OpenGate churches

Volunteer policy for external activities

November 2020

**Introduction**

A volunteer is a person who gives freely of their time, skills and experience without expectation of financial reward. Volunteering can take many forms. Some tasks require particular skills whereas others require none. Volunteering may be for a limited time to complete a particular project or may be on an ongoing basis.

The organisation recognises the immense benefits that volunteers bring to the organisation, and the bridges that they build between the organisation and the local community. In return, the organisation hopes to give its volunteers an opportunity to exercise their skills in a different environment and to undertake new experiences.

The organisation tries to offer a range of volunteering opportunities and, in accordance with its equal opportunities and diversity policies, to ensure that the opportunity to volunteer is widely available.

**Status of volunteers**

A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with the organisation. The organisation will agree a role with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the role's requirements and that the organisation will provide work for the volunteer. However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the role and the organisation is not bound to provide the work. It is also expected that both the organisation and the volunteer will give as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations.

**Volunteering roles**

Roles suitable for volunteers are identified by [name], who will draw up a volunteer outline. This will set out the requirements of the role and the skills or experience needed, as well as any training that is required before the volunteering work is undertaken. Volunteers will not be used as substitutes for employees.

**Recruitment**

A person wishing to become a volunteer will be asked to complete an application form. The applicant will be asked to identify areas in which they would like to volunteer. If the organisation is able to match the applicant to a suitable role, references will be required and, depending on the nature of the role, the prospective volunteer may be required to undergo a health and/or DBS safeguarding check. Application forms should be returned to a named person within the church leadership or administration.

**Volunteering agreement**

The volunteer will be invited to enter into a volunteering agreement with the organisation. This agreement will identify:

* the volunteer's role;
* any training that the volunteer is expected to undertake;
* the expenses that the organisation will pay to the volunteer;
* the insurance cover that will be provided for the volunteer;
* who will supervise the volunteer; and
* the notice that will be given to the volunteer if their role is to come to an end.

**Training**

The organisation will provide any training required for the role, including health and safety training.

**Our Expectations**

In all instances it is expected that volunteers comply with the charity’s policies and procedures while on the premises and undertaking volunteering duties.

**Health and safety**

The organisation has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow the organisation's health and safety policies and procedures. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers should not act outside their authorised area or work. Volunteers should report all accidents to their supervisor.

The organisation will provide volunteers with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise.

**Recompense**

Volunteers are unpaid. However, the organisation will reimburse volunteers for travel and subsistence expenses. This will [entail reimbursement against receipts/take the form of an allowance]. [Reimbursement will be in accordance with the organisation's expenses policy.]

**Policies and procedures**

Volunteers are expected to comply with all the organisation's policies and procedures while they are on its premises or undertaking any of their volunteering duties. Their induction will include an explanation of these policies and procedures.

Policies and Procedures are available on the OpenGate SharePoint and can also be requested from church leaders and administrators.

**Insurance**

The organisation will ensure that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. The organisation will also ensure that volunteers are provided with professional and public liability insurance. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

**Confidentiality**

Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the organisation, its staff, [clients/customers] and [third parties/patients]. Volunteers should not disclose this information or use it for their own or another's benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been made public as a result of the volunteer's breach of confidentiality) or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

**Supervision**

A supervisor will be appointed to support and manage the volunteer. The supervisor will review the arrangements after [three/six] months and thereafter on a regular basis. If the volunteer has any queries or would like to change their role this should be discussed with the supervisor.

**Safeguarding**

As an organisation we work with children and vulnerable adults and will require DBS checks for volunteers wherever necessary and will require that volunteers complete regular safeguarding training. The safeguarding policy will be provided at training and can be made available at any time upon request.

**Data protection**

The organisation processes personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its data protection policy. In particular, data collected as part of the application process and DBS checks is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the volunteering relationship. Inappropriate access or disclosure of personal data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the organisation's disciplinary procedure.

**Dealing with problems**

The supervisor will normally try to solve any problems informally, but if this is not possible the formal complaints system will come into operation.

If the volunteer wishes to make a formal complaint they should put the complaint in writing to their supervisor. If it is not possible to reach a solution the volunteer may raise the matter with the supervisor's manager.

If a complaint is made about a volunteer, this will be notified to the volunteer in writing and the supervisor will decide whether or not any action should be taken. If the volunteer is dissatisfied with the decision they may raise it with the supervisor's manager.

**Volunteer drivers**

Any volunteers who will be transporting equipment or people using a vehicle provided by the organisation must have a valid driving licence. They will be covered by the organisation's insurance policy. Where the volunteer will be using their own vehicle, they must provide a copy of the vehicle's insurance policy and, if appropriate, the MOT certificate.

The volunteer must report any accidents to the organisation. The volunteer must also report any motoring offences or police cautions to the organisation. The organisation will not pay any parking fines accumulated by the volunteer.

**Volunteer's pack**

On commencing their volunteer work, the volunteer will be given a pack containing:

* general information about the organisation;
* a copy of this volunteering policy;
* a standard volunteering agreement;
* details of where they can access the organisation's policies and procedures; and
* information on other volunteering opportunities that are available.

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Sample 1: Local church foodbank which works with other churches and requires volunteers to come from one of those churches.

**LOCATION Food Bank Volunteering Guide**

LOCATION Food Bank is an independent charitable project run by local churches. It provides emergency food parcels to people who are referred to us by local agencies/professionals. We depend on the food donated by members of the public and local organisations. Our volunteers are from churches in LOCATION.

**Why do we help?**

We have a passion for helping people and sharing our faith, because the Bible tells us how important this is.

*“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.”*

Proverbs 19:17

**What’s involved in volunteering?**

As a small group of Christian community-minded volunteers, our regular activities include:

* Praying for the work we do as a team
* Asking others to pray for us too
* Offering Christian prayers for all those we support
* Helping to source food donations
* Representing LOCATION Food Bank, telling as many people as we can about what we’re doing
* Providing hands-on help with:
  + collecting food donations
  + receiving, storing, packing and delivering food parcels
  + manning the phone and coordinating food parcel requests and donations
* Helping to find willing volunteers from other local churches

Volunteering shifts are on a fortnightly rota: however, we would like to hear from people who would consider working more frequently and from those who might be able to support us when necessary, or during peak periods such as summer holidays, or harvest festival, or Christmas.

Due to the nature of the circumstances under which we provide food parcels, volunteers may sometimes become aware of some upsetting situations. For this reason, we try to make sure that volunteers have access to pastoral support through the local Christian church network.

**Volunteering policy for our food bank**

This policy is for anyone volunteering to help LOCATION Food Bank. The relationship between us and volunteers is based on trust and does not involve the obligations of employment.

**Our responsibilities**: We value your willingness to volunteer to help us. In doing this we endeavour to:

* Ensure you’re in a church network with access to appropriate pastoral support
* Offer equal opportunities to everyone who wants to volunteer
* Match your skills and experience to a voluntary role wherever possible
* Provide appropriate supervision, training (where required), and appropriate access to trained co-workers for support
* Be supportive, and recognise and celebrate your successes
* Encourage two-way communication
* Respect all our volunteers and listen to their suggestions
* To ensure that all activities have had appropriate Risk Assessments completed and applied
* Reimburse agreed out-of-pocket expenses. A form for these claims is available from PUT WHO TO GET IT FROM (EG THE ACTIVITY LEADER / THE ACTIVITY TREASURER).

**Our expectations**: We want all those who volunteer to support us to thoroughly enjoy it. Just like any charity, we have guidelines in place to ensure the food bank remains well supported and runs smoothly:

* As a volunteer, you are representing a food bank which is run by churches, so we ask that you behave politely and appropriately
* Be reliable and punctual
* Let us know first if you have any problems, so we can find a solution together
* Work in partnership with other volunteers and church members
* Tell us if your personal circumstances change in a way that might affect your volunteering
* Adhere to laws and government regulations, including all aspects of health and safety
* We proactively protect personal and confidential information as part of our data protection procedures. Volunteers are expected to follow these procedures if they are processing such information. Our GDPR policy can be found: <https://oxcommunitychurches.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/OpenGate/ErQQu3AmuypMso28fDdbod8BSShxaHxLWN0FzUNIB7ug_w?e=cxfM6M>
* Comply with any other polices of procedures we have which are relevant to this activity. These policies can be obtained from the leader of the activity.
* No comments or stories concerning our food bank, its donors or those it supports should be given directly to the media. Any media enquiries should be directed to [rachael@solutionfactors.com](mailto:rachael@solutionfactors.com)

**Payment**: Volunteers are not employed or paid by LOCATION Food Bank, although formally pre-agreed expenses will be refunded.

**Role fulfilment**: volunteers are free to refuse to fulfil the role and the charity is not bound to provide work. Both the charity and the volunteer agree to give as much notice as possible if this becomes the case.

**Representing us**: We are a Christian charity, and we take the behaviour of those representing our food bank very seriously. Although we welcome the wide range of experience, goodwill and skills that volunteers might bring, we screen individuals as far as practical to ensure that they are able to fulfil any given voluntary role. Our panel also considers the effect that a volunteer might have on other elements, such as safety and our reputation.

**Age**: We do not have an upper age limit for volunteers; however, under-18s will need written parental consent.

**Insurance**: LOCATION Food Bank has appropriate charity insurance policies in place. For example, this includes public liability insurance in the event of a volunteer being harmed due to the negligence of the charity, or somebody suffering loss or injury as a direct result of a volunteer’s actions, while carrying out duties on our behalf.

We do not provide motor insurance for volunteers – most insurers consider driving as part of a volunteering activity as ‘social and domestic pleasure’, which is usually included in standard policy coverage. If in doubt, please check with your insurer.

**Safeguarding:** Depending on the role you are applying for, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check may be required. If this is of concern to you, please discuss the role and whether or not a check would be required with the person who the application form is sent to. Their contact details are given at the end of the form.

**Data protection:** Your data will be carefully managed in accordance with the GDPR policy of CHURCH TAKING LEGAL RESPONSIBILTY. That policy can be found WHERE IT CAN BE FOUND EG WEBPAGE.

**Smoking and substance abuse:** Volunteers should not smoke or be under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs while working with us.

**Accountability**: We are accountable to the Charity Commission and to the individuals and organisations that so generously support us. We have a responsibility to check and audit our activities to maintain our reputation as a trustworthy charitable project that manages donations honestly and efficiently.

If you find that any member of our food bank is behaving in a way that is likely to bring the project into disrepute, or cause loss, you should let your pastor, or any of the Foodbank Committee, know.

**How do I apply to become a volunteer?**

If you would like to volunteer, please complete the application form overleaf and return it to: NAME OF PERSON TO SEND IT TO at THEIR EMAIL ADDRESS (OR POSTAL ADDRESS)

**Application Form to Volunteer for LOCATION Food Bank**

**SECTION 1**

**Name……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Home address ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..**

**Home telephone number ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Mobile telephone number ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Email address …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Year of birth ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**SECTION 2**

**Do you have a UK driving licence? Yes/No**

**Do you have use of a vehicle? Yes/No**

**Do you have any health conditions that we should be aware of? Yes/No**

**If so, please provide details …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**SECTION 3**

**Availability (e.g. school hours only, days, fortnightly) ………………………………………………………………………………………....**

**Work preference or skills you can offer? …………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

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**SECTION 4**

**Volunteering referee (this can be an employer or somebody from a charity you’ve volunteered for; ideally your church pastor)**

**Name …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Position …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Organisation ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Telephone number ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Email address ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**SECTION 5**

**Are you a Christian? Yes/No**

**If so, do you belong to a local church? Yes/No**

**Name of church and church leader ……………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Telephone number ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Email address …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Signature…………………………………………………………………………………………………**

Please send this complete application to NAME OF PERSON TO SEND IT TO at THEIR EMAIL ADDRESS (OR POSTAL ADDRESS) Sample 2: Local church toddler group which welcomes volunteers from the community.

**PLACE toddler group Volunteering Guide**

PLACE toddler group is a project run by CHURCH NAME, and forms part of their charitable activities. It provides a safe space for parents of pre-school children to come where they can enjoy social interaction and their children can play and develop social skills. It is led by volunteers and workers from PLACE Community Church, and supported by volunteers from the community.

**Why do we run this group?**

We have a passion for helping people and sharing our faith, because the Bible tells us how important this is.

*“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6*

**What’s involved in volunteering?**

As a small group of Christian community-minded volunteers, our regular activities include:

* Praying for the work we do as a team
* Asking others to pray for us too
* Offering Christian prayers for all those we support
* Delivering sessions and events with the ethos of CHURCH NAME
* Representing PLACE toddler group, telling as many people as we can about what we’re doing
* Providing hands-on help (for sessions and other activities that may be put on) with:
* Making everyone feel welcome at the sessions
* Setting up and clearing away the sessions and other events
* Helping to run the sessions (on the door, craft, tea and coffee …)
* Helping to find willing volunteers

Volunteering shifts are on a weekly rota: however, we would like to hear from people who would those who might be able to support us when necessary, or for specific events (eg. Christmas parties, etc).

**Volunteering policy for our toddler group**

This policy is for anyone volunteering to help PLACE toddler group. The relationship between us and volunteers is based on trust and does not involve the obligations of employment.

**Our responsibilities**: We value your willingness to volunteer to help us. In doing this we endeavour to:

* Ensure that you already have access to appropriate pastoral support for your role, as the volunteer group itself is not designed to provide that support.
* Ensure that you pass the appropriate safe-guarding checks for the role you are volunteering for.
* Offer equal opportunities to everyone who wants to volunteer
* Match your skills and experience to a voluntary role wherever possible
* Provide appropriate supervision, training (where required), and appropriate access to trained co-workers for support
* Be supportive, and recognise and celebrate your successes
* Encourage two-way communication
* Respect all our volunteers and listen to their suggestions
* To ensure that all activities have had appropriate Risk Assessments completed and applied
* Reimburse agreed out-of-pocket expenses. A form for these claims is available from PUT WHO TO GET IT FROM (EG THE ACTIVITY LEADER / THE ACTIVITY TREASURER).

**Our expectations**: We want all those who volunteer to support us to thoroughly enjoy it. Just like any charity, we have guidelines in place to ensure the toddler group remains well supported and runs smoothly:

* As a volunteer, you are representing a toddler group which is run by CHURCH NAME, so we ask that you behave politely and appropriately.
* Be reliable and punctual
* Let us know first if you have any problems, so we can find a solution together
* Work in partnership with other volunteers and church members
* Tell us if your personal circumstances change in a way that might affect your volunteering
* Adhere to laws and government regulations, including all aspects of health and safety
* We proactively protect personal and confidential information as part of our data protection procedures. Volunteers are expected to follow these procedures if they are processing such information. Our GDPR policy can be found: <https://oxcommunitychurches.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/OpenGate/ErQQu3AmuypMso28fDdbod8BSShxaHxLWN0FzUNIB7ug_w?e=cxfM6M>
* Comply with any other polices of procedures we have which are relevant to this activity. These policies can be obtained from the leader of the activity.
* No comments or stories concerning our toddler group, its donors or those it supports should be given directly to the media. Any media enquiries should be directed to [rachael@solutionfactors.com](mailto:rachael@solutionfactors.com)

**Payment**: Volunteers are not employed or paid by PLACE toddler group, although formally pre-agreed expenses will be refunded.

**Role fulfilment**: volunteers are free to refuse to fulfil the role and the charity is not bound to provide work. Both the charity and the volunteer agree to give as much notice as possible if this becomes the case.

**Representing us**: We are a Christian charity, and we take the behaviour of those representing our toddler group very seriously. Although we welcome the wide range of experience, goodwill and skills that volunteers might bring, we screen individuals as far as practical to ensure that they are able to fulfil any given voluntary role. Our panel also considers the effect that a volunteer might have on other elements, such as safety and our reputation.

**Age**: We do not have an upper age limit for volunteers; however, under-18s will need written parental consent.

**Insurance**: PLACE toddler group has appropriate charity insurance policies in place. For example, this includes public liability insurance in the event of a volunteer being harmed due to the negligence of the charity, or somebody suffering loss or injury as a direct result of a volunteer’s actions, while carrying out duties on our behalf.

We do not provide motor insurance for volunteers – most insurers consider driving as part of a volunteering activity as ‘social and domestic pleasure’, which is usually included in standard policy coverage. If in doubt, please check with your insurer.

**Data protection:** Your data will be carefully managed in accordance with the GDPR policy of CHURCH TAKING LEGAL RESPONSIBILTY. That policy can be found WHERE IT CAN BE FOUND EG WEBPAGE.

**Safeguarding:** Depending on the role you are applying for, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check may be required. If this is of concern to you, please discuss the role and whether or not a check would be required with the person who the application form is sent to. Their contact details are given at the end of the application form.

**Smoking and substance abuse:** Volunteers should not smoke or be under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs while working with us.

**Accountability**: As part of CHURCH NAME, we are accountable to the Charity Commission and to the individuals and organisations that so generously support us. We have a responsibility to check and audit our activities to maintain our reputation as a trustworthy charitable project that manages donations honestly and efficiently.

If you find that any member of our toddler group team is behaving in a way that is likely to bring the project into disrepute, or cause loss, you should let your pastor, or any of the PLACE toddler group team, know.

**How do I apply to become a volunteer?**

If you would like to volunteer, please complete the application form overleaf and return it to PUT THE RIGHT ADDRESS HERE; or email it to: PUT THE RIGHT EMAIL ADDRESS HERE.

**Application Form to Volunteer for PLACE toddler group**

**SECTION 1**

**Name ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Home address ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..**

**Home telephone number …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Mobile telephone number ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Email address …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Year of birth ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**SECTION 2**

*(these first two questions depend on whether driving toddler equipment around is a regular need or not)*

**Do you have a UK driving licence? Yes/No**

**Do you have use of a vehicle? Yes/No**

**Do you have any health conditions that we should be aware of? Yes/No**

**If so, please provide details …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**SECTION 3**

**The toddler groups on the following days: FRIDAY mornings in term time, set up from 9am. Clear away completed by midday.**

**Your Availability : ………………………………………………………………………………………....**

**Work preference or skills you can offer? …………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**SECTION 4**

**Volunteering referee (this can be an employer or somebody from a charity you’ve volunteered for; ideally your church pastor)**

**Name …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Position …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Organisation ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Telephone number ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Email address ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**SECTION 5**

*(we ask this so that we can be transparent if people volunteer from other churches and so we can confirm with your church leader that they are happy for you to work with us).*

**If so, do you belong to a local church? Yes/No**

**Name of church and church leader ……………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Telephone number ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Email address …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Signature…………………………………………………………………………………………………**

Please send this complete application to NAME OF PERSON TO SEND IT TO at THEIR EMAIL ADDRESS (OR POSTAL ADDRESS)