



# Volunteer Policy

Last Reviewed: June 2023

Next Review: June 2024

# Enterprise East Group CIC

## VOLUNTEER POLICY

### Introduction

EEG recognises that there can be situations in which Volunteers help can make an appropriate and significant contribution to the work and service objectives of both the company and its beneficiaries. This document, the EEG Volunteer Policy, defines the term and sets out the principles, practices, and procedures which EEG 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. Work experience placements are not classed as volunteering.

### Principles

In appointing Volunteers EEG will adhere to the following principles:

- (a) Volunteers will not be engaged in work which facilitates the loss of an existing employee's post;
- (b) Volunteers will not be used to do the work of paid staff during an industrial dispute;
- (c) Current EEG employees will not be engaged as Volunteers at EEG, unless they choose to specifically volunteer their time at an event they are not required to work at, as part of their contract.

### Recruitment of Volunteers

Volunteers will be selected through the following process:

#### **STEP 1:**

The following items must be agreed by the Managing Director before a proposed Volunteer placement is implemented:

- a. *Role Description*, outlining the specific tasks, responsibilities and reporting lines of the Volunteer;
- b. *Terms and conditions* including the duration, hours, expenses, insurance, etc., relating to the placement;
- c. 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 meeting with the Chief Officer. The two 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.

#### **STEP 3:**

Prior to commencing their placement at EEG, 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 EEG each successful Volunteer shall be formally allocated to a member of staff who will manage and supervise the Volunteer throughout the duration of their placement at EEG. The manager's responsibilities will include ensuring that the Volunteer receives the following:

- a planned induction to EEG;
- regular supervision and support sessions;
- positive feedback on their contribution;
- adequate office accommodation, equipment and services to perform their tasks effectively.

#### **Equality and Diversity**

EEG recognises that the activity of volunteering can provide a volunteer with experiences and opportunities for self and career development. In accordance with EEG's Equality and Diversity Policy, volunteer placements at EEG will therefore be open to all individuals over 16 years. In addition, the *Specification* must set out the

equality dimension and any specific equality requirements of the role. Where a prospective Volunteer demonstrates hostility to, or a clear lack of support for equality, she/he will be deemed automatically to be unsuitable for a volunteer position at EEG.

### **Termination**

Where appropriate, the role and placement of the Volunteer may be terminated by the Managing Director 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 Managing Director will report any such terminations to the Human Resources Director.

### **Discipline and Grievance**

Volunteers will not be subject to EEG's Disciplinary Procedure. Instead, the Disciplinary Procedure for Volunteers will be applied as set out below:

#### **Informal Meeting**

An informal meeting will be held. It will not be recorded as disciplinary action and will be seen as a process of constructive dialogue.

Most problems can be resolved by informal discussions or counselling, and often this can avoid the need for formal disciplinary action. This may include mediation or additional training or support for the volunteer.

If the problem cannot be resolved informally with the volunteer, it might then be appropriate to invoke a disciplinary policy and procedure.

#### ***Stage 1 – Formal Verbal Warning***

A formal verbal warning may be given to the volunteer if, despite informal discussions or training, the conduct or performance still does not meet acceptable standards.

A brief note of the warning will be kept but, subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance, this will lapse after 6 months.

#### ***Stage 2 – Written Warning***

If there is no improvement in standards within the prescribed time, or if a further offence occurs, the volunteer will receive a letter from their manager inviting them to attend a further disciplinary meeting.

The disciplinary meeting should take place as soon as is reasonably possible, but with sufficient time for the volunteer to consider their response to the information contained in the letter. The meeting will be an opportunity for

both the volunteer (with their representative) and the Manager to talk about the issues or allegations being made, consider the information with a view to establishing whether to progress the disciplinary action.

Following the disciplinary meeting, if it is decided that no further action is warranted, the volunteer will be informed in writing. Where the volunteer is found to be performing unsatisfactorily or their behaviour is deemed unsatisfactory, they will be given a written warning. A copy of the written warning will be kept on file, but the warning will lapse after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance. Where a written warning is given, the Chair of the Board of Directors should be advised and kept up to date with any progress.

### ***Stage 3 – Final Written Warning***

If the conduct or performance remains unsatisfactory by the stipulated date, or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant only one written warning, a further disciplinary meeting (where the Director will be present) should be called with the volunteer and their representative. The disciplinary meeting will be an opportunity for the volunteer to answer the issues raised. Were this meeting establishes that there has been a failure to improve or change behaviour, then a final written warning should be given to the volunteer.

### ***Final Stage – Dismissal***

If the volunteer's conduct or performance still fails to improve or if further serious misconduct occurs, the final stage in the disciplinary process may be instituted and the volunteer dismissed.

### **Gross Misconduct**

Where a volunteer is found guilty of gross misconduct, they would normally be subject to summary dismissal (instant dismissal without notice) and the above procedures regarding progression of warnings should not apply.

Examples of gross misconduct might include:

- deliberate falsification of expenses claims
- disclosure of confidential information (see Confidentiality Policy)
- convictions of a criminal offence that undermine a person's suitability for volunteering
- provision of false information relevant to a person's volunteering position
- consistently poor attendance on a project, without appropriate notification
- use of abusive or offensive language or behaviour

- bullying or harassment
- being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- theft of property or misuse of equipment or materials
- failure to abide by policies and procedures
- failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties

### **Appeals**

If a volunteer wishes to appeal against any disciplinary decision, this should be made in writing within five working days of the decision being communicated to them, to the relevant person on the board.

Volunteers will not have access to EEG's grievance procedures. However, Volunteers will be entitled to use EEG's Complaints Procedure. Where appropriate, the complaint will be investigated fully by the Chairman 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 EEG's employers' public liability and personal accident insurance.

### **Involvement**

Where a Volunteer is based at EEG on a day to day basis she/he will be expected to be involved and included in general staff activities, such as staff meetings and to have general access to EEG offices.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It will be the responsibility of the Chief Officer to regularly review the operation of EEG's Volunteer Policy to ensure that it is in accordance with EEG's Equality and Diversity Policy.