



Volunteer Policy



Applicable to: All staff and volunteers
Ratified by Volunteer Strategy Group (1st July 2022)

Introduction

There will be 'No Life Half Lived' because we will make it a matter of life and health that our people are front and centre in all that we do.

We could not carry out the work that we do to reach the one in five of the population affected by our conditions without our volunteers; **you are at the heart of our charity**, bringing a diverse range of skills and experience to the work we do and helping us to forge lasting relationships in the community.

Your Expectations of Us:

- Meaningful, defined roles with effective support and supervision
- Providing a safe and welcoming environment
- Respect from staff, service users, customers and other volunteers
- Appropriate training to ensure you are confident and competent for the tasks you will undertake
- Recognition of the contribution you make to the organisation
- Providing health & safety, environmental and safeguarding information to promote your well-being
- Ensuring you are never out of pocket for authorised expenses
- Providing support and encouragement to raise any feedback, issues or concerns you may have

Our Expectations of You:

- Carrying out your agreed role within the boundaries of the task description
- Attending, and actively participating in, individual and volunteer group meetings
- Respecting staff, service users, customers and other volunteers and conducting yourself appropriately when volunteering
- Participating in training to ensure you are confident and competent in your role
- Adhering to health & safety, environmental and safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of yourself and others
- Understanding that it is not appropriate to give or receive personal gifts
- To have fun! Raising issues or concerns with your line manager as they arise.

Volunteering and Covid 19

CHSS is committed to providing a safe environment for our employees, volunteers, and the communities in which we operate. We are working to avoid disruptions caused by COVID-19 coronavirus, while at the same time acting responsibly to do what we can to prevent further spread of the virus.

We will continue to closely monitor and assess the situation and will be diligent about communicating on important issues.

For further information, please see our policies on the Volunteer Portal.

Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

CHSS welcomes applications from anyone interested in becoming a volunteer. People have a wide range of reasons for volunteering and bring a wide range of experience and skills to us. We respect, and welcome, this talent!

All prospective volunteers are asked to complete an application form. The selection process includes an informal chat, a visit to the service, shop or office and a formal interview. Interviews are carried out to ensure that the person is suitable for the role in question (and an alternative role may be offered).

In order to safeguard our service users, supporters, volunteers and staff, we carry out criminal conviction checks with Disclosure Scotland and require two satisfactory references for all volunteers within 4 weeks of the start date. Certain volunteer roles require membership of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme, which confirms suitability to carry out 'regulated work' with protected adults. The PVG Scheme involves ongoing monitoring, meaning that we are informed if someone in these roles might have become unsuitable to work with this vulnerable group. A Basic Disclosure check, confirming any unspent convictions, is required for all other roles. To support these checks, volunteers are also asked to complete a self-declaration form, which involves disclosing certain convictions depending on the level of check required for the role, along with three forms of ID. Further guidance will be provided when this information is required.

We treat all applicants for volunteer positions fairly and do not discriminate against the subject of a PVG Scheme Record on the basis of a conviction or

other information revealed unless the individual is barred from working with vulnerable groups.

Disclosure information is only shared with those authorised to see it in the course of their duties. For insurance and safeguarding purposes, our volunteer roles have a minimum age restriction of 16 years (18 years for some roles). Further guidance and supervision for 16-17 year-olds is in place to support their volunteer experience, in line with our Protection of Vulnerable Groups Policy.

Induction

As a new volunteer, we warmly welcome you to CHSS and provide you with access to an induction process, role specific guidelines and resources. You will also have access to all organisational policies and procedures that support you in your role.

You will be given a clearly identified line manager, who will give you a Task Description and a Volunteer Agreement. Neither document is a contract with CHSS but are designed to give further information about your new role. Risk Assessments will be provided as required.

Your Line Manager will also guide you through the induction process, organising ongoing training sessions around mandatory and role-specific issues. They will respond to any identified training needs and introduce you to the Volunteer Portal, our online information hub for volunteering. Safeguarding training will also be provided so you can be confident in how to raise any issues or concerns.

Ongoing Training/ Support & Development

It is important for you as well as for CHSS that you receive regular opportunities to reflect on your volunteering contribution. Therefore, post-induction, you will receive regular support in line with your role. These meetings are part of your commitment to volunteering with us and active participation in them is very important.

If you choose to leave us, we will ask you why and invite you to comment upon any improvements that can be made to the volunteering experience we offer.

Confidentiality

You are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which you are exposed whilst serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a member of staff, volunteer, client or other person or involves the overall business of the organisation.

Diversity

CHSS is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of our work. We believe that we have much to learn and profit from diverse cultures and perspectives. We regularly evaluate and monitor our progress towards diversity.

Equal Opportunities

It is our policy to treat those applying for volunteering roles and those actively carrying out volunteering roles with full and fair consideration irrespective of their age, actual or perceived sexual orientation, community background or political beliefs, disability, gender, marital status or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion, sex or status.

Volunteer Management Records

A system of records will be maintained and recorded on our organisational database for each volunteer, including date of birth, contact details, dates of service, emergency contact details, evaluation of work, positions held and recognition received. Volunteers and appropriate staff are responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information to the Volunteering Team in a timely and accurate fashion.

Please note that we hold data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, and a copy of the Privacy Policy is available through the Volunteer Portal and our website. To carry out your role effectively, we need to contact you.

Monitoring and Review

The Volunteering Strategy Group will review this policy annually.