

Volunteer Policy Careers Development Group

Introduction

Careers Development Group (CDG) is a leading charity that supports long-term unemployed people to improve their quality of life. We achieve this through increasing our customers' skills, supporting them to gain qualifications and enabling them to move into sustainable employment.

This policy sets the minimum standards for the way CDG works with volunteers, drawing on a number of other identified policies throughout. It is the key to involving a diversity of volunteers, because it helps to define the role of volunteers within the organisation, and how they can expect to be treated.

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Complementary documents

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy

1. What is the purpose of the Volunteer Policy?

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for using the services of unpaid volunteers. CDG is committed to the involvement of volunteers, and recognises across the organisation that volunteering is a two-way process that benefits both volunteers and the organisation.

This policy provides for fair and equal treatment of its volunteers in all areas and confirms that CDG is committed to diversity at every level.

CDG firmly believes that volunteers offer a valuable contribution to many aspects of our organisation. This policy has been developed to ensure consistency for all volunteers and to ensure that the conduct of volunteers reflects the professionalism of the organisation. CDG is committed to ensuring that volunteers do not undertake the work of paid staff.

2. Who is the Volunteer Policy for?

The Volunteer Policy is:

- a. For paid staff who work with, and/or provide support to volunteers within CDG
- b. For volunteers themselves who provide a role as a part of CDG activities
- c. For organisations and individuals that CDG works in partnership with

3. Who are CDG's volunteers?

A volunteer is someone who freely chooses to give time and energy to undertake tasks and activities to help CDG achieve its aims, without being paid and without expectation of payment or employment.

A CDG volunteer is not an employee of CDG and will not receive any remuneration (other than agreed expenses) or financial benefit. There is no intention between CDG and volunteers to create a legal relationship and/or an employment relationship. CDG volunteers shall have clearly defined roles as stated in the "Volunteer Agreement."

In most cases, a volunteer will work on a part-time basis for the organisation.

CDG recognises different types of volunteer:

- Those involved in CDG services to assist CDG customers in their employment search process (excluding individuals undertaking pre-employment work trials).
- Unemployed people for work experience (for example, CDG administration, community projects). This does not include work placements for CDG customers.
- Those who provide support to the lead staff member on special projects within the organisation (including part-time or short term internships).

The recruitment process, ongoing management or induction will be slightly different depending on the type of volunteer role an individual undertakes.

4. What are the value and benefits that volunteers bring to CDG?

In line with our mission and our core values, CDG requires the assistance of volunteers to:

- Provide a unique service that cannot be provided by paid staff
- Offer specialist knowledge in a variety of areas
- Increase job outcomes and qualifications of customers through the continued development of quality training and learning
- Create a culture of success and recognition
- Develop and implement policies and procedures in line with customers' needs
- Retain and develop qualified staff and volunteers
- Provide an interface between CDG, the local community, funders and others upon whom CDG relies

5. What benefits are there to being a volunteer with CDG?

The organisation develops appropriate volunteer roles in line with its aims and objectives, which are of value to the volunteers and create an environment for personal development.

Working as a volunteer with CDG means donating time that provides:

- the ability to make a difference to the lives of unemployed people, thereby making a contribution to society as a whole
- an opportunity to be part of a high profile, well-respected national charity
- personal development opportunities and experiences that may boost further career development
- networking opportunities and social interaction

6. How does the voluntary programme work?

CDG commits appropriate resources to working with volunteers, such as staff time, management, rights and materials.

6.1 The Volunteer Coordinator

A Volunteer Coordinator is designated to be responsible for the volunteer programme. He/she will liaise with management and the Board to develop and implement a support and supervision framework for volunteers.

6.2 Recruitment and Selection

CDG is committed to using fair, efficient and consistent recruitment procedures for all potential volunteers. CDG will not recruit volunteers to replace paid staff. In general, we will recruit volunteers for specific tasks or projects.

CDG welcomes applicants from all sections of the community and operates an Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy in all areas of the recruitment and selection process.

CDG requires the use of an application form to collect information on all prospective volunteers. Additionally, volunteers will be formally interviewed to provide relevant information and explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to CDG.

Written references (the personal reference must come from sources other than family) and Criminal Records Bureau checks can be required to help to confirm suitability in certain roles.

CDG is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of volunteer information.

6.3 The Volunteer Agreement

Volunteers are required to complete and to sign the Volunteer Agreement.

This document provides written confirmation of the following:

- A clear declaration that the arrangement is not a contract of employment
- Defined duties/tasks outlines/role description
- Who is to supervise the volunteer
- Timeframes
- The policies and procedures to be complied with
- Volunteer expenses process
- Induction, training and development

The volunteer induction will take place once the agreement is signed by CDG and the volunteer.

6.4 Policies and Procedures

CDG is committed to ensuring that, as far as possible, volunteers are protected from physical, financial, and emotional harm whilst volunteering. CDG takes a considered approach to taking up references and official checks that is consistent and equitable for all volunteers, bearing in mind the nature of the work.

Each volunteer will receive, read and agree the policies below:

- Volunteer Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy

6.5 Induction and Training

All volunteers will receive an induction, which will cover special areas outlined on the CDG Induction Checklist. The induction will be organised by the Volunteer Coordinator.

CDG aims to ensure that volunteers are able to contribute and to perform their role. CDG encourages all volunteers to actively participate in our training programs or identify further external areas of training they may benefit from. Some training is optional and may not be suitable for all volunteers. Therefore, each volunteer will have appropriate training as deemed vital in maintaining CDG services to a high standard.

6.6 Support, Supervision, Recognition and Rewards

Each volunteer will be provided with relevant management and support. As a minimum there will be a monthly review to:

- provide an opportunity for the volunteer to discuss her/his role
- ensure that the role continues to be an appropriate one
- identify information/training requirements to develop skills and to perform her/his role
- discuss any problems that arise



CDG is committed to providing appropriate processes and occasions to celebrate volunteers and their work.

6.7 Leaving CDG

Volunteers are free to cease volunteering with CDG at any time. However, an agreed period leading up to this would be helpful in order to give CDG time to make any alternative arrangements required. It is possible that there may also be times when CDG will ask a volunteer to cease volunteering for various reasons.

Volunteers who leave CDG will be offered an exit interview to explore their voluntary experience with us. This will be arranged with an individual's supervisor. Volunteers will be asked to complete an exit feedback form if they are unable to attend an interview.

According to the manager, CDG will offer a reference and/or other statement of the volunteer's achievements. CDG will not provide references for volunteers who have volunteered with the scheme for less than three months.