



Volunteer Policy

Policy Aim

The purpose of this policy is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer involvement and management efforts. The policy is intended for internal management guidance only and does not constitute either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personal agreement. The group or organisation reserves the exclusive right to change any aspect of the policy at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Alteration to or exceptions from these policies may only be granted by the volunteer co-ordinator, and must be obtained in advance and in writing. The volunteer co-ordinator shall decide matters in areas not specifically covered by the policy.

What J.U.S.T offers volunteers

J.U.S.T recognises that volunteering is an exchange. We J.U.S.T use and benefit from the skills and knowledge volunteers bring to the organisation and in return we aim to ensure that volunteering with J.U.S.T is a positive experience. Many volunteers acquire new experiences and skills, which can lead to employment and/or training opportunities. In addition, all J.U.S.T volunteers gain an awareness and understanding of equal opportunities.

Acceptance and Appointment

Service as a volunteer with the organisation shall begin with an official notice of acceptance or appointment to a volunteer position. An authorised representative of the organisation, who will normally be the volunteer co-ordinator, may only give notice. No volunteer shall begin volunteering until they have been officially accepted for the position and have completed all necessary screening and paperwork. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer shall complete all necessary enrolment paperwork and shall receive a copy of their job description and agreement of service with the organisation.

Professional Services

Volunteers shall not perform professional services for which certification or a licence is required unless currently certified or licensed to do so. The volunteer coordinator should maintain a copy of any such certificate or licence.

Requirement of a Supervisor

Each volunteer who is accepted to a position with the organisation must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of what volunteer.

This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the volunteer, and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

Volunteers as Volunteer Supervisors

A volunteer may be a supervisor of other volunteers, provided that the supervising volunteer is under the direct supervision of a paid member of staff.

Volunteer – Staff Relationships

Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programmes of the organisation, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. It is essential for the effective operation of this relationship that each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

Absenteeism

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular, scheduled and punctual basis. When expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform their staff supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made. Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer's work assignment or term of service.

Expenses:

Volunteers are entitled to claim expenses that have resulted as a direct consequence of their volunteering for J.U.S.T

Expenses include:

- Travel expenses covering their journey to and from the location at which they are volunteering.
- Travel expenses which arise as a direct result of their volunteering activities

- A £3.00 contribution towards the cost of a lunch where volunteers work continuously for a period of four hours or longer in a single day

All expenses claims must be submitted to J.U.S.T and accompanied by the relevant receipts or other proof of expenditure.

Dismissal of a Volunteer

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the organisation or who fail satisfactorily to perform their volunteer assignment may be subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with supervisory staff. Prior to dismissal of a volunteer, any affected member of staff should seek the consultation and assistance of the volunteer co-ordinator.

Reasons for Dismissal

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct or insubordination; Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; theft of property or misuse of the organisations' equipment or materials; abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers; failure to abide by the organisations' policies and procedures; failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance; and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

Complaints or Grievances

Decisions involving corrective action of a volunteer may be reviewed for appropriateness. If corrective action is taken, the affected volunteer shall be informed of the procedures for expressing their **complaints and grievance**.

Notice of Departure or Re-assignment of a Volunteer

In the event that a volunteer departs from the group or organisation, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or is re-assigned to a new position, it shall be the responsibility of the volunteer co-ordinator to inform those affected staff and clients that the volunteer is no longer assigned to work with. In cases of dismissal for good reason, this notification should be given in writing and should clearly indicate that any further contact with the volunteer must be outside the scope of any relationship with the group or organisation.

Health and Safety:

Volunteers are covered by J.U.S.T Health and Safety Policy and are asked to observe all J.U.S.T Health and Safety guidelines.

A full risk assessment has been carried out on the organisation and this is reviewed regularly. In addition J.U.S.T will carry out a risk assessment on each volunteer and each volunteering role.

The Health and Safety Policy, the Fire Instructions and risk assessments the volunteer's role are included in the volunteers induction pack.

Insurance Cover:

Volunteers are covered by J.U.S.T Public Liability Insurance Policy.

Exit Interview

Exit interviews, where possible, should be conducted with the volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions that the volunteer may have for improving the position they have been fulfilling and more generally how they might improve the functioning of the wider organisation, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity with the group or organisation in the future.

Volunteers Activities

Volunteers carry out a range of roles, providing additional support to service users and to the work of the organisation. This support is provided in:

- The community
- Schools
- Out of school activities

Monitoring and Review of the Volunteering Policy

J.U.S.T undertakes to review its volunteering policy and procedures on an annual basis.

Principals of Good Practice

J.U.S.T aims to achieve best practice in all its endeavours and undertakes to ensure that:

- The selection process for volunteers avoids unfair discrimination and is welcoming to all prospective volunteers.
- The selection procedure for volunteers follows guidelines for best practice by ensuring that all volunteers are interviewed, and that appropriate references are taken up. When a volunteer has been referred by or placed through another agency, J.U.S.T practice to interview and obtain independent references will still apply.

- To provide a clear definition of what is expected from volunteers through the provision of volunteer position descriptions and a volunteer handbook.
- To provide volunteers with the necessary skills to carry out their task through induction and on-going training.
- To recognise volunteers as equal partners in achieving the aims of J.U.S.T and to ensure that their contribution to the work is an integral part of the service.

- To provide structure to the volunteer role through regular supervision and through volunteer support meetings.

Rights of Volunteers

- To be respected and J.U.S.T ensuring they know what their rights and responsibilities are.
- To be provided with the necessary information to carry out their volunteering and to know what is expected of them.
- To be given induction and other training appropriate to the tasks they are involved in.
- To be given support and supervision from a named person from within the service.
- To be advised of their rights and responsibilities within J.U.S.T health and safety policy and to be provided with a safe working environment.
- To be paid reasonable out of pocket expenses. (Maximum amount to be discussed)
- To be covered by J.U.S.T Insurance Policy.
- To be free from discrimination.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

- To carry out their agreed duties to the best of their abilities.
- To work within the aims, objectives of J.U.S.T.
- To work with agreed policies, codes of practice and guidelines as outlined in the volunteer handbook and as explained during the induction process.
- To be honest and reliable.
- To respect the privacy of the client group and to maintain matters of confidentiality.
- To attend training and support sessions where agreed.
- To inform the placement at least 3 hours before if they are not able to volunteer on a particular day.

Responsibilities of Project Manager

- To provide information, training and assistance to enable volunteers to meet the responsibilities of their volunteer position.
- To provide on-going support and supervision.

- To identify a named person who will maintain contact with the volunteer on a regular basis and at least once a month for the initial 3 months of the placement.
- To welcome any comments from the volunteer regarding ways in which the volunteering task may be improved.
- To treat the volunteer as an equal partner in achieving the aims of J.U.S.T
- To demonstrate a commitment to volunteering being a right open to everyone.

Part V of the Police Act

In line with best practice and as required by current legislation, volunteers working within children's services and volunteers working with vulnerable adults are required to have a criminal records check carried out. A standard disclosure is required for volunteers whose duties involve or can involve regular contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. An enhanced disclosure is required for volunteers in positions where they may be regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of disabled children and adults using J.U.S.T services. Having a criminal record will not necessarily disbar a potential volunteer from being involved in our services. This will depend upon the nature of the position together with the circumstances and background of the offence(s). J.U.S.T is fully committed to complying with the Criminal Record Office Disclosure Bureau's Code of Practice for Registered Person and other recipients of Disclosure Information. J.U.S.T will also ensure that all verification checks undertaken will be compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998, Code of Practice on Recruitment and Selection.

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