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**Volunteer Policy**

**Policy Control Page**

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### Introduction

* Living Options Devon supports and promotes voluntary activity, and encourages co-operation with the public and voluntary sectors to help develop a more just and caring society
* Living Options Devon recognises the benefits of volunteering to both the individual and to the organisation
* As a voluntary organisation Living Options Devon is committed to involving volunteers throughout the organisation

Living Options Devon encourages flexibility and choice for volunteers and believes volunteers can be professional without overburdening them with too much bureaucracy. Whilst it is important to ensure the volunteers are part of the organisation, it is important to remember that they have other factors happening in their lives.

### Guidelines

Living Options Devon recognises that a one-size model does not fit all. Volunteering is a gift relationship and there will be no intention on the part of Living Options Devon to enter into a legally binding contract. Living Options Devon will provide induction, training, reviews and other ‘formal’ processes that are suitable and acceptable to the volunteer. Living Options Devon will ensure the staff who manage volunteers are aware of their roles and responsibility and that these are written into their job description. Living Options Devon will give volunteer managers the necessary support and time, whilst acknowledging volunteer management is not always straightforward and can be time-consuming.

### Principles

* Living Options Devon will draw up a task description for each volunteer in order that both parties are clear about the volunteer’s role
* Living Options Devon will ensure that volunteers are integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the work of Living Options Devon
* Volunteers will at no time replace the work of paid staff
* Living Options Devon expects that paid staff, at all levels, will work positively with volunteers and will actively seek to involve them in their work
* Living Options Devon recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to support volunteers to meet these needs. Appropriate induction and training will be provided in order that they can do their work effectively
* Living Options Devon will ensure that volunteers are reimbursed for all agreed expenses while volunteering with Living Options Devon
* Living Options Devon will provide volunteers with necessary equipment, materials and workspace in relation to their volunteer role
* Living Options Devon will actively participate to promote and raise the profile of volunteering

### Recruitment

Living Options Devon will advertise volunteering opportunities to a wide audience in order to attract a diverse volunteer base. Equal Opportunities will be a key factor in the recruitment process.

All volunteers will be interviewed in an informal style, where an application will be filled out. References will be called for and a CRB will be carried out.

Personal data collected consciously or incidentally during the recruitment or referral process will be stored securely for 3 months and then destroyed. Access to personnel records will be restricted.

### Expenses

All volunteers will have their travel and other agreed out of pocket expenses reimbursed on the production of receipts and/or mileage claim forms. Volunteers will be informed of mileage rates and any limits set on the payments of subsistence. Volunteers will not be paid in money or in kind for anything other than actual expenditure linked to their volunteering.

### Induction

All volunteers will receive an induction by the appropriate members of staff. The induction will take place as soon as is possible after their appointment. Volunteers will be introduced to all relevant staff at Living Options Devon.

### Learning Development Opportunities

Living Options Devon is committed to providing volunteers with learning development opportunities appropriate to their volunteering role, which will enhance and widen their skills and in turn benefit not only the volunteer but Living Options Devon.

### Support/Supervision

All volunteers will have a named staff member to provide support and guidance on a day to day basis. If that person is unavailable when a volunteer attends, clear instructions will be left for the volunteer and another member of staff briefed. In addition the volunteer and line manager should meet at least

once a month to review progress and to discuss any concerns or changes that need to be made to their role description.

Volunteers may be invited to staff meetings, where appropriate and kept informed of changes, developments and general organisational up-dates. Volunteers will be encouraged to have their say and express their views about matters concerning Living Options Devon, particularly in relation to the project/department in which they work. This may be done at meetings or through one to one discussion with their line manager.

### Confidentiality

Personal details of staff, volunteers and service users are treated in the strictest confidence. Information of a confidential nature will not be disclosed, unless it is in respect of a safeguarding issue, to anyone outside Living Options Devon.

### Contact with Volunteers

Any contact with volunteers directly involved in Living Options Devon work and projects must be made during normal working hours and using Living Options Devon phones and email.

It is not acceptable for volunteers to be given personal mobiles or landline numbers of staff.

Any meetings held with volunteers outside Living Options Devon must be included on intranet diaries with information regarding the name of the volunteer, the venue for the meeting and a contact number.

### Equal Opportunities

Living Options Devon believes that everyone has a contribution to make and a right to equal treatment. We ensure that everyone who comes into contact with our organisation experiences equality of opportunity.

### Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Living Options Devon insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or whilst engaged in any work on Living Options Devon’s behalf.

### Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by Living Options Devon’s Health and Safety Policy and procedures. (see Health and Safety Policy)

### Complaints Procedure for Volunteers

If a volunteer has a complaint about another volunteer or any member of staff, they should in the first instance talk to the person concerned, to try and resolve the matter informally.

If this is not possible, the volunteer should speak to their respective line manager. The line manager will raise the issue with the person concerned as soon as possible or agree to chair a meeting between the person making the complaint and the person against whom the complaint is made. Once this has been completed the line manager will write to the volunteer to inform them of the result.

If they are not happy with the result they should put a complaint in writing following Living Options Devon’s Grievance Procedure.

### Policies

Volunteers will be expected to comply with all Living Options Devon’s policies. If a volunteer fails to comply with or causes a serious breach of any Living Options Devon policy a supervision interview will be conducted with the person to whom they are responsible and if no improvement is seen their volunteering opportunity will be terminated.