



Avocet Trust Volunteer Policy

Policy:

The policy sets out the framework for facilitating the inclusion of volunteers into the business of the Avocet Trust and its associated companies.

Objectives:

The Objectives of the policy are to provide a structure whereby volunteers will have an understanding of their roles, responsibilities and benefits associated with undertaking a voluntary position with the organisation.

Scope:

All volunteers and staff of the Avocet Trust who are to work alongside the Trusts clients.

Implementation and Feedback

By using these procedures volunteers will be well placed to give advice on their content. If volunteers have any comments to make or wish to seek advice please contact either the Voluntary Services Coordinator or a representative of the Human Resources Department at the Trusts HQ - Clarence House.

Implementation advice

If you require support or advice on how to implement these procedures please contact your immediate supervisor, the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator or a representative of the Human Resources Department.



About Avocet Trust

The Avocet Trust provides lifetime support for its clients, ensuring that they experience the highest possible quality of life and fully develop their potential. This is realised by continually re-assessing the needs and aspirations of all Avocet clients and by offering both opportunities and choices, supported by well-trained and professional staff. We aim to enrich the lives of our clients, and utilise the skills of our local communities by offering volunteer opportunities for specific projects.

Recruitment

We will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers locally that take into account the principles of our Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policies. The potential volunteer will have to complete an application form. Assistance will be provided to complete the necessary application form if required. The applicant will be interviewed by the appropriate persons and if this is successful the two references will be required.

An enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check with the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made for every volunteer.

Induction and Training

There will be an induction program prepared and delivered by the Brian Crosher Training Department.

This will include:

- induction training and details of ongoing training
- the role of the volunteer
- a list of all relevant staff members and volunteers
- a list of Management Committee members and relevant sub-committees
- copies of all the relevant policies including this Volunteer policy and those relating to Confidentiality, Health and Safety, and Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- essential information e.g. timekeeping, rota etc.
- information about the Avocet Code of Practice
- the Avocet Whistle-blowing Policy
- other information as appropriate.

There will be a probationary period of two months to give the organisation and the volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other. A review will be made midway through the trial period and also at the end of the probationary period.

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Authorised for use by L Howell Chief Executive—Signature

(NB- Signed copy held in local file



Expenses

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. Volunteers will therefore be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses, including expenses for travel at public transport rates or a mileage allowance may be claimed. For those volunteers undertaking a half day commitment (say four hours), a snack and beverages will be provided free of charge at the Matthews Enterprise Café. For those undertaking a longer term commitment of more than six hours the volunteers will be eligible for a two course meal and beverage from the Cafe.

N.B. In order to claim travel expenses, authorisation must be given and a travel expenses form must be completed and given to the site supervisor.

Support

Joining any organisation can always be stressful. It is very important therefore that volunteers are welcomed to the Trust and are encouraged to become fully involved in the organisation.

As the volunteer scheme develops, new volunteers will be partnered with established volunteers to ensure that they are receiving peer support.

A Volunteers Meeting will be held quarterly to allow all volunteers to get together with a designated person to discuss any issues that they have. Ideas for extending the volunteering role will be welcomed.

A Volunteer Co-ordinator or *designated person* will also be identified who will provide individual support to volunteers. An individual supervision will be undertaken no less than bi monthly with respective volunteers, when a private discussion will take place to address any issues that may have arisen, or to develop the volunteers role further with agreement.

On a day to day basis, there will be a briefing session at the beginning and a de-briefing at the end of each session involving clients.

Insurance:

The organisation has a valid insurance policy which you are advised to read.



Confidentiality:

All volunteers as well as staff, are required to abide by the Trust's Confidentiality Policy. This policy is strictly applied.

Code of Conduct:

Avocet considers it essential that all volunteers and staff observe the highest standards of conduct in working with colleagues and others in providing services to our clients their families and to visitors. All volunteers are therefore required to adhere to Avocets strict Code of Conduct Policy in conducting the Trusts business. A copy will be provided on commencement of the induction programme.

Resolving Problems

The relationship between the organisation and its volunteer workers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the organisation is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the clients who use it, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

If a volunteer does not meet with the organisation's standards, the following procedure will apply:

1. A meeting will be held with the site manager who will explain any concerns.
2. If this does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the Volunteer Co-ordinator or a designated *person* will be convened.
3. If the work performance still does not meet the required standard then it may be necessary to conclude the relationship with the Trust.
4. At all times the volunteer will be able to freely state their case and can have a friend to accompany them at any such meetings.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your work you should:

1. Initially explain your dissatisfaction with the appropriate person at the time or ask for a meeting with the appropriate person.
2. If that does not resolve the issue then a formal meeting (with notes being taken), should be convened with the appropriate person.



3. If after this meeting, your dissatisfaction remains unresolved and we are unable to resolve your grievance, then it would be inappropriate for you to continue to be a volunteer.

N.B. None of the above precludes a volunteer appropriately following the Avocet Trusts Whistle-blowing Policy.

At all times you will be freely able to state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

Review

This Avocet Volunteer Policy is freely accessible to all. It will be reviewed on a bi yearly basis or sooner if considered necessary. The Avocet Trust is keen to develop the role of Volunteers in the Trust and contributions to improving the role or scope of volunteers is welcomed.