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Volunteer Policy and Procedures

Table of Contents

1. SCOPE 2
2. Purpose 2
3. Policy statement/values/principals 2
4. Procedures 3
   4.1 Recruitment 3
      4.1.1 Role descriptions 3
      4.1.2 Application process 3
      4.1.3 Interview, DBS and Reference checks 4
   4.2. Induction and Training 5
      4.2.1 Local induction 5
      4.2.2 Training 5
   4.3 Support and Supervision 5
   4.4 Expectations 6
   4.5 References 6
   4.6 Communication: 6
   4.7 Grievance Procedure 7
5. Suitability 7

1. SCOPE

This policy covers all aspects of volunteering from young people to adults at The Leaside Trust. It sets out what volunteers can expect from the Trust and what the Trust expects from its volunteers.

2. Purpose

- To set out to its workforce how the Trust endeavours to encourage and support volunteering.
- To state that volunteers will be treated in a fair and consistent way.
- To outline what support is available and what volunteers can expect from us.
- To offer opportunities for participation, improve diversity and reflect the communities we serve.

3. Policy statement/values/principals

The Leaside Trust recognises and states that:

- Volunteering adds value our workforce, clients, partnerships and the wider community.
- We will treat volunteers with respect and in a fair and consistent way, in accordance with our policies and procedures.
- We will comply with current Data Protection legislation and follow GDPR guidance.
- We actively seek feedback on a regular basis from our Volunteers to improve our volunteer experience. We encourage them to share their thoughts, ideas, concerns with an allocated senior worker and were appropriate we will include them to the decision making process in line with our policies and procedures.
- We provide adequate induction and training to make sure that our volunteers are fully equipped to perform and excel in their chosen roles.
- Volunteers come from all pathways of life, have different skills and experiences as well as learning and development needs. We will work will work alongside our volunteers to achieve their wished goals and outcomes.

4. Procedures

4.1 Recruitment

4.1.1 Role descriptions

- All role descriptions will be well thought out and clearly described so that all individuals are clear about their tasks and responsibilities.

- In order to develop a new volunteering role for a project, a senior worker will assess and discuss with their team the current needs required to fulfil a role. At this stage consideration should be given to what value the volunteer will bring to the service, what are the tasks the volunteer will perform, the capacity and resources of the team to support the volunteer (e.g.: adequate working/computer space if the volunteer is undertaking admin/computer-based tasks), and any risks associated with the volunteering role (e.g., contact with vulnerable clients, access to confidential information, etc.).

- Once a role is agreed the volunteer coordinator will develop a role description and advertise appropriately.

4.1.2 Application process

- Volunteers will apply for the specific roles advertised using the Volunteers Application Form available via The Leaside Trust website or will contact the Trust to request an application form

- The Volunteer Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of application via an email or post within 7 days.

- Written role descriptions will describe the time, commitment, skills and qualities required as well as the types of activities volunteers will carry out.

- The applicants will be requested to provide contact details of two referees that can comment on their suitability for the specific role.

4.1.3 Interview, DBS and Reference checks

- Volunteers who meet the shortlisting criteria will be invited to an informal interview with the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator will be responsible to make the interview arrangement. The Informal Interview Questions Form can be used as a guidance.

- The informal interview should be seen as an opportunity for both parties to discuss the role, tasks, responsibilities and benefits, time commitment and overall expectations of the volunteering placement.

- Following the informal interview process, successful applicants will be invited to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check via an online process.

- Once the volunteers receive their DBS certificate, they will notify the Volunteer Coordinator by emailing a PDF/JPG attachment of the DBS certificate.

- In the case of a positive disclosure in the DBS certificate, a Positive Disclosure interview will be arranged. The applicant will be requested to provide information/context on the disclosures and fill in the Positive Disclosure Form. This will be discussed at the next Board meeting with the Trustees who will decide on the outcome of the application.

- A positive disclosure in the DBS does not automatically exclude the candidate from volunteering with the Trust.

- Once all pre-recruitment checks are complete, successful applicants will be notified by the Volunteer Coordinator and an appropriate starting date will be agreed.

4.2. Induction and Training

4.2.1 Local induction

Before the first date of placement, all volunteers will be emailed links to electronic copies of all appropriate policies and procedures for prior reading. So as on their first date of placement the Volunteer Coordinator/Senior Worker will complete the volunteer our standard centre induction including:

a. Introduction to team member.
b. Tour around the building and familiarising with the facilities.
c. Health and Safety Local Induction including Health and Safety Policy.
d. Workplace protocol: access to computer/phones (if relevant), dress code, reporting and follow up on absence, timekeeping etc.
e. Local amenities
f. Problem solving procedure.
g. Volunteer agreement.
h. Confidentiality agreement.
i. Policies and Procedures (within the first month).

4.2.2 Training

- Volunteers will be given the opportunity to attend relevant training to their role, his will be organised by the volunteer's coordinator

- Where appropriate the Volunteer Coordinator will try to source external training where necessary to meet the learning and development needs of the volunteer appropriate to the Trust's needs.

4.3 Support and Supervision

- Each volunteer will have an allocated supervisor (senior worker) who will be responsible for the overall wellbeing of the volunteer.

- During the first six weeks the chief executive will meet with the volunteer to discuss progress, explore if the volunteer and the service are mutually beneficial and suitable to each other. This will be considered the first supervision meeting.

- Further supervision meetings will take place every six months. The Volunteer Coordinator will be responsible for conducting formal supervision focusing on the overall wellbeing of the volunteer, their learning and development needs, problem solving, further opportunities e.g. changes in the role description, experiencing other projects etc. This will be done face to face or by phone/online depending on the needs of the volunteer and will be scheduled at a time that suits the volunteer.

4.4 Expectations

All our volunteers must adhere The Leaside Code of Conduct and act in a friendly and professional manner at all times. Follow all Leaside rules & procedures and work as an effective member of the staff team.

All activity volunteers

- Arrive 15 minutes before session start.
- Dress appropriately for the activity undertaken.
- Must attend safety briefing.
- Carry/wear a means of measuring time.
- Ensure that any NGB/First Aid qualifications are current and valid (including membership).

4.5 References

The Managing Director can provide references for a volunteer after six months of service upon request.

4.6 Communication:

- We believe that volunteers add important value to our workforce and services and we will endeavour to keep them informed and include them in the decision making as appropriate.

- Volunteers are considered members of the workforce and will be invited to team meetings.

- The volunteers' supervisor will update the volunteers on any changes in the staffing, planning etc. of the team as well as any opportunities available, events etc.

4.7 Grievance Procedure

We hope that volunteering with The Leaside Trust will be a positive experience for all parties involved. Nevertheless, if things don't go as expected the grievance procedure should guide volunteers and staff to efficiently solve any problems that might arise.

If a volunteer has a complaint about a member of staff, another volunteer or a client the Leaside Trust's complaint procedure applies.

If the Leaside Trust receives a complaint about an individual volunteer the same grievance procedure issued at the point of induction.

5. Suitability

We believe that everyone can make an equally valuable contribution to society and we state that we will not discriminate anyone, including volunteers.

Being an ex-offender will not automatically exclude a volunteer from volunteering with The Leaside Trust, however this will be dependent on the committed offence, time spent and board approval