

Volunteering Policy

Owner	Amy Sinclair, Employability & Volunteer Development Manager
Effective from	January 2020
Review date	February 2023
Document purpose	This policy sets out how FareShare South West (FSSW) aspires to deliver excellent volunteering experiences - in line with both statutory requirements and best practice, ensuring that we create a positive environment for our volunteers and time donators.
Background	<p>Underpinning the FareShare UK and FareShare South West vision of “Fighting Hunger, tackling food waste”, are hours of donated time coming from our local volunteers. This policy aims to ensure we are attracting, retaining and supporting as many diverse volunteers as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A safe, accessible space • An enjoyable place • A learning and training environment • Ability to contribute to local community • Be inspired and inspire others • Volunteers feel valued by and a part of the organisation <p>FSSW is committed to creating environments where all our people are able to fulfil their potential, maximise their contribution, be safe and feel comfortable in being themselves.</p> <p>Relating to FareShare South West’s core objectives are:</p> <p>A) to promote the voluntary sector for the benefit of the public by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The distribution of food to charities and voluntary organisations; 2. Encouraging members of the public to undertake voluntary work; and 3. Providing education and training to the voluntary sector. "the voluntary sector" means charities and voluntary organisations. Charities are organisations, which are established for exclusively charitable purposes in accordance with the law of England and Wales. Voluntary organisations are independent organisations which are established for purposes that add value to the community as a whole, or a significant section of the community, and which are not permitted by their constitution to make a profit for private distribution. Voluntary organisations do not include local government or other statutory authorities. <p>B) to advance in life and help young people between the ages of 18 and 25 by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The provision of work-based training which develops their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals.

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Definitions	<p>Key Contact - a staff member or volunteer responsible for the management of one of more volunteers, as part of their role.</p> <p>Volunteer - An individual who freely offers their time and/or skills to perform a role or task, and does not expect or receive payment, either financial or in-kind, in return.</p> <p>Regular Volunteers - provide regular and ongoing support.</p> <p>Irregular Volunteers - provide support occasionally or on the weekend.</p> <p>Placement Volunteers - volunteer as part of their training/course or are referred to us by another provider.</p> <p>Supporters - A person who supports FareShare by donating, fundraising, signing petitions, raising our profile, etc., without the direct management from FareShare staff.</p> <p>One-off Volunteers/Short-term Volunteers - who provide their support for any timeframe <4 days.</p>
Scope and definition of policy	<p>The policy applies to all people who come through the FSSW volunteering programme. It does not apply to paid internships or paid staff.</p> <p>The following people at FSSW are required to familiarise themselves and comply with this policy, including any future updates that may be issued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key contacts for all volunteers • Regular formal volunteers • All staff

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The relationship between FSSW and its volunteers

Volunteering is undertaken by choice; and, indeed, this freedom to volunteer also implies a freedom to stop volunteering at any time. Individuals who choose to support us will not receive remuneration or other benefits, which could be categorised as remuneration. This is with the exception of certain expenses (see section 10), and/or any agreed training provision.

Volunteering at FSSW is open to everyone irrespective of disability, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. Further information about our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion can be found in the [Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#).

Our commitment to volunteers

We commit to:

- Creating a safe environment for volunteers
- Recognising, and celebrating, the contribution of our volunteers
- Creating personal and professional development opportunities for volunteers
- Increasing the number, and flexibility, of volunteering opportunities to meet the diverse needs of people who wish to volunteer

All volunteers must have access to and undertake training appropriate and relevant to their activities. Every volunteering role will be defined to make clear of its responsibilities. This will include a formal induction to their role on their first day of volunteering and may include an introduction to key policies (e.g., Volunteer, Health and Safety; Safeguarding, Equality, Diversity and inclusion, Data Protection, Confidentiality & Whistleblowing). Volunteers will be able to access internally or externally provided training as part of pre-defined volunteering programmes, or as opportunities arise. In the design of our volunteer programme, all considerations of individual needs are made to enable those with long-term conditions and disabilities to participate, whether onsite or remotely.

FSSW is open to involving volunteers with criminal records. Potential volunteers are required to disclose unspent convictions and each case will be dealt with on an individual basis. However, owing to the diversity of our volunteers who themselves may be vulnerable, we are unable to accept volunteers who have been convicted of crimes of a sexual or abusive nature. If a volunteer is found to have been dishonest in disclosing offences in their self-disclosure this may lead to an immediate end of their volunteering.

We will strive to take all practical steps to prevent discrimination (on any basis) and to promote equity during the course of our work, providing a respectful, inclusive, positive, supportive environment for all - one where all of us guard against harassment, supporting a dignified work environment for everyone. FSSW encourages volunteers to raise any serious concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour in our workplaces, initially through their key contact, or trusted member of staff, concerns can be raised by calling Public Concern at Work (an independent whistleblowing charity) on 0207 404 6609 (See Whistleblowing Policy in appendix). All issues raised will be treated in accordance with FSSW's grievance procedure (see appendix).

FSSW takes a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse and is committed to safeguarding those who volunteer, and those who come into contact with the organisation. At FSSW safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. Please see the appendix: Safeguarding policy.

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Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

FSSW Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the organisation sets the standard of our commitment to volunteers (see above).

FSSW Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for ensuring that the standards of this Volunteering Policy are embedded in the vision, values and culture of the organisation.

FSSW Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and those employees with delegated responsibility for volunteer management are responsible for day-to-day implementation of the policy.

FSSW Volunteer Manager and Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that the volunteer policy is appropriately updated and will provide advice and support on the policy and its implementation.

FSSW Employees and Volunteers are responsible at all times for their own conduct and behaviour and are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy if they manage or work alongside volunteers.

Volunteer impact measurement and recognition

FSSW commits to measuring satisfaction levels and understanding motivations within the volunteer programme. This is done through volunteer surveys and data from our volunteer management systems, allowing us to make informed decisions on how to improve volunteer experience.

FSSW commits to events and communications throughout the year which recognise and celebrate volunteering, to ensure volunteers feel valued by and a part of the organisation's objectives.

Insurance

FSSW volunteers are covered by the following insurance:

- Employers' liability
- Public liability

FSSW's insurance does not cover:

- Unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement or role description
- Personal possessions of volunteers

Recruitment

For supporters

FSSW supporters will go through an appropriate process developed by the team supporting them. However, all supporters must have a clear role and any new roles must be clearly defined.

Supporter roles include:

- Community Champion
- Community Fundraiser
- Social Media Ambassador

Recruitment for irregular volunteers (including one off volunteers)

FSSW irregular volunteers will go through an appropriate process, which must include the following steps.

- Being provided with a clear role description

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- For new roles, a role outline must be created and shared with the FSSW Volunteer Manager to ensure they are compliant with this policy, legislation and volunteering good practice
- Volunteers must complete the relevant volunteer application form
- If a criminal conviction is disclosed on the application form, the volunteer must not commence their role before a decision has been about their suitability by the FSSW Volunteer Manager
- Prior to starting with FSSW, the new volunteer will be given the name and contact details of their key contact
- The appropriate level of checks. References, ID checks and criminal record checks, must be fully considered

Irregular volunteer's roles include:

- Corporate volunteers
- Irregular warehouse volunteers

Recruitment for regular formal volunteers

FSSW regular formal volunteers will go through an appropriate process, which must include the following steps:

- Being provided with a clear role description
- For new roles, a role outline must be created and shared with the FSUK Volunteering Team to ensure they are compliant with this policy, legislation and volunteering good practice
- Volunteers must complete the relevant volunteer application form
- Prospective volunteers will take part in a selection meeting with their key contact. This, often informal, meeting will include a two-way discussion of the role, and each other's expectations, with a view to assessing mutual suitability.
- Following the selection meeting a decision within one week - regarding the individual's suitability for the particular role
- If a criminal conviction is disclosed on the application form, the volunteer must not commence their role before a decision has been about their suitability by the FSSW Volunteer Manager
- Volunteers will only be able to start their volunteer experience with FSSW on receipt of at least one reference and the completion of an ID check.
- Prior to starting with FSSW, the new volunteer will be given the name and contact details of their key contact.

Code of conduct document

Regular formal volunteer roles include:

- Driver
- Driver's Assistant
- Warehouse Assistant
- Warehouse Storesperson
- Admin Assistant

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Supervision and management

Each FSSW volunteer and supporter will be allocated a key contact. Additionally, appropriate structures will be provided to support and develop volunteers where appropriate.

All regular formal volunteers will also have:

- An induction to FSSW and their role
- Relevant training and development provided - proof of learning must be evidenced.
- Key policies provided e.g. Safeguarding, Whistleblowing, Data Protection, Health and Safety, Etc. - Evidence of reading these policies must be kept
- Regular supervision and support meetings as required.
- Constructive feedback on their performance and positive feedback about their contribution
- Regular opportunities to express their views about their experience.
- Appropriate tools, equipment and services to perform their tasks effectively.

Problem resolution

Volunteers are not subject to the FSSW disciplinary procedure for paid employees; therefore they will not have access to FSSW grievance procedure, however:

- Volunteers should seek to resolve issues and concerns - relating to their role - in the first instance through their key contact or their key contacts manager.
 - If a volunteer feels that a resolution has not been achieved, they may email the FSUK Volunteering team at Nationalvolunteering@fareshare.org.uk
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 - In all cases, the volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision and action unless it is deemed that sharing this information would put them or others at risk.
 - Where required we will share concerns with statutory agencies such as the police or local authority.
 - Key contacts will report all volunteer terminations to the FSSW Volunteer Manager.
- In the event of a safeguarding allegation against a volunteer, it will be investigated in line with FSSW's Safeguarding policies and procedures. After this appropriate action will be taken and it will be escalated and reported to relevant authorities, in line with our safeguarding policy.
- In the event that we discover that one of our volunteers has an undisclosed criminal conviction, an investigation will be initiated and dependent on the severity of the conviction, this may result in the termination of the volunteer's role.
- In the event of behaviour equivalent to gross misconduct, the volunteer will be asked to leave their volunteering shift immediately and depending on the outcome of an investigation, they may be asked not to return. In this case, this will be recorded on their volunteering record, so they cannot re-join FSUK as a volunteer in future.
- Issues concerning the general public or of interest to the general public, including possible illegal activity, abuse, serious health and safety breaches or acts that could harm the environment or individuals should be raised through the Charity Whistleblowing helpline, Protect: 0207 404 6609.

Children & vulnerable adult volunteers

FSSW is committed to providing opportunities for children, and vulnerable adults (refer to Safeguarding Policy for definition) to volunteer. In order to ensure that the experience is safe and rewarding the guidance below must be followed. If you have any concerns or

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questions about this guidance you can speak with your line manager or the Head of Volunteer Recruitment and Engagement.

Child volunteers

- FSSW only involve people under the age of 16 as irregular or regular volunteers by exception that needs the approval of the Volunteer Manager.
- Anyone under the age of 18 on site **must** be supervised by two adults. One of these must be a paid member of staff. There may be exceptional circumstances (such as an emergency) which mean this is not possible, and thought **must** be given to how to ensure the safety of a young person in all such cases.
- If FSSW is not able to meet these requirements, anyone under the age of 18 is not allowed on site.
- Further information about our approach to safeguarding can be found in the FSSW Safeguarding policy.

Adult volunteers in vulnerable circumstances

- Where an adult volunteer, or an appropriate carer, advises that the prospective volunteer has a need for care and support or is vulnerable the following guidance must be followed.
 - A risk assessment (see below) should be conducted before any vulnerable adult can commence a volunteer role. This should be an inclusive process that is undertaken with the adult, or an appropriate carer, so that we can offer them the best possible experience.
 - Any vulnerable adults on site **must** be supervised by two adults, one being a member of staff. There may be very exceptional circumstances (such as an emergency situation) which mean this is not possible, and thought **must** be given to how to ensure the safety of a vulnerable adult volunteer in all such cases.
 - If, in discussion with a vulnerable adult, you reasonably believe that the volunteer does not require this level of supervision then you must record your reasons for this. This information must also be shared with, and agreed, by the Volunteer Manager and Safeguarding Officer.
 - This decision must also be kept under regular review to ensure that the person's needs have not changed.
 - Further information about our approach to safeguarding can be found in the FSUK Safeguarding Policy.

Expenses and volunteer support

A full detailed policy can be found in Appendix ([Volunteer Expenses Policy](#)). This policy applies to all sites in the West of England and Devon & Cornwall regions and outlines what and how FareShare South West ('FSSW') volunteers can claim for travel to a FSSW site for volunteering purposes. We encourage volunteers who wish to claim for travel expenses, to do so on a fortnightly basis, with individual receipts. We do not reimburse expenses automatically with a flat rate and nor do we pay a proportion of fuel costs based on a standardised mileage rate irrespective of distance travelled. Instead, we will offer flexible reimbursement of volunteer travel expenses up to a maximum of £8 per day for each individual claimant. One condition is that a volunteer must volunteer for at least 3.5 hours in one day if we are going to reimburse them for travel costs i.e., a full morning or afternoon shift. Evening shifts on their own will not normally be reimbursed.

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Volunteer Exit

FSSW will endeavour to ask all volunteers to complete a volunteer exit interview, questionnaire or survey when their volunteering with FSSW comes to an end. This may not always be possible,

Useful contacts

FSSW Volunteer Manager (Eleanor Wolff)

- 0117 954 2220
- eleanor.wolff@faresharesouthwest.org.uk

FSSW Volunteer Coordinator (Zephyr Giddings)

- 0117 954 2220
- zephyr.giddings@faresharesouthwest.org.uk

FSSW Operations- Volunteer Lead (Sophie Pike)

- 0117 941 4401
- sophie@faresharesouthwest.org.uk

FSUK Volunteering Team:

- Nationalvolunteering@fareshare.org.uk
- 0800 711 7073

Whistleblowing helpline Protect:

- 0203 893 0341

Appendices - full policies available on request

[FareShare South West Volunteering Handbook](#)

[Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Policy.](#)

[Safeguarding Policy](#)

[Working with Vulnerable Adults Risk Assessment](#)

[Whistleblowing Policy](#)

[Volunteer Expenses Policy](#)

[Data Protection Policy](#)

[Incident Procedure](#)

[Accident Procedure](#)

[Fire Safety](#)

[Manual Handling](#)

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