

BRIGHTER FUTURES

VOLUNTEER POLICY



Created by: S Owen
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Introduction

Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community: the environment of individuals outside one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice without concern for financial gain.

Brighter Futures believes in the value of voluntary activity as an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of a free and democratic society. It supports and promotes volunteering in public and third sector organisations. Brighter Futures takes responsibility for ensuring that volunteers within its own organisation are appropriately involved, valued for their contribution and respected as colleagues.

In adopting this volunteer policy, Brighter Futures wishes to:

- Formally acknowledge and support the role of volunteers in its work
- Set out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and provide a set of guidelines to ensure good practice in working with volunteers
- Encourage and enable, rather than restrict, the involvement of volunteers.
- Ensure we retain the standards of Investing in Volunteers.

This volunteer policy and accompanying guidelines are intended for use by Brighter Futures paid staff and volunteers.

Volunteer Policy Statement

Brighter Futures Equal Opportunities

As an employer and engager of volunteers Brighter Futures is committed to a policy of equal opportunities. This principle will apply to service delivery, recruitment, promotion, training, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions.

Volunteers will be expected to adhere to Brighter Futures Equal Opportunities Policy, a copy of which can be found within Brighter Futures Volunteer Handbook and website.

Recruitment & Selection

Recruitment of volunteers will be from all sections of the community and will be in line with (Brighter Futures) Equal Opportunities Policy. Appropriate targeting may be used where posts are created for members.

Information & Training

Volunteers will receive full information about their chosen area of work and will be given a clear idea of their responsibilities to Brighter Futures.

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

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

Support & Supervision

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person for supervision and support; this will normally be the volunteer coordinator.

Problem-Solving

Brighter Futures recognises that problems do arise, and we aim to identify and resolve these problems at the earliest stage. Volunteers who have a problem of any kind should discuss it in the first instance with their named contact person.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same confidentiality conditions as Brighter Futures paid staff.

Expenses

Brighter Futures will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses.

Health and Safety

All volunteers are covered by the same health and safety policies and provisions as staff, this includes free training, advice and guidance.

Relations with Paid Staff

Brighter Futures is committed to ensuring that volunteers work complements the work of paid staff, and that it will not be used as a substitute for paid work.

Steps will be taken to ensure that staff at all levels are clear about the roles of volunteers and to foster good working relationships between staff and volunteers, paid staff should be clear of the value of volunteers. Brighter Futures recognises the need for training for all those working alongside and managing volunteers which will be implemented by the volunteer coordinator.

Costs

Brighter Futures will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers and recognises the value of designated responsibilities within specific posts for the management of volunteers.

References

On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Brighter Futures will systemically monitor and evaluate its involvement of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy. Software including Better Impact will maintain information in accordance with our Data Protection policy.

Review

This policy comes into force on 01/06/2025 (replacing version 002) and Brighter Futures commits itself to review the policy as and when changes in legislation or other factors make this necessary. The policy will be subject to a review every two years.

Note

- *“Paid Staff” refers to paid employees and those undertaking placements with Brighter Futures*
- *This document refers to other policies which are available in Brighter Futures Volunteer Handbook and stored within OneDrive.*

Guidelines for Involving Volunteers

These guidelines are intended for use along with the policy statement. They give further detail on recommended good practice in the involvement of volunteers within Brighter Futures.

Recruitment

Brighter Futures has an Equal Opportunities Policy and will prevent discrimination particularly on the grounds of sex, marital status, disability, race, colour, religious belief, political belief, sexuality, nationality, ethnic origin, age, trade union activity, responsibility for dependents or employment status. (See statement and policy for details)

In order to reach a wide section of the community, recruitment should be by a variety of means.

Positive action in recruitment may be used for specific voluntary tasks. For example, specific work with minority ethnic groups.

Members and beneficiaries of our group activities may have roles created to meet their specific needs, in these cases no recruitment or selection process will be undertaken.

Initial Contact

People interested in becoming volunteers with Brighter Futures should be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person. They should:

1. Be given written information to take away
2. Have their role explained and how it fits in with Brighter Futures 's vision and mission
3. Have the next stages of becoming a volunteer with Brighter Futures outlined

If the volunteer wishes to proceed with the application at this stage, the contact person should fill out the application form for the volunteer (getting referees' details) and ask the volunteer to sign.

If the volunteer is undecided, agree the next step e.g., for the contact person to phone them potential volunteer in a week's time.

Selection

All volunteers should complete an application form. Two written references will be required. If the volunteer is to carry out specialised work (e.g., IT support) at least one reference should relate directly to this.

If volunteers may be working with vulnerable people, or in positions of trust, they should be asked to provide information on their application form about any criminal convictions that they may have.

All information should be dealt with in the strictest confidence and should not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

Members and beneficiaries of our group activities may have roles created to meet their specific needs, in these cases no recruitment or selection process will be undertaken.

Records

Minimum details should be kept on volunteers. This will include the application form, references, placement details, relevant information regarding the person's health, correspondence and any other relevant information such as emergency contact details.

Record keeping must be secure but accessible to other members of staff if you are absent.

The Data Protection Act enables people to access information held about them.

Induction

Induction sessions should be provided for all new volunteers using the standard induction checklist:

Expectations of Volunteers

Brighter Futures should expect volunteers to:

Participate in induction sessions

Comply with existing policies and procedures

Undertake voluntary work at agreed times

Inform relevant staff if unable to attend

Give some notice if unable to continue volunteering

Raise any issues of concern relating to their voluntary work with the contact person

Agree with the vision and mission of the charity.

Placement

Once a suitable voluntary placement has been identified, details about the frequency and length of commitment and nature of the voluntary activity should be determined and an established trial period agreed.

Brighter Futures reserves the right to ask volunteers to leave and will give reasons in writing if requested.

Support, and Supervision

Regular support/supervision should be available to each volunteer. The type and level of support will depend on the needs of the volunteer and the nature of their role. Full information on this will be provided during induction.

Each volunteer should have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for the day-to-day management and guidance of the volunteer and who will be able to offer advice, support and feedback on a regular basis. (this will often, but not always be the volunteer coordinator)

If a complaint about a volunteer arises, refer to the complaints policy.

Expenses

The procedures for claiming expenses should be clear and accessible.

All agreed out of pocket expenses should be reimbursed on production of receipts.

Insurance

It should be ensured that volunteers have appropriate insurance cover in terms of employers and public liability.