

# **FOODBANK – VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**



## **VISION, MISSION AND VALUES**

Our vision is to see an end to the need for food banks in the UK.

Our mission is to bring communities together to end hunger and poverty in the UK by providing compassionate, practical help with dignity whilst challenging injustice.

We support food banks across the UK to provide emergency food and compassionate, practical support to people in crisis, while campaigning for a UK without the need for food banks.

Last year food banks in our network provided 1.6 million food parcels to people in crisis. As the coronavirus pandemic unfolds in the UK, the need for food banks may increase as more people are unable to afford food. At the same time, volunteers in our network may be unavailable as they follow government's advice to self-isolate.

Without the thousands of volunteers, selflessly donating their time, food banks simply would not be able to support the thousands of people in crisis.

## **AIM AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This policy aims to provide guidance for volunteers who have accepted an agreed role within the food bank and the staff who supervise them.

The policy forms part of our commitment to volunteering, acknowledging the hugely valuable contribution that volunteers make to the food bank.

## **OUR VOLUNTEERING PRINCIPLES**

- volunteers are recognised as equal partners in achieving the aims of the organisation
- all volunteers are recruited using the food bank process
- volunteers are integrated into the structure of the charity and can actively contribute to the charity's work
- staff at all levels will engage positively with volunteers
- volunteers will be provided with necessary training and support
- regular reviews will take place to ensure that volunteers are confident and comfortable in their role and we will actively seek to ensure any needs are met

## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Food bank is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. When representing the charity as a volunteer we expect you to support our commitment to promoting equality.

## **VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

What you can expect as a volunteer:

- to be involved with an organisation that is dedicated to end hunger and poverty
- to be welcomed and treated with courtesy and respect
- clear instructions, information and advice to assist you in your role
- to be consulted and informed regarding any possible changes to your role
- to be treated fairly regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, parental or marital status, disability, religion, colour, race, ethnic or national origins or socio-economic background
- a named contact for support
- to have your right to privacy respected
- recognition and thanks

Food bank expects volunteers to:

- uphold and champion the vision, mission and values of your local food bank
- remember that you are a representative of the charity
- collaborate positively with staff, volunteers, members of the public, clients and staff from partner organisations throughout your time as a volunteer
- be open and honest in your dealings with us
- comply with relevant policies and procedures
- meet mutually agreed expectations around your role and to communicate with your Main Contact if these cannot be met
- let us know if we can improve the service and support that you receive
- let us know if you wish to change the nature of your volunteering role or if you are unable to continue as a volunteer

## **RECOGNITION**

Food banks rely heavily on volunteers and will endeavour to thank them and show appreciation regularly.

## **EXPENSES**

Your local food bank will endeavour to pay for reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred whilst undertaking your volunteering role. Expenses must be discussed and agreed with your supervisor in advance of your role.

## **INSURANCE, RISK ASSESSMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY**

All volunteers are covered by their food bank's public liability insurance.

Each volunteer role will have an associated risk assessment and this, alongside the Health and Safety policy, will be talked through with you as part of your induction.

Any training necessary to carry out your role safely will be provided and training needs will be regularly reviewed.

Please make use of any personal protective equipment (PPE) provided whilst undertaking your role and let your supervisor know if you need anything further.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING**

Problems may arise in a number of different ways. A volunteer may make a complaint about another volunteer or a member of staff of the food bank itself.

In cases of difficulty, food bank:

- endeavours to get it right from the beginning, by following guidance on good practice, having up to date policies and listening to the concerns of volunteers
- offers means to achieve reconciliation when things go awry by ensuring everyone knows what to do when something goes wrong, appointing somebody to monitor volunteers' complaints and to explore independent means of conflict resolution when necessary
- accepts responsibility for ensuring volunteers' complaints have a fair hearing

Any complaint (oral or written) will be examined quickly and effectively. If there is no satisfactory resolution the volunteering will be referred to a senior manager, up to and including the Chief Executive who will provide a written response within 10 working days.

If the complaint relates to potentially criminal activities involving safeguarding the charity's beneficiaries, volunteers and staff will be reported to the police and the appropriate regulatory authorities for charities.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

Food banks ensures it promotes a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults. This means we want to protect their health and wellbeing and human rights, and enable them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. In the course of your volunteering you may come across a cause for concern with regard to safeguarding vulnerable people. The food bank has clear procedures for reporting concerns. The first course of action is to inform the Project Manager immediately.

The food bank also has established procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff or volunteers. Allegations which involve potentially criminal activities will be reported immediately to the police.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Whilst volunteering you may have access to or learn of information of a confidential nature. We expect all volunteers to comply with our confidentiality guidelines and sign up to our confidentiality agreement.