

Volunteer Policy

This policy provides practical guidance for staff, Board members and other Volunteers about how Healthwatch Worcestershire (HWW) involves people in its day-to-day work. Volunteers are at the very heart of the work of HWW and are always needed in order to implement the aims and goals of the organisation. HWW recognises the dedication, hard work and time which they offer when they often already have busy lives; they are a highly valued resource, and we are committed to supporting them in their work.

Definition of Volunteers

For the purposes of this policy, a Volunteer will be defined as, **"A person who willingly undertakes work on behalf of others outside the immediate family, or for the wider community, without financial gain"**.

Recruitment & Selection

HWW will use appropriate means to advertise for Volunteers locally, taking into account the principles of our Diversity and Inclusion policy. Applicants will need to complete an application form, have an informal interview and if successful two references will be taken up.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring) CHECKS

Some roles will require a DBS check due to the nature of the work. In these cases, only if the check is satisfactory will the Volunteer be offered a role.

Induction & Training

All Volunteers will have an induction into the HWW organisation and our work. This will include:

- The role of the Volunteer
- A list of staff members and roles
- Copies of all the relevant policies including this Volunteer Policy, Code of Conduct, Health and Safety and Diversity and Inclusion
- Details of any ongoing training
- Other information as appropriate

As part of the Healthwatch Network, you will also have access to a range of free online training courses that we encourage you to take part in, to help you develop in your role. These include:

- Equality
- Diversity
- Human rights
- Safeguarding
- Mental health awareness

- Disability awareness
[Click here to visit the training site](#)

Adult Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting an adult with care and support needs to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Safeguarding Training

HWW will ensure that: -

- mandatory Adult Safeguarding Basic Awareness training is put in place for staff and Volunteers where this is appropriate to their role.
- more advanced training in recognising, responding, enquiring and reporting is available to staff as appropriate to their role

We will liaise with the County Council and other bodies as appropriate to ensure that the training reflects the multi-agency approach in place across Worcestershire.

The training will ensure that staff and Volunteers are made aware of and understand their professional boundaries in respect of safeguarding and that their practice reflects this.

Volunteers must read and understand our Safeguarding policies, which will be available to them via our website.

Expenses

HWW values its Volunteers and wants to ensure there are no barriers to involvement. Travel and other reasonable expenses will be reimbursed. Please refer to the Volunteer Handbook to find out how to make a claim.

Support

HWW recognises Volunteers need to feel valued and be seen to be a part of the organisation with which they are involved. We will strive to ensure these needs are met through support and training. Informal meetings will be held with the Volunteer to discuss any problems or issues and training requirements.

Health and Safety

All Volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Health and Safety Policy Statement and receive briefings relevant to the situation. Volunteers are expected to follow the health and safety procedures.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

HWW has a commitment to Equal Opportunities and Diversity. A copy of the organisation's Diversity and Inclusion policy is included in this handbook and will be covered in the induction. We expect Volunteers to follow this policy. Training will be provided where appropriate.

Resolving Problems

HWW is indebted to its group of Volunteers for helping the organisation to develop. The aim of this procedure is to ensure that any issues that might arise during a Volunteer's time with HWW are dealt with in a fair and consistent way. We have a collaborative approach to problem solving and we aim to work closely with Volunteers if issues arise.

Most problems are best dealt with informally, in discussion with the responsible Engagement Officer in the first instance. Notes should be kept of the meeting and if the issue is not resolved at this stage then it will need to be addressed through a further meeting with a senior staff member.

What to do when issues cannot be resolved

Although most Volunteers are likely to have a positive experience Volunteering with HWW there may be occasions when issues cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. If the problem-solving procedure has been followed and every effort has been made to consider a fair outcome, but the parties remain unhappy, then consideration should be given to terminating any ongoing relationship between HWW and the Volunteer.

In such circumstances HWW will offer an exit interview. HWW reserves the right to cease working with a Volunteer when it is considered to be in the best interests of the organisation.

Document Details & Version Control

Version	Comments /Reason for Amendments	Lead Director	Author / Editor	Date	Review by
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