



East Herts Council

Volunteering Policy

Policy Statement

Policy Statement No 41 (Issue No 1)

January 2012

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Status of volunteers	3
3.	Volunteering roles	3
4.	Recruitment	3
5.	Volunteer coordinator	3
6.	Volunteering agreement	4
7.	Dress Code	4
8.	Training	4
9.	Health and safety	4
10.	Recompense	4
11.	Policies and procedures	4
12.	Insurance	5
13.	Volunteer drivers	5
14.	Confidentiality	5
15.	Dealing with problems	5
16.	Personal information	6
17.	Volunteer's pack	6
18.	Policy review and amendment	6

1. Introduction

A volunteer is a person who gives freely of his/her time, skills and experience without expectation of financial reward. Volunteering can take many forms. Some tasks require particular skills whereas others require none. Volunteering may be for a limited time to complete a particular project or may be on an ongoing basis.

The Council recognises the immense benefits that volunteers, and the bridges that they build between the Council and the local community. In return the Council hopes to give its volunteers an opportunity to exercise their skills in a different environment and to undertake new experiences.

The Council tries to offer a range of volunteering opportunities and, in accordance with its equal opportunities and diversity policies, to ensure that the opportunity to volunteer is widely available.

2. Status of volunteers

A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with the Council. The Council will agree a role, with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the role's requirements and that the Council will provide work for the volunteer. However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the role and the Council is not bound to provide the work. The Council and the volunteer will endeavour to give as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations, however either party can terminate the agreement with or without notice at any time.

3. Volunteering roles

Roles suitable for volunteers are identified by managers with advice from Human Resources. A volunteer agreement will be drawn up outlining the role. This will set out the requirements of the role and the skills or experience needed, as well as any training that is required before the volunteering work is undertaken. Volunteers will not be used as substitutes for employees.

4. Recruitment

A person wishing to become a volunteer will be asked to complete an application form. References and proof of identity will be required and, depending on the nature of the role, the prospective volunteer may be required to undergo a health and/or criminal records check.

5. Volunteer coordinator

A volunteer coordinator will be appointed to support and manage the volunteer. The coordinator will review the arrangements after three months

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER "B"

and thereafter on a regular basis. If the volunteer has any queries or would like to change his/her role this should be discussed with the coordinator.

6. Volunteering agreement

The volunteer will be invited to enter into a volunteering agreement with the Council. This agreement will identify:

- the volunteer's role;
- the training that the volunteer is expected to undertake;
- the expenses that the Council will pay to the volunteer;
- the insurance cover that will be provided for the volunteer;
- who will supervise the volunteer; and
- the notice that will be given to a volunteer if his/her role is to come to an end.

7. Dress Code

The Council will provide all volunteers with badges. Volunteers are requested to present themselves in a smart but casual manner (no jeans, trainers or logo t-shirts). Any specific dress code requirements for the duties to be undertaken will be set out in the volunteering agreement.

8. Training

The Council will provide any training required for the role, including health and safety training.

9. Health and safety

The Council has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow the Council's health and safety policies and procedures. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers should not act outside their authorised area or work. Volunteers should report all accidents to their volunteer coordinator.

The Council will provide volunteers with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise.

10. Reimburse

Volunteers are unpaid. However, the Council will reimburse volunteers for travel and subsistence expenses.

Volunteers will need to complete a volunteer expenses claim form (see appendix a) and provide all receipts. Form must be submitted within 3 months of the expenditure. Mileage will be paid at 27p per mile.

Any additional expenses or any additional travel costs outside those normally incurred should be agreed in advance with the volunteer coordinator.

11. Policies and procedures

Volunteers are expected to comply with the Council's health and safety, equalities and diversity and volunteering policies while they are on its premises or undertaking any of their volunteering duties. Their induction will include an explanation of these policies and procedures and copies will be given to the volunteer with their volunteer agreement.

12. Insurance

Volunteers will be indemnified (protected) by the council's Public Liability insurance when carrying out the duties outlined in their volunteer agreement, unless an individual acts unethically, abuses a trust, commits a criminal act or seeks personal gain. Volunteers are also covered by the Council's Employer's Liability.

13. Volunteer drivers

Any volunteers who will be transporting equipment or people using a vehicle provided by the Council must have a valid driving licence. They will be covered by the Council's insurance policy.

Where the volunteer will be using his/her own vehicle, they must provide the Council with his / her driving licence, insurance policy and, if appropriate, the MOT certificate on an annual basis. Volunteers must notify their Insurer in advance of the purpose of journeys in case they are not covered by their policy.

The volunteer must report any accidents that occur whilst on Council business. They must also report any motoring offences or police cautions to the Council. The Council will not pay any parking fines accumulated by the volunteer.

14. Confidentiality

Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the Council, its staff, customers and suppliers. Volunteers should not disclose this information or use it for their own or another's benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been made public as a result of the volunteer's breach of confidentiality) or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

15. Dealing with problems

The coordinator will normally try to solve any problems informally, but if this is not possible the formal complaints system will come into operation.

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER “B”

If the volunteer wishes to make a formal complaint they should put the complaint in writing to their coordinator. If it is not possible to reach a solution the volunteer may raise the matter with the coordinator's manager.

If a complaint is made about a volunteer, this will be notified to them in writing and the coordinator will decide whether any action should be taken.

If the volunteer coordinator has any concerns about the volunteer's performance they will discuss this with the volunteer and decide whether any action should be taken.

If the volunteer is dissatisfied with a decision made by the volunteer coordinator they may raise it with the coordinator's manager.

16. Personal Information

East Herts Council holds personal information submitted by the volunteer on the application form and Volunteer Personal Information Sheet in the legitimate interest of the Council. This information is kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Volunteers are requested to keep East Herts Council updated with any change their contact details or those of their emergency.

17. Volunteer's pack

On commencing with the Council volunteers will be given a pack containing:

- general information about the Council;
- a standard volunteering agreement;
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Volunteering Policy

18. Policy review and amendment

This policy shall be reviewed after two years or sooner in line with legislation and best practice.



VOLUNTEERS CLAIM FORM

This form is to be used to record those travel expenses you incur while volunteering for East Herts Council for which you wish to be reimbursed.

We provide reimbursement for:

- Standard Class train fares and bus fares (with receipts or tickets attached to the claim form)
- Mileage (at 27p a mile)

Please attach all receipts/tickets to the back of this form.

Expenses should be claimed on a monthly basis.

Expenses must be claimed within three months.

Personal Details
Name: _____

Travel Details

Date	Purpose	Mileage (if applicable)	Cost Incurred
Total:			

I declare that I have necessarily incurred these expenses as in the course of my volunteering. All supporting receipts are genuine and are stapled to the back of this form.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Authorised Officer)