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| PCC/ Parish Logo | Volunteer Policy |

Document Overview

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| **Purpose** | The purpose of this policy is to clarify the terms on which volunteers carry out tasks for the organisation. The policy does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contract of employment or a contract for services. The organisation reserves the right to change any aspect of this policy at any time. This policy applies to all volunteers. |
| **Confidentiality** | This document is not confidential. |
| **Document owner** |  |
| **Status note** |  |
| **Distribution** | All Volunteers |
| **Required action** |  |
| **Proposed next step** |  |

Version History

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Status Note** |
| 1.0 | 22/05/2024 | Draft template for Parishes |
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1. Definition of a “Volunteer”
   1. 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.
   2. While volunteers have no employment rights such as paid sickness and holidays, they are covered by the organisation's rules on health and safety, equal opportunities and positive working and should ensure that they are aware of and follow these policies.
   3. All volunteers are expected to abide by this policy.
2. Users and Relatives as Volunteers
   1. Clients of the organisation may be accepted as volunteers, where such service does not constitute an obstruction to, or conflict with, service provision to the users or to others. Relatives of clients may also serve as volunteers but will not be asked to carry out any work that impinges upon their relationship.
3. Service at the Discretion of the Organisation
   1. 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.
   2. If a volunteer wishes to end their relationship with the organisation they should inform their line manager as soon as possible.
4. Conflicts of Interest
   1. 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 their line manager.
5. Representation of the Organisation
   1. Prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate the organisation, volunteers should seek prior 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.
   2. We recognise the importance of IT and social media in modern life. We recognise that it would be difficult to operate effectively without the use of technology. However, we also recognise the inherent problems associated with all forms of technology and social media that can cause reputational loss due to inappropriate comments so we ask all volunteers to abstain from making posts that would defame the reputation of the Parish, Diocese of Coventry, and Church of England as a whole.
6. Confidentiality and GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018
   1. The organisation is registered under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. 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.
   2. By agreeing to volunteer for the organisation, you agree to maintain confidentiality both before and after your assignment has ended.
   3. Failure to maintain confidentiality will be treated seriously.
7. Disclosure of Public Interest Matters (Whistleblowing)
   1. We are committed to conducting the business of the Diocese of Coventry with honesty and integrity, and we expect all volunteers to maintain high standards. However, all organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring or to address them when they do occur. For more information see the Diocesan website section on [Complaints and whistleblowing - Diocese of Coventry (anglican.org)](https://www.coventry.anglican.org/about/more-about-us/complaints-and-whistleblowing/)
8. Recruitment
   1. Before permission to volunteer is given, all new volunteers must undergo the Church of England Safer Recruitment process. This includes completing an application form and our obtaining two independent references.
   2. As appropriate for the protection of clients, where volunteers will be working with children or vulnerable adults they will be asked to submit to an enhanced DBS check and complete a Confidential Declaration form. Volunteers who do not agree to these checks may be refused the assignment.
9. Reimbursement of Expenses
   1. 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.
10. Insurance
    1. 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.
11. Environment and Sustainability
    1. The five marks of mission were adopted by the General Synod of the Church of England in 1996. The fifth mark of mission encourages Christians to ‘Treasure’; to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth. The Church of England is committed to a carbon reduction target of 80% by 2050. The Diocese of Coventry is supportive of this commitment and will endeavour to play its part in achieving it.
    2. We recognise the theological basis of sound environmental practice. We are committed to reducing our environmental impact and continually improving its environmental performance, with regular monitoring and review. We encourage volunteers to do the same.
12. Conduct
    1. The choice of clothing and personal grooming is largely a matter of individual taste. However, there are certain personal appearance factors that may affect the performance of your job. Therefore, volunteers are expected to dress in a comfortable, but neat and business-like manner, appropriate to the work they are undertaking.
    2. We are committed to creating a harmonious working environment, which is free from harassment and bullying and in which every employee is treated with respect and dignity. We are called, first and foremost, as brothers and sisters in Christ, to love one another, regardless of differences in diversity, opinion or theology.
    3. We are committed to ensuring that individuals do not feel apprehensive because of their religion or belief, gender, marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, race, age, disability (Protected Characteristics) or as a result of being subject to any inappropriate behaviour.
    4. Harassment and bullying are unacceptable behaviour at work and will be treated as misconduct. All volunteers must comply with this policy. We have a zero-tolerance policy for anyone engaging in discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
    5. The organisation may find it necessary to end this agreement if the volunteer commits any of the following:
       1. gross misconduct or insubordination
       2. being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
       3. theft of property or misuse of the organisation's equipment or materials
       4. abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers
       5. failure to abide by its policies and procedures
       6. failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance
       7. failure to perform assigned duties satisfactorily

Note: This list is not exhaustive.