with what is happening.
* Take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse, contact the designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
* Write down everything said and take note of any action taken.

**DON’T:**

* Make promises you can’t keep.
* Interrogate the child/vulnerable adult– it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
* Do nothing – make sure you tell the (add name of organisation) Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.
* Cast doubt on what the child/vulnerable adult has told you, don’t interrupt or change the subject.
* Say anything that makes the child/vulnerable adult feel responsible for the abuse.

**If the child/adults are in immediate danger, please dial 999.**

1. **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

* As an organisation, we need to collect and use certain types of information about the different people we work with.
* This personal information must be collected and dealt with appropriately – whether on paper, on a computer, or recorded on other material.
* This is because there are strict legal obligations about how we handle and store such data, which information we are legally allowed to collect and when we must ask for consent, because of the relationship of trust we have with those who provide their data.
* Volunteers must read our **Data Protection Policy** as this outlines our policy for handling such data.
* Whilst volunteering with us you may have access to confidential information. This includes personal information and data relating to members of the community, our employees, documents, and information relating to our plans, policies, procedures and forms as well as information that may be commercially sensitive.
* It is expected that you understand the importance of always treating this information in a discreet and confidential manner – this includes not passing any information on to any third party, whether done deliberately, by not taking care when you handle it or by discussing information where you may be overheard.
* You will be asked to sign a **Confidentiality Agreement** to demonstrate that you agree to keeping the information you come into contact with confidential at all times – both whilst volunteering and after you leave (add name of organisation) too.

1. **Health and Safety**

* Upon commencement of volunteering with (add name of organisation) you will receive a health & safety induction with (add staff member). You will also be asked to read our Health and Safety Policy as part of your volunteer induction.
* You must not take any action that could threaten the health or safety of yourself, other employees, members of the community or service users.
* You should report all accidents and injuries at work, no matter how minor, to (add name of staff member).
* You must ensure that you are aware of our fire and evacuation procedures and the action you should take in the event of such an emergency.
* 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 volunteer without clearance from your own doctor. Contact with any person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease must be reported before commencing work.

1. **Personal Harassment & Discrimination**

(Add name of organisation) is committed to eliminating any unlawful or unfair discrimination including direct or indirect discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination linked to a perceived characteristic, harassment, and victimisation.

We take complaints of discrimination or harassment very seriously. They will be investigated thoroughly, and we will provide opportunities for the person making the complaint to speak in a safe environment about their experience.

By law, harassment is when bullying or unwanted behaviour is related to any of the following ‘protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010:

* age
* disability
* gender reassignment
* race
* religion or belief
* sex
* sexual orientation

By law, discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly for any of these reasons:

* age
* disability
* gender reassignment
* marriage or civil partnership
* pregnancy and maternity
* race (including colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin)
* religion or belief
* sex
* sexual orientation

If you have any concerns or need further information about our policies and processes, please speak to (add name of staff member).

**(Add name of organisation) Volunteer Agreement**

This volunteer agreement does not in any way form a contract of employment. There is no obligation for you to continue volunteering and (add name of organisation) has no obligation to provide a role.

(Add name of organisation) relies greatly on its volunteers who give their time, knowledge, and enthusiasm.

We aim to provide volunteers with valuable work experience and to help them develop new skills.

We appreciate you volunteering with us, and our aim is to make this experience enjoyable and rewarding for you.

**Whilst you are volunteering with us, you have a right to:**

* appropriate support, and training so that you can fulfill your volunteering role.
* receive travel expenses, as detailed in the (add name of organisation) Volunteer Handbook.
* voice your concerns and be listened to
* withdraw from volunteering at any time, should you need to.
* confidentiality, with all personal records and data kept securely.

**You have a responsibility to:**

* commit to giving at least xx weeks of your time or until the end of the specific project that you are supporting.
* ask for help or support should you need it.
* be reliable. Please contact us as soon as possible if you are unable to attend a session.
* attend relevant training sessions.
* follow our ethos and dress code.
* follow (add name of organisation) policies.
* look after your own safety and report any safety concerns immediately.
* respect the confidentiality of services users and staff at (add name of organisation).

**Declaration**

I understand my rights and responsibilities as a (add name of organisation) Volunteer as stated in this agreement.

Please complete the following table to confirm you have completed the (add name of organisation) Volunteer Induction.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| I have copy of the Volunteer Handbook. |  |  |
| I have undertaken a Health and Safety Induction. |  |  |
| I have read the (add name of organisation) Data Protection Policy. |  |  |
| I have signed the (add name of organisation) Confidentiality Agreement. |  |  |
| I have read the (add name of organisation) Safeguarding Policy. |  |  |
| I have read the (add name of organisation) Health and Safety Policy. |  |  |

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:

**Volunteer Expenses Form**

This form can be used to claim expenses whilst volunteering in accordance with guidelines previously stated.

**Please enclose copies of receipts, circling relevant spending.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** |  | |
| **Date** |  | |
|  | | |
| **Date of expenditure** | **Description of expenditure** | **Amount claimed.** |
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| **Total amount claimed:** | |  |
|  | | |
| **Volunteer signature:** | | |
| **Office use only** | | |
| **Staff signature:** | | |
| **Date:** | | |
| **Amount paid:** | | |
| **Received by signature:** | | |
| **Notes** | | |

**Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement**

Whilst being a volunteer you may have access to personal information or confidential knowledge about the work that (add name of organisation) does. This is an important responsibility, which (add name of organisation) takes very seriously.

We have set out a confidentiality policy, which we expect you to have read and understood.

When someone gives us any confidential information, they need to be sure that we will not pass this to anyone else without their prior permission.

The only exception to this is if you have been given any information which raises a concern for you - for example, a risk to a person’s health or a child protection issue.

In this case you will be expected to share this with your supervisor, who will assess the information and take any appropriate action in line with our confidentiality and safeguarding policies.

This requirement not to talk outside the project also applies to business sensitive information about the work we do, that is not meant to be shared outside the office.

**Confidentiality Statement**

I understand that whilst volunteering I may come across information that is confidential. I agree that I will never disclose such confidential information to anyone outside of the project unless there is a legal or safety duty to do so.

Signed …………………………………………….

Print Name ………………………………………….

Date …………………………………………………

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rates-and-allowances-travel-mileage-and-fuel-allowances/travel-mileage-and-fuel-rates-and-allowances> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)