Re:dish volunteer policy

Introduction

This document sets out the key principles and objectives with regard to our relationship with volunteers. It provides a framework for best practice and the positive relationship we wish to have with volunteers.

A volunteer policy is a document that sets out the overall principles that will govern how the volunteer programme is run.

Volunteers are individuals or groups who offer their time, experience, knowledge and skills without financial gain, helping us to achieve our objectives and/or provide a benefit to the community.

There are a number of guiding principles that we will work within including:

- We will work within our existing policy and practice around equality and diversity with volunteers
- We will provide a volunteer agreement to all volunteers
- We will make information available to enable volunteers to claim expenses
- We will provide appropriate insurance cover for all volunteers whilst engaged in volunteering activity
- We do not regard volunteers as unpaid staff and do not advocate or practice the use of volunteers instead of paid staff. We will not expect volunteers to undertake inappropriate responsibilities.
- We will offer suitable training and support for volunteers
- We expect a high level of good behaviour and conduct in both our management of volunteers and from volunteers themselves
- Relevant policies will be made available to volunteers and form part of the induction process.

Whilst these are guiding principles the practice may vary depending on the volunteering role and setting. At all times however, we will try to ensure that we are flexible to ensure that the needs of volunteers are met.

Our recruitment message will be positive and reflect diversity and accessibility. Where resources allow volunteers will be recruited in a pro-active way, through local volunteer centres and in public venues with the intent of broadening and expanding volunteer involvement.

Selection processes will be open and accessible. Our process of recruitment will involve publicising all roles as widely as possible, followed by an initial informal interview with the Community Development Worker and application form. All references will be reviewed.

If, following risk assessment of the role, a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure is required then this will be completed before a volunteer may have sole or substantial access to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Some aspects of the volunteer's role and function may be confidential. The Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policies, and what these mean for volunteers in practice, will be discussed on an individual basis with the volunteer.

Personal information about volunteers will be maintained in line with data protection procedures and confidentiality policy.

Insurance

All volunteers are insured whilst volunteering with Re:dish.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

Re:dish intends to draw upon as wide a pool of volunteers as possible. All volunteers will have access to our Equal Opportunities Policy.

Reimbursement of Volunteer Expenses

Re:dish recognises that volunteers should not lose out financially as a result of their volunteering activities.

A clear procedure is provided on the reimbursement of agreed out of pocket expenses.

Grievances

Re:dish aims to resolve any problems or difficulties that volunteers may have whilst placed within the organisation fairly and quickly in line with current policy.

Working with Vulnerable Clients

Volunteers attached to services for vulnerable adults or children may need particular support, advice and training. They should be made aware of the special requirements of the role and behaviour which is not acceptable.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety Policy should be followed by volunteers and may vary in line with current policy.

Valuing the contribution of Volunteers

The achievements and practical contribution of Volunteers will be recognised appropriately and with the agreement of volunteers, including in the media.