

Volunteering – Volunteer policy

Introduction

Precious Lives recognises that there can be situations in which volunteers' help can make an appropriate and significant contribution to the work and service objectives of [organisation]. This document, is Precious Lives volunteer policy, defines the term and sets out the principles, practices and procedures which Precious Lives will follow in the appointment, management and control of volunteers.

Definition

Volunteers may be described as individuals who put their experience, knowledge and skills at the disposal of an organisation, free of charge, with the primary aim of helping the organisation to achieve its service objectives and or with the primary aim of bringing some benefit to the local community. In this sense, volunteers are to be distinguished from students, other work placements, and secondees, where the primary aim is usually for the student or secondee to obtain certain work experience or to carry out work or research in certain areas.

Principles

In appointing volunteers Precious Lives will adhere to the following principles:

- Volunteers will not be engaged in work which facilitates the loss of an existing employee's post, nor on any tasks or projects which (within the past two years) were done by paid employees whose posts have since been deleted;
- Volunteers will not be used to do the work of paid staff during an industrial dispute;
- Current Precious Lives employees will not be engaged as volunteers at Precious Lives

Recruitment of volunteers

Volunteers will be selected through the following process:

Step 1

The following items must be agreed by the Trustees, in consultation with the trade union, before a proposed volunteer placement at Precious Lives is implemented:

- A role description, outlining the specific tasks, responsibilities and reporting lines of the volunteer;
- Terms and conditions including the duration, hours, expenses, insurance, etc, relating to the placement;
- A specification, outlining the relevant experience, skills, knowledge, abilities and equal opportunity awareness necessary to carry out the role effectively.

Step 2

The prospective volunteer will be invited to a panel meeting with the intended line manager and the CEO or her/his representative. Using the role outline and the specification the parties

will engage in a two-way discussion of the proposed role, of its requirements and of each other's expectations, with a view to assessing mutual suitability. Following the meeting, the two Precious Lives representatives will make a decision within one week regarding the individual's suitability for the particular role.

Step 3

Prior to commencing their placement at Precious Lives successful volunteers must provide a reference from a suitable person (excluding relations) attesting to their character and suitability for the position.

Step 4

Prior to commencing their placement at Precious Lives, each successful volunteer shall be formally allocated to a particular employee who will manage and supervise the volunteer throughout the duration of her/his placement at Precious Lives. The manager's responsibilities will include ensuring that the volunteer receives the following:

- A planned induction to Precious Lives
- Regular supervision and support sessions;
- Positive feedback on their contribution;
- Adequate office accommodation, equipment and services to perform their tasks effectively.

Equal opportunities

Precious Lives recognises that the activity of volunteering can provide a volunteer with experiences and opportunities for self and career development. In accordance with Precious Lives' equal opportunity policy, volunteer placements at Precious Lives will be therefore be open to individuals irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age or marital status. In addition, the specification must set out the equal opportunity dimension and any specific equality requirements of the role. Where, during the panel meeting (see above) a prospective volunteer demonstrates hostility to, or a clear lack of support for equal opportunity policy, s/he will be deemed automatically to be unsuitable for a volunteer position at Precious Lives

Termination

Where appropriate, the role and placement of the volunteer may be terminated by the Chief Worker at one week's notice, or immediately, where behaviour equivalent to gross misconduct has occurred. In all cases the volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision and action taken. The Chief Worker will report any such terminations to the Chair of the executive committee.

Discipline and grievance

Volunteers will not be subject to Precious Lives' disciplinary procedures. Correspondingly, volunteers will not have access to Precious Lives' grievance procedures. However, volunteers will be entitled to use Precious Lives' complaints procedure. Where appropriate, the complaint will be investigated fully by the Chief Worker or her/his representative.

Expenses

Volunteers will be entitled to travel expenses, and subsistence allowance, but may not receive payment for any reason.

Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by Precious Lives' employer's public liability, professional indemnity where appropriate, and personal accident insurance.

Training and involvement

Where a volunteer is based at Precious Lives on a day to day basis s/he will be expected to be involved and included in general staff activities, such a staff meetings, and to have general access to Precious Lives offices. Such volunteers will also be entitled, subject to availability, to undertake two Precious Lives training courses free of charge in a calendar year.

Monitoring and review

It will be the responsibility of the Chief Worker to regularly review the operation of Precious Lives' volunteer policy to ensure that it is in accordance with Precious Lives' equal opportunity policy.

Date Implemented: 20 th March	Future Review Dates			Notes
	2011	2012	2013	
Date to reviewed	June	June	June	
Date approved By Trustees				