



Volunteers Policy

Approved by WOCA Committee: January 2018

Date of next review: January 2021

Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the terms on which volunteers carry out tasks for WOCA. The policy does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contract of employment or a contract for services. WOCA reserves the right to change any aspect of this policy at any time.

Definition of "Volunteer"

A volunteer is someone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of their volunteer duties, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the organisation. Volunteers are not employees of the organisation and do not work under a contract for services. They undertake to carry out specific tasks on behalf of the organisation but are under no obligation to offer their services. Similarly, the organisation is not obliged to offer them work.

While volunteers have no employment rights such as paid sickness and holidays, they are covered by the organisation's rules on health and safety, safeguarding, and equal opportunities and should ensure that they are aware of and follow these policies.

Recruitment

Depending on the duties they wish to help with, volunteers may be asked to complete an application form, with references, and to sign an agreement (see Appendix 1). The need for an application form and/or a signed agreement shall be at the discretion of WOCA.

Service at the Discretion of the Organisation

The organisation accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at its sole discretion. Volunteers agree that the organisation may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate their relationship. If a volunteer wishes to end their relationship with the organisation they should inform the Centre Manager as soon as possible.

Conflicts of Interest

Any volunteer, who has a conflict of interest with any activity or programme of the organisation, whether personal, philosophical, or financial, must declare this to the Centre Manager.

Representation of the Organisation

Prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate WOCA, volunteers should seek consultation and approval from appropriate staff. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, lobbying efforts with other organisations, collaborations or joint initiatives, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are not authorised to act as representatives of the organisation unless this is explicitly stated.

Confidentiality and the Data Protection Act 1998

The organisation is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a member of staff, volunteer, service users or other person, or involves the overall business of the organisation.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

In line with WOCA's Safeguarding Policy, as appropriate for the protection of service users, volunteers in certain roles may be asked to submit to a criminal record check. Volunteers who do not agree to the background check may be refused the role.

Lines of Communication

Volunteers should be included in and have access to all appropriate information, memos, materials and meetings relevant to the work assignments. Volunteers should be consulted regarding all decisions that would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

Ending the Agreement

The organisation may find it necessary to end this agreement if the volunteer commits any of the following:

- a. gross misconduct or insubordination
- b. being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- c. theft of property or misuse of the organisation's equipment or materials
- d. abuse or mistreatment of service users or co-workers
- e. failure to abide by its policies and procedures
- f. failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance
- g. failure to perform assigned duties satisfactorily

Note - This list is not exhaustive.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Volunteers are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred while undertaking business for the organisation and they are encouraged to claim their expenses in order to ensure that the true cost is reflected in project accounts. Prior approval must be sought for any major expenditure, and receipts must always be submitted in support of claims.

Insurance

Personal liability and accident insurance is provided for all volunteers engaged in the organisation's business (excluding normal motor insurance). In respect of motor vehicle insurance cover, volunteers are responsible for consulting with their own insurers regarding the extension to include volunteer work. They may be required to produce evidence of this cover.

Appendix



Volunteer Agreement

Name:

Introduction

Volunteers are an important and valued part of WOCA. We very much appreciate your volunteering with us and hope that you enjoy the experience and benefit from this. This agreement tells you what you can expect from us and what we hope from you. We aim to be flexible so please let us know if you would like to make any changes and we will do our best to accommodate these.

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us, and may be cancelled at any time by either party. It is not the intention of either WOCA or you to create any employment relationship either now or at any time in the future.

Role

You have volunteered to work as _____, starting on _____ date.

In order for you to undertake the above, we will provide the following:

Induction

We will introduce you to the work of WOCA, the other team members and your volunteering role and provide any specific training you need to undertake your volunteer duties.

Supervision

We will explain the standards we expect for our services to Centre users and encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them. We aim to meet with you regularly to discuss how things are going with your volunteer activities and to help you develop your skills whilst with us.

Equal opportunity

All volunteers will be treated in accordance with our Equal Opportunities policy. A copy can be obtained from the Centre Manager.

Health and safety and Safeguarding

We aim to provide a safe working environment for all of our employees and volunteers and those who visit our premises. You are asked to familiarise yourself with our Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies and to comply with all of its requirements. A copy can be obtained from the Centre Manager. Should you need any training or protective clothing this will be provided to you free of charge.

Insurance

We will arrange for adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst undertaking work approved and authorised by us. Further details are available from the Centre Manager.

Problems

If you have any problems, concerns or difficulties whilst volunteering with us, you should raise these in the first instance with the Centre Manager.

If after your discussions, the issue remains unresolved, or if you feel you cannot raise this with the Centre Manager (perhaps because that person is involved), you should put your concerns in writing to The Chair of the West Oxford Community Association who will then arrange to meet with you to discuss these.

Expenses

Travel expenses or a meal allowance may be paid at the Centre Manager's discretion. Volunteers who wish to claim such an expense should follow our normal expenses procedure accompanied by relevant receipts or copies of travel cards or tickets.

In return, you agree:

- to attend at such times as agreed and to give us as much notice as possible when you are unable to attend so that we can make other arrangements
- to perform your volunteer duties to the best of your ability
- to comply with our procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities, in relation to our employees, volunteers and Centre users
- you may have access to confidential information regarding both WOCA and the Centre users, and you therefore agree:
 - to keep all information to which you have access secret and confidential and not to disclose it to anyone, except employees of WOCA as may be necessary in the proper course of your volunteer work for us. This applies to all confidential information, whether communicated verbally, in writing or otherwise
 - not to use the information for any purpose without obtaining our prior written agreement
- if we request it, to return any documents or items connected with your volunteering, and not to retain any unauthorised copies
- to provide the details of two referees as agreed who may be contacted by us for a reference
- to a Disclosure and Barring Service check being obtained where necessary

Signed by:

On behalf of WOCA

Date:

Signed by:

Name:

Date: