

Volunteer Policy

1. Introduction

Rochdale Connection Trust is committed to enabling and supporting volunteers to make a vital contribution to our organisational aims. We recognise the added value that volunteers bring to our organisation and also to those who use our services. Volunteer involvement in this organisation does not replace or devalue the role of paid staff.

Within RCT volunteers are involved in:

- Board of Directors/Management Committee Meetings
- Agreeing a List of roles undertaken by volunteers

RCT aims to have a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship with our volunteers; with their involvement informing and developing our work, and our work enabling individuals to learn skills and achieve personal development through their volunteering.

The involvement of volunteers will be guided by the following principles of good practice:

- the tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all everyone is sure of their respective roles and responsibilities
- the organisation will comply with the Data Protection Act in the use of data held on all volunteers
- volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid staff
- volunteers will be provided with regular supervision, providing an opportunity to share ideas/concerns with their named Supervisor (Coordinator)
- all existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers

2. The Purpose of this Policy

By adopting this policy RCT aims to:

- highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers
- reflect the purpose, values, standards and strategies of the organisation in its approach to involving volunteers
- recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers
- confirm this organisation's commitment to involving volunteers in its work
- establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers
- ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers

This policy provides an overview of the activities carried out by volunteers currently and provides a basis for the expansion, if required, for the role of volunteers alongside paid staff. This document and the associated procedures and guidance documents provide a framework for the involvement of volunteers.

3. Recruitment and Selection

Rochdale Connections Trust will adhere to its equalities and diversity policy when recruiting and selecting volunteers. All potential volunteers will be asked to complete a volunteer's application/registration form. Written task descriptions will outline time, commitment, necessary skills and actual duties. Where there is specific training required this will be highlighted as part of the recruitment process. Where there is a requirement for a Disclosure Check this will be highlighted as part of the recruitment process. All volunteers will be required to provide 2 references. Where individuals cannot be placed we will endeavour to refer them to another agency who can support them to find a volunteering opportunity.

4. Support and Supervision

Once placed, we will expect volunteers to comply with all existing policies and procedures. All volunteers are covered under RCT's Public Liability Insurance.

All volunteers will have an induction to their volunteering which will involve an overview of the relevant policies and procedures. Following Induction, volunteers will have regular support and supervision meetings with a named contact to identify areas for development, or to discuss any issues. A record of these discussions will be held as part of the individual volunteer's records. Volunteers can have access to their records at any time.

Volunteers will be able to claim reasonable expenses for their volunteering in line with the Expenses Policy. Volunteers should discuss any planned expenditure prior to incurring these expenses to ensure that it will be covered by the organisation.

Where volunteers have holidays or other commitments which mean that they cannot attend their normal volunteering, they should advise their named contact to ensure that we can arrange alternative cover. If volunteers require a longer break from their volunteering, they should discuss this with their named contact at RCT and we will endeavour to be as flexible as possible to accommodate the needs of volunteers.

Volunteers can access learning and development opportunities which are relevant to their volunteering role throughout their time with RCT. Opportunities for Learning and Development will form part of the discussions at support and supervision sessions.

5. Problem Solving

Where a concern is highlighted – either by a volunteer or about a volunteer, this will be dealt with using the organisation's Disciplinary, Grievance and Dismissal Policy.

6. Responsibility

Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of the policy and procedures lies with the CEO, Kathy Thomas. Implementation and adherence to this policy is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers within the organisation.

REVIEW SCHEDULE:

The Volunteer Policy is formally reviewed on an annual basis.

Date of last review: August 2023

Reviewed by: Lizl Donnelly

Job Role: Business Support Manager

Date of next Review: August 2024