Volunteer Policy

Policy Created: March 2017

Last Reviewed: August 2026

Next Review: August 2027 (or sooner if significant changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational activities occur)

Reviewed by: Laurence Clark

Responsible Officer: CEO

Approved by: CEO

Main Contact for Queries: info@pathwaysassociates.co.uk

1. Introduction

This policy explains how Pathways Associates supports, manages, and works alongside volunteers. It sets out what volunteers can expect from us and what we ask in return.

Volunteers play an important role in our organisation, and we are committed to ensuring their experience is positive, safe, and meaningful.

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2. Benefits of Volunteering

Volunteering with Pathways Associates offers a range of benefits:

- **Respect and value** – We recognise and appreciate each volunteer's skills, experiences, and individuality.
- **Involvement in our work** – Volunteers contribute to the day-to-day running of the organisation and help shape our projects.
- **Personal development** – Volunteers gain new experiences, skills, and opportunities within a supportive environment.
- **Community representation** – Volunteers help us reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

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3. Policy Statement

Pathways Associates is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all volunteers.

3.1 Equal Opportunities and Fair Treatment

All volunteers will be treated fairly and with respect. Recruitment, selection, support, and supervision will follow our Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality Policies.

3.2 Recruitment and Induction

All potential volunteers will take part in an informal interview to discuss their skills, interests, and expectations.

Every volunteer receives an induction covering:

- Our values and ways of working
- Their role and responsibilities
- Equal Opportunities
- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety
- Expenses
- Office protocols

3.3 Confidentiality

We respect the confidentiality of volunteers, and volunteers must also respect the confidentiality of colleagues, peers, and the organisation.

3.4 Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Pathways Associates' Employers' Liability Insurance.

3.5 Health and Safety

Volunteers must follow our Health and Safety policies and procedures at all times.

3.6 Expenses

Volunteers may claim reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, provided attendance or activity has been agreed in advance.

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4. Volunteer Procedure

Step 1 – Initial Contact

Volunteers can contact Pathways Associates directly. We will respond to enquiries within **7 days**, and where appropriate, arrange an interview within **14 days**.

Step 2 – Volunteer Interview

Interviews will normally be carried out by two people, ideally including a Board Member. The interview includes:

- An introduction to Pathways Associates and our projects
- Creation of a Volunteer Profile (skills, experience, interests)
- Agreement of a three-month work plan
- Discussion of DBS checks or training where required

Step 3 – Starting the Placement

With support from staff and Board Members, volunteers begin their placement and become part of the Pathways Associates team.

All volunteers receive an induction covering:

- Role and expectations
- Rights and responsibilities
- Equal Opportunities
- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety
- Expenses
- Office Protocol

Step 4 – Supervision

Volunteers will have supervision sessions with an assigned mentor every **six weeks**.

Step 5 – Volunteer Reviews

Every **three months**, volunteers will take part in a review session with their mentor. These reviews help:

- Assess progress
- Set short-, medium-, and long-term goals
- Support personal development

- Identify opportunities for improvement within Pathways Associates

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5. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up-to-date, inclusive, and aligned with best practice.