



# Volunteer Policy

## PREPARING FOR VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Where we create a new role, we will write a new role description, setting out the tasks we will ask the new volunteer(s) to carry out. This process will help us decide:

- whether the role is appropriate for a volunteer.
- that the new role will benefit both ourselves and potential volunteers.
- that we have the necessary resources to accommodate and support the role (e.g staff time, office space).

Before recruitment takes place, we will ensure that we have:

- carried out a risk assessment on both health and safety and safeguarding issues
- nominated a supervisor for the volunteer role
- decided where and how we will advertise for the role
- confirmed selection criteria and what training will be provided.

Potential applicants will be sent an application pack, containing a role description, information about the organisation, and an application form.

## RECRUITMENT

We will advertise for volunteers locally that take into account the important principles of Equality and Diversity policies. The applicant will be required to complete an application form, but help will be given with this if necessary. The applicant will initially have an informal telephone conversation which will be followed by an informal meeting with the relevant lead person in the organisation, eg the Befriending Lead will meet up with potential Befrienders. If the interview is successful two references will be taken up. Where possible references from previous recent employers will be sought. If the volunteer has been employed or volunteered in care in the last 10 years one of the references need to be from that source where possible.

A Disclosure and Barring Service check will be made for those working directly with the elderly.

There will be a short Induction covering the following areas:

1. The history and work of the organisation.
2. How the organisation is run.
3. The role of the volunteer.
4. How to claim expenses.
5. The organisational chart will be discussed.
6. Volunteers will be referred to the list of Trustees on the website.
7. A list of Evergreen's policy headings will be provided most of the contents of which are on the website. Volunteers will be asked to sign to say they have read the policies.

8. The importance of committing to attending a day's Induction Training course. This course includes the following areas:

- Loneliness and Social Isolation.
- Confidentiality.
- Befriending.
- Communication.
- Values.
- Safeguarding.
- Health and Safety.
- Report Writing.

## **EXPENSES**

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. -Travel expenses will be reimbursed where required (mileage rate - 30p). In order to claim expenses, a claim form must be completed and given to the Office Administrator on a monthly basis.

## **CRITERIA FOR BEFRIENDING**

We seek to carefully link Befrienders with their clients, taking into account issues such as interests, location and male or female. We try not to make assumptions about a client's circumstances in relation to whether they are offered a Befriender. For example, it may be that an applicant appears to have people around them which may include family. However, we acknowledge that situation does not necessarily mean that the applicant is not lonely and needs a befriender. However, the following are the circumstances where we will not provide a befriender to an applicant.

1. If the applicant is assessed as not requiring a befriender. The reason will be given to the applicant.
2. There may be circumstances where we are not able to match an applicant with a Befriending volunteer (see below):
  - if an applicant has mental health issues where it would not be appropriate for a befriender to visit. In such circumstances, reasons would be given.
  - if an applicant is in a Residential/Nursing Home. However, if the Befriending service started before moving to a Residential or Nursing Home the befriending arrangement could continue.
  - If it cannot be established that both or either the client and the Befriender would benefit from the proposed match.

The organisation undertakes a review with the Befriender/Client approximately 8 to 12 weeks after the commencement of the befriending and annually thereafter. This feedback is always passed to the Befriender.

## SUPPORT

The person who leads the relevant service and other members of staff and volunteers will offer support to the volunteers. Volunteers will be given contact details of the person or persons to contact to discuss any issues. It will be re-emphasised to volunteers that they should contact their Lead person with any issues which may include seeking advice, information or perhaps just to talk through how things are going.

Training opportunities will be offered to volunteers which will include inviting volunteers to identify training needs. Evergreen will always try to provide relevant training for volunteers.

All volunteers are encouraged to keep in touch with the office. There is an 'open door' policy so volunteers are able to come into the office at any time the office is open.

Volunteers are offered a range of supervision and support by their coordinators for example: 1 to 1 supervision, group supervision, drop in sessions (Befrienders Voice). Informal peer support is provided at regular volunteers such as coffee mornings and events. A one to one mentor can be provided if requested.

The organisation has a valid Employers Liability Insurance policy. We will inform our insurers of any substantial changes to our volunteer involvement.

## CHAPLAINCY

Evergreen have a chaplaincy service where you can share your anxieties and concerns. Perhaps you have had a major life event that has made you question everything? Maybe a chat with one of our Chaplains can help.

## RESOLVING PROBLEMS

**If a volunteer has a complaint about the organisation, a member of staff or another volunteer:**

We hope that most problems can be solved informally. But if this is not the case the volunteer should raise the matter formally with their Coordinator. If the complaint is against their Coordinator, then the volunteer should request a meeting with the Office Manager or another Coordinator.

If the volunteer feels that the issue has not been resolved then it should be put in writing to the Chief Operating Officer, who will arrange a meeting with them to discuss the issue. Further investigation may need to take place, but the matter should be dealt with within **14 days**.

**If there is a problem with a volunteer's behaviour:**

The relationship between the organisation and its volunteers 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.

If the role of a volunteer does not meet with Evergreen's standards it will be dealt with in the following way:

1. Minor issues will be dealt with informally by the immediate line manager.
2. If this does not resolve the issue, or if the problem is more serious, a meeting will be held between the volunteer and the lead person for the area of service. They will explain the concerns and offer support and allow time for improvement.
3. If this does not resolve the concern, then a meeting with the Chief Operations Officer will be convened.

4. If the volunteers work still does not meet with Evergreen's standards, then the services of the volunteer will be terminated.
5. Where there is a serious incident or allegations, we will ask the volunteer to stop volunteering with us until the issue is resolved. A meeting will be arranged with the Chief Operations Officer. The volunteer will be able to freely state their case and have a friend to accompany them if required. If the volunteer is found to have acted against Evergreen's policies and standards, they will be asked to leave Evergreen permanently. Relevant issues might include (but are not necessarily limited to): violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour, discrimination or other behaviour in breach of our Equalities and Diversity Policy, theft or dishonesty, actions that either harmed or could have harmed others.  
Any illegal activity will be immediately reported to the police and any other relevant body, whose actions will take precedence over this procedure.

### **Appealing a decision**

If you are unhappy with a formal decision, you can appeal to the Evergreen Care UK Chief Operating Officer. You will hear from them within 14 days, and this decision will be final.

At all times the volunteer would be freely able to state their case and have someone of their choice to accompany them if required.

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