



Letting Go of Volunteers Policy

Volunteers

Most volunteering comes to a natural conclusion when a volunteer feels that s/he is ready to leave an organisation and move on to other things. Occasionally there may be circumstances when an organisation considers it necessary to ask a volunteer to leave. This model policy suggests the circumstances and measures for dealing with this.

Policy

A volunteer will automatically be asked to leave if, after investigation, he or she is found to have committed:

- theft of property belonging to the organisation, another volunteer, member of staff or service user
- acts of violence towards another volunteer, member of staff or service user
- malicious damage to property belonging to the organisation, volunteers, staff or service users

Please note that criminal proceedings may also be brought against a volunteer by the injured party in these cases.

The steps below in this policy will be taken in instances such as (this is not an exhaustive list):

- deliberate falsification of expenses claims
- breach of the organisation's policies and procedures, especially those concerning confidentiality and health and safety



- criminal convictions which affect the volunteer's suitability for a role
- the provision of false information or failure to disclose information relevant to their suitability for a role
- poor performance
- poor attendance
- inappropriate behaviour, including sexual or racial harassment.

Investigation

The organisation is committed to thoroughly investigating all concerns, complaints and allegations about volunteers and their work. In the event of a complaint, the Volunteer Manager will:

- consider all concerns raised, complaints and allegations made through the appropriate channels, i.e. the organisation's complaints policy or concerns raised in management and supervision meetings.
- only in exceptional circumstances, investigate complaints made anonymously
- identify the facts of the matter, through discussion with the volunteer and other relevant parties, to determine whether there is any cause to continue with the steps outlined below



- if it is found that there is cause to continue with the steps outlined below, the volunteers project manager will assess the seriousness of the case and decide upon the next steps
- the volunteers project manager will inform the volunteer of the decision taken and of the next steps

Exploring Alternatives

When dealing with below standard work, inappropriate conduct or a complaint made against a volunteer, the volunteer manager will first look at alternatives to asking a volunteer to leave the organisation.

Supervision and support – does the volunteer fully understand the rules or procedures of the organisation? The volunteer manager will review the support and supervision of the volunteer to ensure that:

- the volunteer understands how they should fulfil their role
- the volunteer understands what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- the volunteer has all the information they need to perform their duties to the required standards
- any problems identified can be resolved.

New role – the volunteer manager will assess the volunteer's role in relation to the volunteer's strengths, needs and motivations and, if necessary, assign the volunteer to a new, more suitable role.

Training – the volunteer manager will assess the knowledge and skills required for their role and will arrange further training to address any gaps in knowledge.



Referral – the volunteer manager will assess whether the volunteer is more suited to working in another voluntary organisation and will refer the volunteer to their local volunteer centre for help and guidance on finding a new volunteering opportunity.

Retirement – the volunteer manager will assess the volunteer's ability to continue volunteering with the organisation, looking at the physical and mental requirements of the role as well as health and safety issues. In agreement with the volunteer, the volunteer manager will explore whether there are alternative possibilities such as working from home in a different role. If this is not possible, the volunteer manager may ask a volunteer to retire from their work with the organisation.

Where none of the above alternatives are suitable in the circumstances or are unsuccessful, the volunteer manager will proceed with the following steps.

Initial warning

The volunteer manager may give the volunteer an informal warning to improve performance or conduct. The warning will be noted in the volunteer's personal file. The volunteer's performance or conduct will be reviewed in a supervision session to be held not more than one month after the initial warning is given.

Second warning

If, following the review outlined above, the volunteer's performance or conduct is still found to be below standard, the volunteer manager will give a second warning. This will be noted in the volunteer's personal file. The volunteers project manager will ask the volunteer to commit to set, measurable targets in order to help them to improve their performance or behaviour. These will be reviewed in a supervision session to be held no more than one month after the second warning is given.



If, following the review outlined above, the volunteer's performance or conduct is found to be below standard, the volunteer manager will give a final warning. This will be noted in the volunteer's personal file. The volunteer manager will set measurable targets in order to monitor the volunteer's progress. These will be reviewed in a supervision session to be held no more than one month after the final warning is given. If no improvement is found to have been made at the time of the review, the volunteer may be asked to leave the organisation.

Leaving the organisation

The volunteer manager will convey the decision to ask the volunteer to leave the organisation by holding a private meeting with the volunteer. The meeting will be

followed up with a letter re-iterating the decision and providing information on any arrangements for leaving. The volunteer manager will inform the organisation's staff and volunteers of the decision.

If the volunteer wishes to continue volunteering, they should be referred to their local volunteer centre for information on opportunities available in other organisations.