

## **ECHO Community Programme VOLUNTEER POLICY**

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### **Volunteer Value Statement**

ECHO Community Programme exists to provide the community with support and guidance. The delivery is provided in a friendly, approachable manner, embracing inclusion and operating within the realms of Equal Opportunity.

ECHO Community Programme will recognise volunteers' positive contribution and will endeavour to create a safe environment where they feel fully involved and fulfilled within the organisation. The Project will seek to match aspirations of the volunteer with the needs of the organisation.

### **Principles**

ECHO Community Programme recognises the importance and value of the role of volunteers. The Project considers that it is therefore important to carry out the recruitment and selection of volunteers to the same standard as for its salaried staff.

The Project Manager, Line Manager and appropriate Supervisors are responsible for encouraging the full integration of volunteers into the staff team, whilst accepting that they should at no time be expected to shoulder the responsibility of a paid staff member.

Volunteers should be viewed as a complement to the staff team and not as a substitute. Volunteers will be given specific roles but not be expected to cover for absent paid staff.

The Project recognises that it has a partnership with its volunteers and therefore has responsibilities to ensure that their needs are met. These needs may take the form of:

- An environment where volunteers feel they are able to contribute to the organisation
- The opportunity to make a contribution to a cause or concern with which they have a strong empathy
- An opportunity to meet people in a new environment

### **Who is a volunteer?**

ECHO Community Programme considers that a volunteer is somebody:

- Who wants to give freely of their services

- Who does not receive a wage or salary
- Who wants to contribute to the work of the project
- Who wants to benefit from the project or the volunteering experience

### **A) Preparation for Volunteers' Involvement**

1. The Project Manager will have overall responsibility for the following:
  - Identification of the needs of volunteers
  - Identification of volunteers appropriate to the field of work
  - Identification of areas where volunteers may be suitably deployed

### **B) Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers**

1. The Volunteer Co-Ordinator will be responsible for:
  - Arranging for potential volunteers to attend for an informal visit
  - Receipt of volunteers' application forms and for taking up references
  - Arranging interviews for potential volunteers
  - Following the same equal opportunities practice as when recruiting salaried staff
2. The interview structure will include:
  - Clarifying potential volunteers' proposed commitment
  - Motivation
  - Availability
  - Duties
  - Tasks etc.
3. If it is deemed appropriate, the volunteer's offer of help can be accepted after the receipt of references. If the volunteer's offer is not accepted then reasons should be given. References should be taken in respect of potential volunteers by one of two options – written or telephone.

### **C) Supervision**

1. Supervision will be available to all volunteers

2. The Volunteer Co-Ordinator or appropriate member of staff will arrange and agree with each volunteer the frequency and nature of supervision.
3. A written record will be kept by the Project of any agreed deviation in volunteers' roles or responsibilities from the agreement originally made. A copy of the amendment will be given to the relevant volunteer(s).

#### **D) Volunteer/Paid Staff Relations**

1. All staff should be encouraged to recognise the value of the volunteer's contribution to the service.
2. Volunteers applying for posts as paid staff will be required to go through the complete recruitment procedure for permanent employee posts.

#### **E) Volunteers' Responsibilities**

1. Each volunteer should be clear about the standards to which they must adhere and which they need to reflect in their behaviour and conduct.
2. All volunteers handling money must adhere to financial procedures as set out by the Project. All volunteers are expected to understand and abide by the Project's Health & Safety Policy.
3. All volunteers are expected to understand and abide by the Project's Equal Opportunities.
4. All volunteers are expected to understand and abide by the Project's policy on handling of confidential information.

#### **F) Volunteers' Entitlements**

1. ECHO Community Programme considers that volunteers have the right:
  - To discuss and agree their roles and responsibilities
  - To a safe and supportive environment
  - To receive a regular supervision
  - To raise complaints and concerns
  - To receive out-of-pocket expenses and non-financial rewards, with the prior approval of the individual manager

- To refuse requests which they consider unreasonable or inappropriate
- 2. The Project will, where appropriate, provide through the Volunteer Co-Ordinator support and advice in relation to future career expectations
- 3. Volunteers are entitled to reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, by prior agreement with the Volunteers' Co-Ordinator and dependent on funding allowance. Items for which expenses may be claimed include travel costs to and from the place of volunteering.
- 4. ECHO Community Programme maintains insurance cover for all its staff and volunteers. Volunteers will be informed of the cover relevant to their activities and of what they need to do in order to remain covered by insurance.

### **Termination of Volunteers' Involvement**

1. Both parties have the right to terminate the volunteer's involvement giving notice of at least one week.
2. Where the Management Team asks a volunteer to leave, the Team will offer the volunteer reasons and, where appropriate, advice as to why it has been necessary to terminate the agreement.
3. All property, equipment, keys and identity badges belonging to ECHO Community Programme should be returned to the Management Team.

## VOLUNTEERS' THREE-MONTHLY AGREED TERM OF INVOLVEMENT

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I, the volunteer, accept the terms and conditions laid down in the Volunteers' Policy for ECHO Community Programme

This is an Agreed Term of Involvement and will be renewed by ECHO Community Programme on a three-monthly basis.

This does not affect the Termination of Volunteers' Involvement right in that both parties may terminate the volunteer's involvement giving notice of at least one week.

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**Name of Volunteer**

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**Date**

**Telephone Contact No.**

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**Annette Jones Carole Williams**  
**Line Manager**

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**Date**