



Volunteer Centre
East Riding

Information Sheet No. 3

DEVELOPING A VOLUNTEER POLICY

What is a volunteer policy and why do you need one?

Quite simply a volunteer policy is the foundation on which your organisation's involvement of volunteers should be based.

It gives cohesion and consistency to all elements in your organisation that affect volunteers (recruitment, expenses, health and safety etc.) It is the key to involving a diverse range of volunteers, because it helps to define the role of volunteers within the organisation and how they can expect to be treated.

A Volunteer Policy:

- ★ demonstrates an organisation's commitment both to its volunteer programme and to its individual volunteers
- ★ helps to ensure fairness and consistency
- ★ enables volunteers to know where they stand

What is the first step?

- ★ Think about why you are involving volunteers
- ★ How do they fit into the day-to-day life and work of the organisation?

The following topics are suggestions of what an organisation may want to include in a Volunteer Policy:

The Organisation

- ★ Mission Statement
- ★ Aims and objectives

- ★ The relationship to national parent bodies and local voluntary or statutory bodies
- ★ Who the organisation is for
- ★ When the organisation is open

The People

- ★ The management committee (including who is on the management committee)
- ★ The person who has responsibility for co-ordinating the work of volunteers and the person who will be their `named person`
- ★ List giving names of all staff and volunteers

Equal Opportunities

- ★ The organisation`s commitment to equality and anti-oppressive behaviour

Recruitment

- ★ How volunteers are recruited
- ★ The interview process
- ★ Whether or not references and/or police checks are taken up
- ★ Details of expenses and provision of any clothing or equipment

Task Description

- ★ Outline that volunteers will be given a written description of the tasks they will be asked to do
- ★ Statement that volunteers may discuss changing these tasks if appropriate

Arrangements

- ★ Understanding of the level of commitment offered by the volunteer
- ★ What the volunteer should do if they are unable to attend

Training

- ★ The organisation` induction programme for all new volunteers
- ★ Training given to volunteers
- ★ The purpose of training and any expectations arising from that training

Support

- ★ Volunteer team and support meetings
- ★ Volunteer representation on management committee
- ★ How ongoing support/supervision will be offered
- ★ Who the volunteer`s `named person` will be

Insurance and Health & Safety

- ★ Details of Public Liability, Personal Accident and Contents insurance covering volunteers
- ★ Statement that volunteer drivers need to inform their insurance company in writing that they are using their car for voluntary work
- ★ The organisation`s responsibility for health and safety and details of proper use of equipment, protective clothing, building safety, first aid, health and safety training etc.

Confidentiality

- ★ Statement outlining the importance of confidentiality
- ★ Outline of how confidentiality operates

Volunteer Expenses

Reimbursements offered including travel expenses, lunch etc.

Car Mileage Rates

- ★ Mileage allowance
- ★ Details of tax implications of mileage payments

Volunteers on Benefits

- ★ Volunteers on most benefits need to inform the Benefits Agency if undertaking voluntary work. It is not the responsibility of the organisation to inform the Benefits Agency.

Do`s and Don`ts

- ★ Things volunteers should and should not do

Reviewing the Volunteer Policy

- ★ Agreed procedures for regularly reviewing the policy

DISCLAIMER

This information sheet is intended for guidance only, East Riding Voluntary Action has endeavoured to check that details are correct, but please seek independent advice before applying the guidance to your organisation.

