











Volunteer Policies and Agreements

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This booklet contains the key points from key policies. The policies are written to apply to staff but it is important that volunteers are aware of them too.

Treat it as a reference tool. Ask your staff link to explain how the policies apply to the volunteering you will be doing for us.

We take our policies and standards seriously, but we don't expect volunteers to know them inside out! We are always here to help and advise – please do ask questions.

Volunteer Policy & Procedures

Carers in Bedfordshire is committed to making the biggest difference for carers it can and recognises that by maximising resources and involving members of the community in its work, it can make a greater difference to the wellbeing of the carers we support. We therefore recognise that volunteer support is vital to the charity in our mission.

We see volunteers as people who, unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy, skills and experience to benefit our organisation and the wider community. This includes carers with the necessary skills and qualities.

Volunteering can:

- have a positive impact on health and wellbeing
- provide opportunities to meet new people
- be a way that people can give back to their communities and make a difference
- help to develop new skills or build on existing experience and knowledge
- be a route to employment

We aim to:

- to attract, develop and retain a diverse and high calibre of volunteers
- to ensure a professional and consistent approach to the recruitment, selection and management of volunteers
- to recognise and document the contribution of volunteers in enabling us to fulfil our mission

We will

- We welcome and respect the breadth of experience, skills, dedication and goodwill that volunteers bring from the local community
- We are committed to upholding a relationship of trust with volunteers so that they enjoy and are fulfilled by their volunteering experience with us – we have a “gift” relationship, not a legal one
- We recognise that volunteers complement the role of paid staff and allocate each volunteer to a defined role in the structure of the organisation; we take every effort to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers

- 🕒 We treat volunteers fairly and do not discriminate against any volunteer on the basis of any protected characteristics; we expect volunteers to treat everyone they come into contact with according to the principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity
- 🕒 We encourage volunteers not to be out of pocket by volunteering e.g. to claim expenses

What you can expect from us

Induction and support

A staff link and volunteer coordinator will look after you offering

- 🕒 a planned induction to our services
- 🕒 regular individual support sessions
- 🕒 feedback on your contribution
- 🕒 office accommodation, equipment and services
- 🕒 updates from the charity
- 🕒 opportunities to meet with other volunteers socially

Expenses

You are entitled to the reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, which must be claimed on the form provided, appropriately evidenced and authorised by your staff link.

Insurance

You are covered by *Carers in Bedfordshire* public liability and professional indemnity policies. We do not insure your personal possessions against loss or damage. You should inform your car insurance company if you use your car in the act of volunteering eg. As an ambassador or dementia befriender

If you are acting in a professional capacity, for example as a complementary therapist, you must demonstrate you have appropriate and adequate insurance to cover the activities you undertake.

Training and involvement

We'll give you specific training to perform your role if you need it. You may also be entitled, subject to availability, to undertake *Carers in Bedfordshire* training courses and briefings.

We also value suggestions from volunteers about all aspects of our services and will invite you to give your views

Policies and procedures

We will keep you updated with policies and procedures so that you can fulfill your commitment to observe health and safety and other key policies.

Data protection

We regard your personal details as data under the General Data Protection Regulations. We will hold this data securely and treat it confidentially and with the utmost care and respect, not sharing or disclosing it to any external organisations or third parties.

We will seek your permission before we use any photographs of you carrying out your roles for promotional purposes such as in a leaflet or online.

Support

- Flexibility about your personal circumstances and for you to feel valued and respected in all you do.
- Support and guidance through a staff link.
- An open, accessible and fair process for raising any concerns.
- Information about health and safety matters and to make efforts to ensure you have a safe volunteering environment.

Confidentiality

Introduction

All staff working for CIB are bound by a legal duty of confidence to protect the personal information that they may come into contact with during the course of their work. This is also a requirement within the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR 2018.

Clients expect that their personal and sensitive information will be treated in confidence and not passed to others without their permission. Similar considerations apply to personal information concerning other individuals, such as staff/volunteers.

Volunteers are also bound by a duty of confidence when volunteering within the organisation. The organisation will ensure that volunteers are

not placed in a position or given a task that allows them access to data beyond that which they need to fulfil their role.

Principles of Confidentiality

Confidential information is information entrusted by an individual in confidence where there is a general obligation not to disclose that information without consent. Confidential information may include personal information such as name, age, address and personal circumstances, as well as sensitive personal information regarding race, health, sexuality, etc.

Clients have a right to expect that CIB will not disclose any personal information learnt during the course of their duties, unless permission is given. Without assurance about confidentiality clients may be reluctant to give information that may be required in order to provide care.

Confidential information may be known, or stored on any medium. Photographs, videos etc. are subject to the same requirements as information stored in records, on a computer, or given verbally. Information that identifies individuals personally must be assumed to be confidential, and should not be used unless absolutely necessary. Whenever possible, anonymised data (from which personal details have been removed and which therefore cannot identify the individual) is to be used instead. Note however that even anonymised information can only be used for justified purposes.

Awareness and Compliance

All volunteers are asked to sign that they have read and understood the Confidentiality Policy when they start with the organisation.

Responsibilities

No member of staff shall knowingly misuse any information or allow others to do so. Any breaches/potential breaches of confidence are to be reported to the Quality Officer and will be discussed by the Board.

Individual staff are:

- Responsible for maintaining confidentiality.

- Authorised only to have access to personal information they need to know in order for them to perform their duties.
- Responsible for safeguarding the confidentiality of all personal and organisation information to which they have access, this includes its safe and secure transfer and storage.
- Personally responsible for any decision to pass on information to another person/third party.
- Responsible for adhering to the Confidentiality Policy, the Data Protection Act 1998/2018.

Acting on the Duty of Confidentiality

Any personal, sensitive or financial information, must be treated as confidential.

No personal information, given or received in confidence, may be passed to another person or organisation without the consent of the provider of the information. This is usually the client but sometimes another person may be the source (e.g. relative or carer).

No personal information, given or received in confidence for one purpose, may be used for a different purpose without consent of the provider of the information this is the same with donors.

Whilst clients usually understand and accept that information may be shared within the CIB team in order to provide services, it is still necessary to check that the client understands what will be disclosed and who may be contributing to their support.

It is also important to respect the wishes of any clients who object to their information being shared, except where this would put others at risk of death or serious harm.

The overriding principle is that clients, donors, staff or volunteers should not be shocked to find out how their information has or is being used or shared, rather that they should be effectively informed to allow them to exercise their rights in relation to their data.

Where a member of staff or volunteer is seeking advice and support they may share relevant information with their manager or the Data Protection Officer. The duty of confidentiality must then be maintained by both of them.

All matters of a confidential nature discussed by the Board of Trustees must be kept within the Board. Trustees are not permitted to discuss confidential matters outside the organisation unless approval in each individual case has been sought and granted by the rest of the Board.

Data protection

Carers in Bedfordshire believes in treating people properly and looking after their data. We also want to comply with the law. A full description of how we use Personal Data can be found in our Privacy Notice (for a full copy visit our website and go to About Us).

Carers in Bedfordshire understands the relationship between Data Protection and Confidentiality, and recognises that a clear policy on the confidentiality of Personal Data – in particular that of service users – must work alongside and support Data Protection compliance.

All staff (including volunteers) are responsible for:

- attending Data Protection training when invited
- following all policies and procedures that underpin Data Protection
- passing any request from a Data Subject to exercise their Data Protection rights to the Data Protection Lead without delay
- reporting any breach, possible breach or near miss to their staff link or to the Data Protection Lead as soon as they become aware of it

Child protection policy

It is our policy to have zero tolerance of abuse and we uphold the principle that the safety and welfare of children and young people is always paramount, whatever the circumstances. It is everybody's responsibility to report abuse wherever it is seen, suspected or reported and to take the necessary immediate actions to ensure the protection of any child or young people, including unpaid family carers.

Full version supplied to those working with children and young people by YC team

Adult safeguarding policy

This policy enables Carers in Bedfordshire to ensure that adults are appropriately safeguarded by

- Preventing abuse, maltreatment and neglect from happening
- Promoting well-being, safety and
- Responding effectively to instances of abuse, maltreatment and neglect

This safeguarding duty applies to an adult who

- Has needs for care and support
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

The policy is based on the concept of zero tolerance of abuse of people with care and support needs. Responses to abuse should be proportionate to the situation and the degree of vulnerability is a factor in determining this. Our procedures are particularly concerned with people who are unable to protect themselves from significant harm. They are based on the presumption of mental capacity and on the right

of people with care and support needs to make their own choices in relation to safety from abuse, maltreatment and neglect except where the rights of others are compromised.

Equality & Diversity

Carers in Bedfordshire has an absolute commitment to equality and diversity - recognising and valuing difference as well as recognising and seeking to redress inequality and disadvantage. Our commitment is firmly founded on our belief that to offer services that are personal, committed and creative, we need a diverse staff team who can respond to carers as individuals.

To attract, keep and motivate the most talented staff, we need to reach out to all sections of the community and provide a working environment in which everyone feels valued, respected and able to contribute. Both as a service provider and an employer, we aim to be empowering, supportive and to offer as much flexibility as possible in order to help each individual realise their full potential as carers or employees of Carers in Bedfordshire.

However, we recognise that true diversity in service delivery provision and within the staff group also involves a willingness to take action, where necessary, aimed at combating the effects of existing barriers to fair and equal treatment. Within society certain groups are unfairly discriminated against and disadvantaged in terms of their access to services and employment because of a 'protected characteristic' (Equality Act 2010) - e.g. race, religion or belief, sex, disability, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership status.

We also recognise that individuals who are perceived to have a protected characteristic, or associated with someone who has a protected characteristic may suffer discrimination and have a legal right to protection. We will, where appropriate, take positive action to help redress the effects of discrimination. Any positive action initiatives will

be legally compliant and consistent with our approach of making all carers and staff feel valued and respected.

Health & Safety

Carers in Bedfordshire's policy is to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working conditions and equipment and systems of work for all its staff, service users and visitors. The policy will follow compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act, 2014.

Our statement of general policy is:

- To prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health and provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from work activities
- To provide adequate training to ensure staff are competent to do their work
- To engage and consult with staff on day-to-day health and safety conditions and provide advice and supervision on occupational health
- To implement emergency procedures - evacuation in case of fire or other significant incident.
- To maintain safe and healthy working conditions, provide and maintain plant, equipment and machinery, and ensure safe storage / use of substances

Each member of staff is required to:-

- Take reasonable care whilst at work. Ensure they do not endanger themselves or others who may be affected by their activities
- Inform their line manager if they believe the working conditions to be unsafe
- Make themselves fully conversant with Carers in Bedfordshire procedures and practices and any other information applicable to tasks they are required to undertake and fully comply with their contents
- Report any incident, accident or near miss as soon as is reasonably practicable, using the appropriate form and passing it on to The Chief Executive Officer or nominated Staff member
- Respond positively to appropriate Health and Safety training

General responsibilities – each member of staff or visitor:-

- Has a moral and legal obligation to take reasonable care of their health and safety and of other persons who may be affected by any acts or omissions
- Should familiarise themselves with Carers in Bedfordshire's procedures in the event of fire or any emergency in premises they frequently visit
- ensure that all fire exits remain clear at all times, waste is disposed of correctly, adequate first aid is available and good communication channels are in place
- No person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere, misuse, or omit to use, anything provided in the interest of health and safety.

Safe equipment

Guidance on how to use equipment will be available to all staff and service users. It is the responsibility of staff and service user to ensure that they are familiar with the instructions for operating equipment before doing so.

A nominated person will be responsible for identifying all equipment needing training and/or maintenance. A nominated person will be responsible for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up and all identified maintenance is implemented. A nominated person will check that new equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

Manual Handling

Staff should avoid manual lifting where at all possible. All staff should use aids which are available to reduce the risk of injury, e.g. a trolley or sack barrow. Staff should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be divided into smaller quantities or by lifting heavy and awkward loads. When lifting in a team take instructions from one person only. Any member of staff feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident in the Accident Book, to avoid a more serious injury.

Display Screen Equipment

Any member of staff will be deemed a “VDU user” under the regulations if they meet the following criteria:

They depend on the use of a monitor or display for their job; or

They use a monitor or display for a continuous period of over one hour on a regular basis. Carers in Bedfordshire will ensure that workstations comply with the relevant regulations.

Safe handling and use of substances

Carers in Bedfordshire will identify all hazardous substances used in the workplace. Wherever possible Carers in Bedfordshire will replace hazardous substances with those less harmful. Carers in Bedfordshire will provide adequate storage facilities for all hazardous substances. Carers in Bedfordshire will provide adequate training or instruction on the use of substances as required.

COSHH assessments are carried out annually and the assessments displayed prominently in each premises. .

First Aid

First aid boxes are located in each Carers in Bedfordshire office and the locations notified to staff.

The names of the first aiders are clearly marked and displayed and should be informed in case of accident. They will be responsible for calling the emergency services if required.

Working Time Regulations

A worker (ie any member of staff) must have at least a 30 minute break if working more than six consecutive hours a day. It should be a break in working time and should not be taken at the end of or before a working day. This is to allow enough rest for each member of staff from their day’s work, as well as a break from their positions.

Dementia befrienders also see: Lone working policy

Volunteer Agreement

Volunteers are an important and valued part of *Carers in Bedfordshire*. We hope that you enjoy volunteering with us and feel a full part of our team.

This agreement tells you what you can expect from us, and what we hope from you. We aim to be flexible, so please let us know if you would like to make any changes and we will do our best to accommodate them.

We will do our best:

- To introduce you to how the organisation works and your role in it and to provide any training you need.
- To provide regular meetings with a main point of contact so that you can tell us if you are happy with your volunteering and get feedback from us.
- To respect your skills, dignity and individual wishes.
- To reimburse your travel costs up to our current maximum, 45p per mile for car drivers and bus fares for the time you are volunteering at one of our services.
- To consult with you and keep you informed of possible changes.
- To insure you against injury you suffer or cause due to negligence.
- To provide you with an adequate workspace, equipment and services to perform your task effectively.
- To apply our equal opportunities policy.
- To apply our complaints procedure if there is any problem.

As a volunteer, I agree to do my best:

- To work reliably and to the best of my ability. To maintain the good reputation of the charity
- To follow *Carers in Bedfordshire's* rules and procedures, including health and safety, equal opportunities, data protection and confidentiality and volunteering from home.

This agreement is in honour only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract of employment.

Volunteering from Home

In exceptional circumstances, it may be acceptable for you to volunteer from home. We expect you to volunteer within the following rules for your own wellbeing and to comply with our policies

- Make sure you can volunteer in a comfortable environment with adequate seating and lighting. Take regular breaks.
- Work in a space where you cannot be overheard or your screen seen by others
- Keep paperwork to a minimum and store away securely. Destroy all paperwork including notes securely by shredding, pulping or burning
- We cannot supply you with a phone. Make sure you properly block your number when you make calls by dialling 141 first or checking the settings for this on your phone; we can't reimburse you for calls so ideally you will have a contract with unlimited minutes
- Tablets don't cope very well with our database; you are advised to work from a laptop or PC
- Only work during office hours so that we can communicate with you. Agree with your staff link your weekly slot and any changes so that the rota can be updated. We only have a limited number of logins for some accounts.
- Send us a quick email to say you are logged in and when you log out.
- Never save/change the login or password details whether your device is shared or not
- Make sure your pc has anti-virus protection and a firewall to prevent hacking. We can advise you of free ones.
- If a call distresses you, take a break before you make another call. Ring your staff link, anyone in the office or the Support Worker On Call that day
- We have a Welfare Fund to support staff and volunteers with your wellbeing if you face a crisis

Confidentiality Declaration

While working as an employee, director/trustee, volunteer, partner or contractor of *Carers in Bedfordshire*, you may hear confidential information concerning carers and their personal lives and/or information concerning the work or plans of the charity which may be commercially sensitive.

This information should be shared only with the Carers in Bedfordshire team members with whom you are working.

I declare that I will uphold the confidentiality of all information disclosed to me by Carers in Bedfordshire.

Adult and Child Safeguarding Declaration

I confirm that I have read the guidance for volunteers on Adult & Child Safeguarding

I understand the contents and I agree to follow this guidance when volunteering.

**Please fill out the online Volunteer Declaration form
to accept these declarations**