

ALFORD HOUSE

VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Prepared by SA Law LLP

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Introduction

Volunteers are vital to Alford House. Without volunteers, Alford House could not exist. Volunteers are the main workforce. Supported by salaried staff, they deliver our services to young people and govern the club at every level. Alford House volunteers have opportunities to exercise every talent, enthusiasm or skill and to influence and direct work and policy in all areas.

It is vital that we attract - and keep - volunteers. This Volunteering Policy recommends steps, which everyone in Alford House can put into practice now, to welcome new people to the club and reinforce the commitment and enjoyment of current volunteers.

Volunteering works best when it is based on a clear and mutual benefit. People volunteer for many reasons, but everyone who volunteers wants to be valued, treated with consideration and given every opportunity for fulfilment or personal growth through their volunteering.

All volunteers should know about the opportunities that Alford House offers them, and what we expect from them in return.

What is a Volunteer?

Definition of a Volunteer

A 'Volunteer' is anyone who performs tasks or duties at the direction of and on behalf of the Organisation, without compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of carrying out this task. A Volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled by the Organisation prior to carrying out any tasks on behalf of the Organisation.

Volunteers will not be considered employees of Alford House.

The Organisation intends that services provided by Volunteers should enhance and not replace services provided by paid staff. Volunteers will be recruited to perform tasks that match their original motivation to Volunteer and will not be allocated placements inappropriate to their skills, abilities and aptitude.

Employee/Ex-Employees of Alford House as Volunteers

Alford House recognises the value of diverse experience within staff who are employed by the Organisation, or have been employed by the Organisation in the past. Existing and ex members of Alford House staff who wish to undertake a voluntary placement in a different area of the Organisation, will be eligible to apply for a voluntary placement following the success or completion of their probation period. Staff who have been dismissed by the Organisation or who leave pending a disciplinary hearing/investigation will not be eligible to apply.

Students on voluntary placements

The Organisation may offer voluntary placements to staff as part of their nominated coursework and in negotiation with their particular college.

Relatives as Volunteers

Relatives of client's may be accepted as Volunteers, but will not be placed in a position of direct service or relationships with members of their own family who are receiving services.

Youth Volunteers (under the age of 18)

There is specific legislation related to voluntary placements for people under the age of 18. In specially agreed circumstances where a voluntary placement is offered to someone under the age of 18, all relevant legislation will be complied with and parental consent applied.

Other Volunteers

Alford House will also accept applications to Volunteer from other individuals subject to the recruitment and selection procedures outlined in this policy.

Role of Volunteer

What volunteers can expect from the Alford House

Opportunities to serve the community regardless of their race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin, sex, marital or civil partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion, age or physical appearance.

The satisfaction of knowing that what you do is of real worth and that you are recognised and valued by the club - whether the task you take on is great or small, and whatever time you can give.

The confidence to do job because you can rely on consistent support and adequate resources.

Ready access to the challenging and exciting opportunities and training which Alford House can offer you.

Reimbursement of your agreed expenses, volunteering needn't cost you anything, other than your time.

What Alford House asks of its volunteers

Accept and work within the Fundamental Principles of the Ethical Code of Conduct in Youth Work.

Make new people welcome, and work as a team with other volunteers and staff.

Attend any support, training or supervision sessions useful for your tasks or your development.

To keep confidential any information about anyone receiving a service from Alford House.

Recognise that fundraising plays an important part in the work of the club, in addition to the other jobs you may do.

Support and follow the Alford House equal opportunities policy.

Be aware that you could be called on to help in an appropriate capacity in the event of a major incident.

Recruitment

Alford House will use all appropriate means to recruit Volunteers including advertisement in the local area. All recruitment will take into account our Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policies. The Organisation seeks to recruit Volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds that reflect the make up of the local community.

Alford House will also consider requests for volunteering externally or internally in the Organisation.

An applicant will be required to fill in an application form and help can be provided if necessary. The applicant will then be interviewed by Volunteer Co-ordinator/Group Leader/Centre Organiser and if successful, will be required to provide two references. These should preferably be from the most recent or current employers of the individual, whether in a voluntary capacity or from the individual's college in the case of students applying for a voluntary work placement.

All potential Volunteers must provide proof that they are entitled to work in the United Kingdom in accordance with the Immigration and Asylum Act 1996.

All appointments to a voluntary position must be subject to clearance by occupational health for the person's fitness to undertake the tasks described in their description of duties.

All potential Volunteers will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (as per Alford House Disclosure Policy) and will be asked to declare any criminal convictions they may have in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Volunteers who do not agree to these checks on the completion of these forms may be refused a voluntary placement with the Organisation

Induction and Training

Once successfully completing the recruitment procedure, an induction will be prepared and delivered by Volunteer Co-ordinator/Group Leader/Centre Organiser. This will include:

- The role of the Volunteer
- A list of all staff members and Volunteers
- A list of management committee members and sub committees
- Copies of all the relevant policies including the Volunteer Policy and the Confidentiality, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities and Diversity policies
- Essential procedures i.e. time keeping, rotas etc
- Induction training and details of ongoing training
- Information about the relevant code of practice
- Other information as appropriate.

There will be a trial period of 12 weeks to give the Organisation and the Volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other. A review will be made mid way through the trial period and also at the end. The Organisation may decide to extend the trial period if necessary and you will be informed of this.

Following successful completion of the trial period, you will be reviewed and evaluated on an ongoing basis by Volunteer Co-ordinator/Group Leader/Centre Organiser

Support

Volunteer Co-ordinator/Group Leader/Centre Organiser will be all Volunteers main point of contact at Alford House.

All Volunteers will have regular meetings with their main point of contact to feedback on progress, discuss future developments and training news.

Expenses

All Volunteers will have their travel and other subsequent payments, which are incurred in the course of carrying out their voluntary duties reimbursed. This may include payment for travel to and from the voluntary placements, travel expenses and meals or carrying out voluntary duties in accordance with relevant Alford House policies and procedures. Details of expenses which can be reimbursed will be included in the Volunteer agreement. None of the payments will be made unless proof of expense is received and the Organisation will only reimburse out of pocket expenses.

Insurance

Volunteers are covered under Alford House Insurance policy for personal accidents and contents insurance while carrying out their duties.

Health and Safety

Alford House Health and Safety policy also applies to Volunteers who are advised to read this. All Volunteers will be trained in the Organisation's Health and Safety policies and procedures at the time of induction and be expected to abide by it at all times.

Confidentiality

All Volunteers will be expected to maintain confidentiality in all aspects of their work in accordance with the Organisation's policies and procedures. Any breaches of confidentiality may lead to termination of the voluntary arrangement by the Organisation.

Diversity

Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding and commitment to Alford House Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy.

Data Protection

All Volunteers give their express consent to Alford House processing information, including any sensitive personal data (as defined in the Data Protection Act 1998), including any relevant medical records, details of ethnic origin, subject to our undertaking that we will comply with our obligations under the 1998 Act.

All Volunteers will apply the Data Protection policy in the course of their placement with Alford House and protect the privacy of all data recorded by Alford House.

Termination of Volunteer Agreement

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Create Date 22nd Oct 2007
Revised Date: 16th March 2018
Review Date: 1st June 2019

Volunteers may terminate their Volunteer agreement with Alford House at any time and cease carrying out voluntary duties for the Organisation. It is requested that Volunteers intending to cease carrying out voluntary duties within the Organisation provide advance notice of their departure, for example one month where possible.

The Organisation may terminate the Volunteer agreement of individual Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules of all procedures of the organisation or who fails to satisfactorily carry out their Volunteer duties. Possible grounds for the termination of a Volunteer's agreement may include, but are not limited to:

- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst carrying out their duties;
- Theft of property or misuse of the Organisation's equipment;
- Abuse or mistreatment of client's, staff or others;
- Failing to abide by the Organisation's policies and procedures.

Resolving Problems

The relationship between Alford House 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 standard of service to the clients who use it and is also important that Volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

If your role as a Volunteer does not meet with the Organisation's standards, here is how it can be dealt with:

- Initial meeting with their main point of contact who will explain the concerns;
- If this does not resolve the concerns then a meeting with the Club Manager will be arranged.
- If your work still does not meet the Organisation's standards, termination of the Volunteer agreement.

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

If the Volunteer is dissatisfied with any aspect of their work, they should:

- Explain their dissatisfaction with their main point of contact.
- If that does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the Club Manager should be convened.
- If that does not resolve the issue then a formal meeting with the Chair or Deputy Chair of Governors should follow.

At all times the Volunteer will be able to fully state their case and have a friend accompany them.

This Volunteer Policy is freely accessible to all. It will also be reviewed on a yearly basis to adapt and improve it.