



TODMORDEN LEARNING CENTRE AND COMMUNITY HUB LTD (TLCCH)

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

1. Introduction

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within the organisation. It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers.

The volunteer handbook gives further details about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

2. Our Commitments

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the organisation. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims, and complements the role of paid staff. We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the organisation, its clients and the volunteers themselves.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will not be used to replace staff.

We are committed to offering a flexible range of opportunities and to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented

groups such as youth, people with a disability, older people and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of volunteering. We recognise that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

3. Who Is a Volunteer?

Volunteering is an activity which is

- Undertaken freely, by choice
- Undertaken to be of public/community benefit
- Is not undertaken for financial gain

Work experience placements and internships are not the same as volunteering. Trustees are volunteers who are responsible for the governance of the organisation.

Volunteers may be involved on a one-off, short-term or long-term regular basis.

- In the direct delivery of services at TLCCH
- Forming part of the Board as a Trustee
- In raising the community's awareness of the organisation
- Taking a role in one-off events and promotional activities
- Providing a presence at TLCCH as a receptionist or doing practical or office work

Volunteers are valued for:

- Bringing additional skills and new perspectives to TLCCH
- Enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- Championing our cause within the wider community
- Enhancing the quality of our work and of our client experience
- Promoting the wellbeing of users of services, staff, local communities and themselves

4. Standard of Good Practice

Our management practice is informed by the Code of Practice for Organisations Involving Volunteers and the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard for volunteer management.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

A designated staff member (The Volunteer Co-ordinator) has responsibility for the development and co-ordination of voluntary activity within the organisation, including volunteering policies and procedures and the welfare of volunteers.

All volunteers will have a designated staff member/volunteer for guidance, support and supervision. Staff responsibilities for volunteers will be explicitly referred to in their job/role description.

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for the organisation to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits.

However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the organisation expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation.

The organisation expects volunteers:

- To be reliable and honest
- To uphold the organisation's values and comply with organisational policies
- To make the most of opportunities given e.g. for training
- To contribute positively to the aims of the organisation and avoid bringing the organisation into disrepute
- To carry out tasks within agreed guidelines

Volunteers can expect:

- To have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- To receive adequate support and training
- To be insured and to volunteer in a safe environment
- To be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner
- To receive pre-authorised out of pocket expenses
- To have opportunities for personal development
- To be recognised and appreciated
- To be able to say "no" to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable
- To know what to do if something goes wrong

6. Recruitment and selection

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Opportunities will be promoted locally in such a way as to attract interest from different sectors of the community. Positive recruitment may be used where appropriate. Online application is encouraged but non-digital methods of application will also be made available

Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering, including written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role, key tasks, skills required and benefits. A risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles.

Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview, application form and the taking of references; the process will be defined and consistent for any given role - for example the recruitment process for trustees, regular volunteers and for volunteers for one-off events will be tailored in each case and may differ from one another.

Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred role, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles.

For roles which involve care giving and/or sustained and direct contact with young people or adults at risk, or access to personal data, volunteers will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check which will be arranged by the TLCCH. DBS disclosures are dealt with in the strictest confidence. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering.

7. Induction and Training

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

8. Support and Supervision

Volunteers will be offered support and supervision as appropriate and this is discussed during induction. Arrangements vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone support, group meetings or one to one review.

9. Recognition

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation's wider staff, at staff meetings etc.

Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through annual reports, website articles, social media, and during Volunteers' Week award celebrations.

10. Dealing with Problems

The organisation aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. It seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly.

We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the case of any difficulty. Where informal resolution is not possible, the organisations 'Settling differences' policy will be adhered to.

Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's Grievance Procedure and how to use it.

11. Expenses

Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

12. Moving on

When volunteers move on from volunteering with TLCCH they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully.

Volunteers who have remained with the organisation for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

13. Other relevant documents

The Volunteer Handbook includes detailed, useful information for volunteers including template forms.

Organisational policies relevant to volunteers include Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality, Social media, Safeguarding, Complaints, Settling Differences.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on: 25/11/2019

Date of Next Review:



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VOLUNTEERING AGREEMENT

We appreciate your volunteering with us, and this agreement indicates our commitment to do the best we can to make your volunteering experience a positive and rewarding one. We aim to be flexible so please tell us if there is anything you would like to change or discuss.

You should also be made aware of your Volunteer Role description and the Volunteering Policy/Volunteer Handbook.

This is a voluntary agreement and does not constitute a contract of employment. It can be cancelled at any time by either party

As an organisation we undertake to:

- Introduce you to your role, to the organisation and to other staff and volunteers with whom you will come into contact
- Provide regular opportunities for you to meet with your supervisor.

Your supervisor is _____

- Re-imburse pre-authorised out of pocket expenses
- Consult with you about changes that affect your volunteering
- Provide a safe environment and insurance cover for you whilst you are volunteering
- Treat you with respect, in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy
- Respond to your concerns or complaints as quickly as we can

As a volunteer I undertake to:

- Undertake tasks within agreed guidelines, to the best of my ability
- Give as much notice as possible if I am not able to volunteer as expected
- Uphold the organisation's values and policies, including Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Confidentiality and Equal Opportunities
- Report anything that causes concern for my safety/wellbeing or that of others
- Do my best not to behave in any way that would bring the organisation into disrepute
- Make the most of opportunities for training and development

Welcome on board!

Signed _____ (volunteer)

Signed _____ (for the organisation)

Date _____

