



**City of Sanctuary
Sheffield**

Creating a Culture of Welcome

VOLUNTEER POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

City of Sanctuary Sheffield is a registered charity (CIO no. 772694) aiming for Sheffield to be a place of safety and welcome for people seeking sanctuary. Volunteers are an essential part of our organisation, and we aim to recruit, support and develop volunteers who can help us to achieve our vision.

2. IMPORTANT TERMS

2.1 This policy and any associated volunteering documents are not intended to be a legally binding contract between the volunteer and City of Sanctuary Sheffield.

2.2 The term "volunteer" is used to describe someone who helps City of Sanctuary Sheffield deliver its services and activities by giving their time without receiving payment other than the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.

2.3 The legal position of volunteers with regard to benefits and immigration and asylum legislation may change from time to time.

2.4 Volunteer role outlines are descriptions of the requirements and responsibilities for specific roles that may be undertaken by volunteers. They are provided to aid recruitment and to help to provide volunteers with clear descriptions of their role.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to all the staff, volunteers and trustees of City of Sanctuary Sheffield.

4. PURPOSE

4.1. The purpose of the policy is to set out both the rights and the duties of volunteers in City of Sanctuary Sheffield and the procedures for ensuring that rights are respected and that all volunteers are aware of their duties and responsibilities to themselves, to other volunteers, to people seeking sanctuary, to third parties and to the charity.

4.2. It also sets out the responsibilities and duties of City of Sanctuary Sheffield towards its volunteers, and informs volunteers what they can expect from the charity in the way of support, training etc.

5. PRINCIPLES

5.1. City of Sanctuary Sheffield recognises and values the involvement of volunteers in delivering its services and activities.

5.2. City of Sanctuary Sheffield expects all staff and trustees to work positively with volunteers. All volunteers will be treated fairly and with respect. All volunteers are expected to treat other volunteers, staff, people seeking sanctuary, partner organisations and other members of the public with respect and fairness too.

5.3. City of Sanctuary Sheffield will ensure that volunteers are properly inducted into the organisation structure, that there is effective communication with volunteers.

5.4 Mechanisms are in place for volunteers to provide constructive feedback and to contribute to the development of our services and activities These mechanisms include volunteer debrief sessions, volunteer reviews and volunteer support sessions.

5.5. City of Sanctuary Sheffield actively promotes and prioritises volunteering opportunities for people with lived experience of seeking sanctuary.

5.6. City of Sanctuary Sheffield volunteers complement and support the work of paid members of staff.

5.7. City of Sanctuary ensures that it provides the support, training, development and guidance necessary to enable volunteers to be effective in their roles.

5.8. City of Sanctuary Sheffield is committed to promoting and establishing volunteering good practice with other voluntary and community groups. To support this process City of Sanctuary Sheffield maintains effective links with local and national umbrella bodies, including Voluntary Action Sheffield and Investing in Volunteers.

6.VOLUNTEER PROCESS

VOLUNTEER ROLES.

6.1. City of Sanctuary Sheffield identify, on an ongoing basis, new, varied and rewarding roles for volunteers. Staff are involved in identifying and developing volunteer opportunities. This ensures that volunteer roles are clearly defined and supportive of and complementary to existing staff roles.

6.2. Each volunteer opportunity will have a volunteer role outlining a description of the role, its tasks and responsibilities and the skills needed. The role outline specifies which member of staff is responsible for supporting a volunteer in their role.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

6.3. Staff job descriptions clearly state where staff have responsibilities for the support, deployment, training and management of volunteers. Staff will be given training and supervision required to carry out these duties.

6.4. It is the responsibility of The Co-ordinator to ensure that staff are fully trained in working with or managing volunteers

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF VOLUNTEERS.

6.5. City of Sanctuary Sheffield aims to provide volunteering opportunities for a broad range of people, particularly people seeking sanctuary. Volunteering opportunities are advertised widely, at the Sanctuary, through local volunteering organisations, through social media and the City of Sanctuary Sheffield website.

6.6. The volunteer coordinator and/or administrator will ensure that enquiries from potential volunteers are responded to as quickly as possible.

6.7. All volunteers will be asked to provide the names and contact details of 2 referees - for example employers, volunteer supervisors or managers, teachers or tutors, or other appropriate people (not family members) on their application form. Asylum seekers may provide just one referee if providing two will be a barrier to volunteering. For those who can only provide one referee, additional supervision will be in place for the first three months of volunteering.

6.8. Once someone has applied to be a volunteer, they will be invited to an induction training session.

INDUCTION.

6.9 All volunteers are required to attend an induction session before they start their voluntary role. The induction process will introduce the volunteer to the work, vision and values of City of Sanctuary Sheffield. It will explain their responsibilities as a volunteer, and what they can expect from City of Sanctuary Sheffield. The Volunteer Policy will be summarised and distributed. Volunteers will also be informed of other key policies and how to access them

6.10 The member of staff or team leader responsible for each volunteering role will make contact with inducted volunteers and identify their availability., They will then commence their role and receive the support and training required.

TRAINING

6.11 In addition to induction training, volunteers will be given the training required for specific volunteering roles. If a role requires additional training, volunteers are expected to attend the training and achieve any formally required standards. Where possible and appropriate, City of Sanctuary Sheffield will support volunteers to access accredited training.

6.12 City of Sanctuary Sheffield will ensure that a proportion of the volunteering budget is set aside for ongoing volunteer training costs.

SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT.

6.13 All volunteers will have a named member of staff as a point of contact within City of Sanctuary Sheffield. This person will usually be the member of staff responsible for the area of work where they are volunteering, and they will have overall responsibility for supervising and supporting the volunteer.

6.14 All volunteers (who volunteer regularly) will be provided with regular volunteer reviews with their named member of staff. There will be the opportunity for a one-to-one meeting, at least every 6 months, or more often if needed. All volunteers can ask for additional support or advice at any time.

6.15 Volunteer review sessions will be used to allow the volunteer to discuss their role, ensure the volunteer is receiving support within the workplace, identify any problems associated with the work, identify new training needs or further opportunities within the City of Sanctuary Sheffield.

6.16 CoSS aims to support volunteers in their further personal and professional development beyond volunteering.

6.17 For some volunteer roles there may be team meetings for volunteers to plan the work of the team, share ideas, problem solve and plan new developments. Team meetings will also offer the opportunity for volunteer support and supervision.

6.18 Where possible group volunteer mutual support sessions are organised to help process emotions and issues arising from supporting clients.

6.19 Where possible and necessary volunteers will be provided with briefing before their work session and a debrief after it has been completed.

6.20 We organise regular volunteer social gatherings to show appreciation for their input and foster team spirit.

7. VOLUNTEER ENTITLEMENTS.

7.1 Volunteer expenses. City of Sanctuary Sheffield aims to eliminate the financial barriers to volunteering, and make it accessible to as broad a cross section of society as possible and especially people seeking sanctuary, by reimbursing any out-of-pocket expenses. This would normally cover travel costs, and the cost of a local 'meal deal' if the volunteer is required to be present all day and a meal cannot be provided by City of Sanctuary Sheffield. Receipts or evidence of purchase (e.g. bus tickets) will be required.

7.2 Refreshments and meals. Volunteers are entitled to free drinks (e.g. tea or coffee) and light refreshments (e.g. biscuits) while they are volunteering. If they are required to volunteer all day, either a mid-day meal will be provided or the cost of a local meal deal will be reimbursed. All volunteers can attend the Community meal on Tuesday or Volunteer meal on Wednesday and receive a free meal.

7.3 References – City of Sanctuary Sheffield will provide references for those individuals who have been actively volunteering for an appropriate length of time (enough time for the appropriate staff members to feel confident that they can provide a fair and accurate reference.)

7.4 Insurance. City of Sanctuary Sheffield has a duty to provide adequate insurance cover for the approved activities of its volunteers. Relevant insurance may include employer's liability, public liability, personal accident and professional indemnity. Volunteers will not normally be expected to use their cars in the course of volunteering. However, should volunteers choose to use their own vehicle while on a volunteering activity, they will need to ensure they have the appropriate cover from their own insurer, since volunteering is often classed as "business use".

7.5 A safe working environment. Volunteers should have a safe working environment in compliance with Health and Safety legislation. Volunteers will be made aware, at induction and by their team leader, named staff member or supervisor, of relevant risk assessments and safety guidelines. They will receive any necessary safety training for specific roles and be expected to follow all the required health and safety guidelines.

7.6 Communication, meetings, social events. City of Sanctuary Sheffield aims to make volunteers feel welcome and valued in the organisation. Volunteers will receive regular communication and updates from City of Sanctuary Sheffield through emails, newsletters, WhatsApp, texts and team meetings. There will also be regular

social events such as meals for volunteers, to help people get to know each other and to thank volunteers for the contribution they make to the work of City of Sanctuary Sheffield.

8. EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

8.1. Volunteers are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct. Here is a link to it: or please ask the Volunteer Co-ordinator for a copy

8.2 Here is some more detail on aspects of the Code of Conduct as it applies to volunteers.

8.21 Reliability and punctuality. Volunteers are expected to attend and to arrive on time when they are expected to carry out their volunteering role, or attend training or meetings. However, City of Sanctuary Sheffield recognises that sometimes this may not be possible because of illness, caring responsibilities or urgent appointments. In these circumstances volunteers are asked to let the named member of staff or team leader know as soon as possible that they cannot attend or will be late, so that alternative arrangements can be made.

8.22 Confidentiality and data protection. Volunteers must ensure that confidentiality and the best interests of clients are maintained at all times, within the responsibilities of their role. If a volunteer is unsure about their role, or has concerns about safeguarding issues or the behaviour of a client or colleague they should approach their supervisor. If volunteers are required to collect or use personal information about any individuals, they must follow the Data Protection Policy

8.23 Relations with others. As with all staff it is expected that volunteers consider how their actions could be perceived by other people and organisations external to the City of Sanctuary Sheffield. Volunteers are expected to behave in a welcoming, polite and professional way. As with all staff, volunteers should inform their named staff member in the event of any act external CoSS which might have negative consequences for the charity. Discriminatory behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated.

8.24 Acting as a representative of City of Sanctuary Sheffield. Volunteers must not speak on behalf of City of Sanctuary Sheffield or imply they are doing so, unless they have been specifically asked to do this; in particular as this relates to any contact with the media or with other organisations.

9. CONCERNS, PROBLEMS OR COMPLAINTS

9.1 When there are concerns about the behaviour or attitude of a volunteer, these will be addressed through the Complaints section of the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy. If volunteers do not abide by the above expectations or Code of Conduct they will be asked to cease volunteering.

9.2 Similarly, if a volunteer has a concern or complaint, whether about another volunteer, a staff member or trustee, or any aspect of the work of City of Sanctuary Sheffield, this should be addressed by using the relevant procedures in the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy.

9.3. If there are concerns about the health, mental or physical, of a volunteer, or about the impact of an illness or condition on a volunteer's ability to carry out their role, these must be raised in the first place with the volunteer and the named staff member. Volunteers are encouraged to inform the named staff member of any illnesses or conditions that may impact on their ability to volunteer on their application form, or subsequently if a condition develops.

9.4. City of Sanctuary Sheffield aims to have a caring, positive and proactive response to volunteers with health problems. It will seek to be flexible and to make reasonable adjustments to the volunteering role (e.g. shorter hours, more frequent breaks, easier roles) to enable volunteers to continue volunteering. The responsible staff member will work with the volunteer concerned to develop an agreed plan to support them while they are volunteering with City of Sanctuary Sheffield. If they have a period of prolonged sickness absence, the named staff member will keep in touch and help them with a planned return to volunteering if appropriate.

9.5 If an asylum seeker volunteer is detained by the Home Office, or faces the risk of unwanted deportation, City of Sanctuary Sheffield will endeavour to provide support through this period. The named staff member or another member of the team will keep in touch and offer practical assistance if possible.

10. EVALUATION

10.1. City of Sanctuary Sheffield aims to recruit a wide range of volunteers, prioritising people seeking sanctuary. It will evaluate its effectiveness in meeting this aim by collecting demographic information about its volunteers, including gender, age, ethnicity, languages spoken and whether they have experience of seeking sanctuary

10.2. Volunteers will be actively encouraged to feedback about their experiences of volunteering and to make suggestions for improvements, in line with the Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy

10.3. Individuals or organisations referring volunteers to our volunteer programme will be informed about the outcome of their referral, and asked for their feedback on the City of Sanctuary Sheffield volunteering programme.

10.4. The trustees will review the City of Sanctuary Sheffield volunteering programme and evaluate it against the appropriate local or national standards (e.g Sheffield Investors in Volunteers.)

11. RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

11.1. The Volunteer Coordinator has overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation of this policy at City of Sanctuary Sheffield and for reporting to the trustees on its operation.

11.2. City of Sanctuary Sheffield Volunteer Policy will be presented as part of the volunteer handbook for all new staff, volunteers and members of the Board of Trustees. Existing staff, volunteers and trustees will be told of the revisions to new versions of the policy. All staff, volunteers and named trustees will be expected to read the policy and sign that they have done so.

11.3. The staff members responsible for specific areas of work or projects are responsible for ensuring that the Volunteer Policy is implemented within their service element. They have responsibility too for ensuring that volunteer team leaders are aware and trained in the Volunteer Policy and understand their own obligations to follow the policy. Team leaders must follow the policy within their specific remits

11.4. A named trustee (or trustees) is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. They will advocate on behalf of volunteers and good practice in volunteer management. They will try to ensure that the views of the volunteers are sought and taken into consideration. City of Sanctuary Sheffield will use a variety of consultation methods for effective feedback from volunteers, including focus groups, meetings, questionnaires and interviews. The named trustees for volunteers are

11.5. The Board of Trustees will review the Volunteer Policy every 3 years or sooner if needed, and update it to include any new legislation or good practice initiatives.

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