

Name of policy: Volunteering Policy

Date created: February 2004

Date approved by Management Committee: March 2004, March 2007, March 2010, March 2014.

Manager responsible for this policy: Deputy CEO

No Limits is keen to involve volunteers in our work. We believe their distinctive and valuable contribution enhances our ability to deliver a range of quality services. In return we aim to provide a safe and rewarding experience for the volunteers who work with us. Most of our voluntary opportunities require regular commitment (outlined in their task descriptions).

Becoming a volunteer at No Limits

No Limits will comply with relevant legislation around selection, following safer recruitment good practice. Prospective volunteers will be given an opportunity to discuss the role in full and will need to complete a volunteer application form to formalise their expression of interest. Once interest has been expressed through the satisfactory completion of the application form, prospective volunteers may be invited to attend relevant training. All new volunteers will be interviewed by a panel which may include a paid member of staff, an experienced current volunteer and a young person. Volunteers must provide the names of 2 referees and cannot start volunteering with No Limits until two satisfactory references have been received. References do not necessarily need to be from an employer/former employer but should not be from a close family member. We will provide advice if identifying referees proves a barrier.

We require all volunteers to undergo an enhanced DBS check and receive a satisfactory return, in line with guidance. Volunteers must also provide appropriate evidence of identity together with other relevant information. We will tell them what documents/information we need and support them through the DBS process.

Volunteers must tell No Limits immediately if they receive a conviction or are subject to adverse child protection proceedings or any other circumstances which could impinge on the work of the organisation.

No Limits does not preclude people with previous criminal convictions from volunteering with us. We will look at each individual situation objectively and fairly, without compromising our legal duty of care, taking into account:

- the area of work and volunteer role;
- the nature and seriousness of the offence;
- the time when the offence occurred and whether there has been any pattern of offending;
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation offered by the convicted person; and
- the applicant's current circumstances.

Some areas of our work, such as Counselling, require professional, technical or other qualifications. Volunteers involved in such activities will need to provide evidence of relevant qualifications and/or experience.

Trial period

All volunteers will have a trial period of 3months to confirm whether or not they and the organisation are compatible.

At the end of the trial period, there will be a review undertaken with the Team Leader (or their delegated representative), responsible for the project. A decision will be made about whether to end

the trial period, require the volunteer to undergo further training / observation, or end the volunteer's involvement with the organisation.

Volunteers may terminate the trial period at any time if they no longer wish to be involved with No Limits. No Limits reserves the right to terminate the trial period at any time if the volunteer breaches the organisation's policies and/or acts in a way that endangers or damages himself or herself, or any other person or organisation.

Working as No Limits Volunteer

All volunteers during the trial period will have to undergo No Limits training, an induction to the organisation and the project they are to work on. They will also be given a written description of their role (Volunteer Task Description) before starting so they are clear what is required and expected of them.

We expect all No Limits staff including volunteers to wear their identification badge at all times while representing the organisation.

Volunteers are required to attend regular supervision and training (as required for their role and directed by No Limits) and, where appropriate, to obtain accreditation. They are expected to comply with all No Limits policies and procedures.

Smoking / Alcohol / Non-Prescription Substances

No Limits operates a policy of no smoking within any of its buildings or within its immediate environment. This policy also applies to volunteers when attending as a representative of the organisation at any public event. Smoking is not permitted in front of children and young people or the public at any time whilst engaged in voluntary activity. There is to be no consumption of alcohol or non-prescription substances whilst volunteering and volunteers may not be under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription substances during their volunteering time. If volunteers are found to have violated this policy it will be deemed as gross misconduct and lead to the volunteering relationship being ended. Further details can be found within the No Limits code of conduct a copy of which is made available to all prospective volunteers.

Confidentiality

No Limits has access to sensitive information and data relating to many groups and individuals in the county and it is therefore imperative that the strictest confidentiality is maintained at all times. During the training and induction period, the relevant Team Leader will go through the Confidentiality Policy to ensure volunteers understand and agree to the requirements of the policy.

Payment of expenses

Expenses will be paid (as agreed for each individual role / project).

All expenses must be claimed on the appropriate form(s). Details of current expenses rates will be available to all volunteers.

Dealing with problems

Volunteers should raise concerns in the first instance with their line manager who will try to resolve the matter informally.

If the volunteer is not satisfied that the problem has been resolved with his / her immediate supervisor and wishes to take the matter further he / she should request a formal meeting with his /

her immediate supervisor. This meeting should take place within five working days of the request being received by the immediate supervisor.

If the volunteer is not satisfied with the outcome he / she receives and wishes to take the matter further he / she should request a meeting with the Chair of the Management Committee, or designated deputy. The request should be in writing, stating the resolution requested and why the first response is not accepted as being satisfactory. The volunteer may be accompanied by a representative of his / her choice. The meeting should take place within fourteen working days of the request being received by the Chair of the Management Committee or designated deputy. Minutes will be kept of the meeting. The Chair (or designated deputy) may decide upon a course of action and will notify the volunteer of any arrangements. The decision of the Management Committee will be final in terms of this procedure.

If there are concerns with the performance of a volunteer after the trial period, the line manager or another appropriate member of paid staff will raise these directly with the volunteer. Support will be given where appropriate to address any issues. If a mutually satisfactory solution cannot be found, No Limits may have to end a volunteer's involvement with the organisation.

Insurance

Volunteers are covered by No Limits' public liability and employer liability insurance policies while engaged in their voluntary tasks with us.

Volunteers using their own motor vehicles in connection with their volunteering for No Limits **should** advise their insurance company that they are using the vehicle for such purposes, especially if volunteers are transporting children and young people in their own vehicle while at No Limits. Vehicles must be in a roadworthy condition with current MOT certificate, if applicable. No Limits will request copies of insurance documents, MOT certificate where applicable and driving licence. Volunteers are required to inform their project manager of any relevant changes.

Intellectual property

If a volunteer produces any work that falls within the category of "intellectual property" (e.g. designing a leaflet or logo) No Limits reserves the right to retain the ownership of such work and will pay the sum of 1p to the volunteer for the transfer of ownership if so requested.

Recognition

No Limits is committed to demonstrating its support to all its volunteers and will take opportunities to show our recognition and appreciation. This may include arranging "thank you" events; holding special events for Volunteers' Week; nominating volunteers for the local Volunteer Certificate Scheme for those volunteers who have contributed over 100 hours of high standard voluntary work as well as receiving No Limits certificates for 1, 3, 5, 10 years of voluntary service.

No Limits can provide a reference for volunteers who have completed more than 50 hours of volunteering with the organisation, or in circumstances where this has been agreed with the relevant Team Leader. A full reference can be provided during an ongoing volunteering relationship. References are provided by the Workforce Development Team following consultation with the relevant Team Leader which will take place upon receiving a reference request, or as part of an exit procedure for volunteers, whichever comes first.

Ending Involvement

No Limits believes that it should not be an awkward or difficult experience for a volunteer to say that they wish to stop their involvement with us. It is appreciated that there are many reasons why

volunteers move on and No Limits would welcome the opportunity to hear the volunteer's views during an exit interview / questionnaire. This helps towards the ongoing development of our volunteer involvement and reviewing our current practices, procedures and policies.

When a volunteer wishes to leave, it is appreciated if reasonable notice is given to the relevant Team Leader. They will then go through an exit procedure with the volunteer, ensuring all pieces of work are handed over, any relevant materials are returned to the organisation and an exit interview is completed (if possible).