

July 2009

1 Introduction

- 1.1 A volunteer is a person who gives freely of his/her time, skills and experience without expectation of financial or in-kind 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.
- 1.2 The Organisation recognises the immense benefits that volunteers bring, and the bridges that they build between the organisation and the local community. In return LASS aims to give its volunteers opportunities to exercise their skills, access training and to gain new experiences.
- 1.3 LASS offers a range of volunteering opportunities and, in accordance with our equal opportunities and diversity policies, ensures that the opportunity to volunteer is widely promoted.

2 Status of volunteers

- 2.1 A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with LASS. The Organisation 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 organisation will provide opportunities for the volunteer. However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the role and LASS is not bound to provide the opportunity. It is also expected that both LASS and the volunteer will give as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations.

3 Volunteering tasks

- 3.1 Roles suitable for volunteers are identified by the managers. A volunteer task description sets 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

- 4.1 The term "Recruitment" as used within this policy refers to enlisting the willing support of a volunteer. It does not constitute in anyway, employment status.
- 4.2 A person wishing to become a volunteer will be asked to complete an application form and meet with a member of staff. The applicant will be asked to identify areas in which he/she would like to volunteer in addition to providing information about their current skill set. If LASS is able to match the applicant to a suitable role, references will be required and the volunteer will be required to undergo a criminal records check.¹

5 Volunteering agreement

- 5.1 The volunteer will then be invited to enter into a volunteering agreement with LASS. This agreement will identify:
 - The volunteer's role
 - The training that the volunteer is expected to undertake (at no cost to the volunteer)
 - The expenses that LASS will pay to the volunteer
 - The insurance cover that will be provided for the volunteer
 - Who will supervise the volunteer
 - The notice that will be given to a volunteer if his/her role is to come to an end.

¹ Up until 11th October 2009. From the 12th October 2009 the new "Vetting and Barring Scheme" from the Independent Safeguarding Authority is introduced and this will replace the current CRB system.

6 Volunteer File

Each Volunteer will have a file for the purpose of record keeping and volunteers have the right to request a copy of this file under the 1998 Data Protection Act and the 2000 Freedom Of Information Act. This file will contain the following:

- Application form
- CV (if provided)
- Volunteer Agreement
- Confidentiality agreement
- References²
- Copies of CRB application information
- CRB Reference number
- Copies of Driving Licence, Motor Insurance and MOT certificates (if driving on behalf of LASS).
- Record of work undertaken
- Any references we provide for the volunteer

7 Training

7.1 The Organisation will provide any training required for the role. The volunteer is not expected to pay for any training and transport/lunch costs to and from the training event will be covered for under the expenses policy (see section 9 Recompense below).

8 Health and safety

8.1 The Organisation has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow The Organisation'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 must not act outside their authorised area. Volunteers must report all accidents to a member of staff.

8.2 The Organisation will provide volunteers with appropriate guidance on health and safety.

9 Recompense

9.1 Volunteers are unpaid. However, The Organisation will reimburse volunteers for travel, subsistence and expenses incurred in order to perform a duty (i.e. attendance at an event). In all instances for reimbursement, receipts and documentation is required and volunteers are expected to follow the Expenses and Reimbursement Guidelines.

9.2 Volunteers are not entitled to benefits outside that of travel expenses, lunch provision or training costs. This extends (but is not limited) to services which LASS offer at cost, (i.e. chargeable products and services such as meals, therapies or community events).

10 Policies and procedures

10.1 Volunteers are expected to comply with all the organisation's policies while they are on our premises or undertaking any of their volunteering duties. Volunteer induction will include an explanation of these policies and procedures.

11 Insurance

11.1 The Organisation ensures that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. The Organisation also ensures that volunteers are provided with professional and public liability insurance. The insurance does not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

12 Confidentiality

12.1 Volunteers are unauthorised to partake in any work or activity of LASS until they have read, understood and signed to acknowledge their understanding of the LASS confidentiality and health and safety policies and have completed their induction.

² Reference information received is treated differently under the Data Protection Act and as such, it may not be possible to disclose a full reference to a volunteer.

12.2 Access to any confidential information is granted on a need-to-know basis only. "Need-to-Know" is defined as information access that is required in order to perform a particular piece of work.

13 Supervision

13.1 A manager will be appointed to support and manage the volunteer. The manager will review the arrangements after one month 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 manager.

14 Dealing with problems

14.1 The manager will normally try to solve any problems informally, but if this is not possible the formal complaints system will come into operation. In which case, the volunteer should follow the information contained within the complaints procedure which is available online at www.lass.org.uk.

15 Volunteer drivers

15.1 Any volunteers who will be transporting equipment or people using a vehicle must have a valid driving licence, motor insurance appropriate to the journey and a valid MOT (if appropriate). In such cases, copies of this documentation are required and will be held on file.

15.2 The volunteer must report any accidents to LASS. They must also report any motoring offences or police cautions to LASS. LASS will not pay any parking fines accumulated by the volunteer.

16 Volunteer's pack

16.1 On commencement of work, the volunteer will be given a pack containing:

- General information about LASS
- A copy of this volunteering policy
- A standard volunteering agreement
- Details of where they can access The Organisation's policies and procedures