

[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]

Volunteer Recruitment Policy and Procedure

The death of one of us touches all of us

NOTE: This document has been adapted from a Policy and Procedure document designed to be used by a funeral home wishing to initiate a FoB. The original document was checked by a human resources consultant, so what follows is basically sound, but will need attention to detail. In any case, it can be adapted to the particular needs and character of the FoB you wish to start up.

1. Introduction

[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved] recognises the important role that volunteers play in the development and delivery of its services to the bereaved, and values the contribution that they make in a wide variety of roles.

[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved] encourages participation in volunteering from all sections of our local community, and appreciates the benefits individuals and groups with a diverse range of skills, experience and perspectives can bring to the support of the bereaved.

[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved] believes that the death of one of us touches all of us, and that communities are brought together when impelled by duty, altruism and self-interest. It is in our interest to help others because, in time, we shall need them to help us. It is also very satisfying. We believe that many people playing small parts, according to their abilities, makes us more effective.

2. Purpose

This policy delivers a logical and structured approach to the use and engagement of volunteers operating under the title [PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved].

This policy aims to ensure that procedures for the recruitment, management and support of volunteers, their vetting, engagement, training, welfare, retention, and their guidance on managing problems should they arise. It aims to ensure consistency and fairness in the involvement, management and support of volunteers and clarify the expectations of both volunteers and [PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]. The policy is intended to provide guidance only and does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a legally binding document or contract. A Volunteers' Handbook will provide information to volunteers about key points in this Policy.

This policy has been prepared taking account of prevailing legislation. New legislative requirements, or changes in current legislation, may necessitate a review of this policy document in the future

3. Definition of a volunteer

A **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved] Friend of the Bereaved** is a volunteer who carries out unpaid work for **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** on a regular or ad hoc basis, under the guidance and/or supervision of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**. A **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved] Friend of the Bereaved** is someone who gives their time and talents to offer practical support to the bereaved.

4. Consultation

In preparation of this policy, consultation was undertaken with the following groups/individuals:

NOTE: Prior to establishing its Friends of the Bereaved volunteering scheme, the funeral home must liaise with local volunteer groups, social services and relevant local charities to ensure that its activities complement and will not overlap local provision currently offered, and that its volunteers can work collaboratively with other agencies.

5. General

This policy is intended to promote a service whereby volunteers are treated solely on the basis of their merit, abilities and potential, regardless of gender, colour, age, ethnic or national origin, disability, socio-economic background, religious, political beliefs, family circumstances, sexual orientation or any other irrelevant distinction.

6. Volunteers – Overview

6.1 It is the policy of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** to encourage and facilitate members of the local community to provide practical assistance and support to people in the immediate aftermath of a bereavement.

6.2 The use of volunteers maximises community engagement and promotes partnership working between **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**, other agencies and the local community.

6.3 This policy provides guidance to all members of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**

6.4 The nature of volunteering is unique and differs considerably from paid employment. Volunteers are not staff and have no employment status

6.5 Under its Health and Safety Policy, **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** will ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the provision and maintenance of safe and healthy working conditions.

7. Recruitment Process

7.1 The recruitment of volunteers will be managed by **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**

7.2 A role description for each volunteer will be determined by the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**

7.3 The **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** will determine the most appropriate means of attracting suitable volunteers using known networks wherever possible

7.4 All volunteers will complete an application form

8. Who is eligible to volunteer?

8.1 Most volunteer roles don't require any special skills or qualifications, but volunteers do need to be friendly and approachable. Good listening and interpersonal skills and common sense are important, whilst empathy and a caring and non judgemental attitude are essential.

8.2 Persons bereaved within 12 months of application will not normally be offered a role which involves direct client contact. Identification of unresolved grief issues may be further explored at interview. Any applicant who is felt to be at risk may be encouraged to volunteer for a less stressful role.

8.3 All volunteer applicants must be aged 16 years or over; no upper age limit applies.

8.4 **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** welcomes applications to volunteer from people with disabilities, and will consider their applications on the basis of skills and experience, and the requirements of the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**, in accordance with normal recruitment and selection practice. **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** will aim to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate individual needs.

8.5 Applicants who have a criminal record are eligible to apply (see 10.3 below)

9. Volunteer interviews

9.1 The initial contact with a prospective volunteer will usually be through informal interview with a member or members of the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** Committee of Management to explain about volunteering at **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**, the roles and opportunities available, and explore with the individual their background, skills and experience. At the end of the meeting, the Committee of Management will determine whether there is potentially a suitable role which the new volunteer is willing and able to take.

11.2 Volunteers applying for roles will then be required to supply the names of two referees and may need to attend a further interview if required.

11.3 If the applicant is successful, the Committee of Management and the volunteer will then agree a date and time for formal induction.

10. Screening of volunteer applicants

10.1 Because their work may bring them into contact, from time to time, with vulnerable adults and with children, all volunteers will be asked to submit to vetting and security checks to include confirmation of relevant qualifications and appropriate references.

10.2 A DBS disclosure will be required for all volunteers offering counsel and/or services to bereaved people . If a volunteer has a concern about being checked they may still be considered but will be asked to provide a suitable explanation for their reluctance.

10.3 Where a DBS reveals a previous conviction, full details of the conviction and circumstances will be required in order that a risk assessment can be made to support the decision to offer voluntary work or not. Previous conviction does not necessarily exclude a person from volunteering with **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** but the safety and welfare of the client group for whom the Friends cares is paramount. (See Policy on Recruiting Volunteers with a Criminal Record)

10.4 Any applicants unsuccessful at this stage of the process have NO right to appeal against the decision.

10.5 Volunteers will not be subject to a medical assessment but will be advised that it is their personal responsibility to seek guidance from their own medical advisor in regards to their ability to carry out the role.

11. Successful applicants

11.1 Appointment will be confirmed by a letter signed by the Committee of Management

11.2 All volunteers will be assigned a line manager or supervisor who will be responsible for task allocation.

11.3 All volunteers will receive an induction programme of 3 x 1-hour sessions which will include relevant health and safety issues, awareness of the precise nature of their role and its parameters, and strategies enabling them to act in the best interests of bereaved people.

11.4 The line manager or supervisor is responsible for identifying any specific training needs in order for the volunteer to fulfil the role.

11.5 Volunteers are not expected to complete formal appraisals.

12. Roles of Volunteers

12.1 Volunteers at **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**, are engaged in a wide range of roles which answer the everyday practical needs of the bereaved.

12.2 Line managers will carry out an annual review of the role to establish the requirement of the role and the suitability of the individual to remain in the role

12.4 In order that volunteers are clearly identifiable as such, they will be provided with a picture identification card depicting volunteer status.

12.5 The main duties involved in each volunteering role, the line management arrangements, and the basic requirements of the role in terms of skills and experience, are set out in role profiles, which are reviewed regularly. A copy of the relevant role profile will be provided to each volunteer.

13. Security, vetting and confidentiality

13.1 All volunteers are to be subject to vetting and security checks (see 10).

13.2 Volunteers are to adhere and comply with all security/information management policies; any breach of these may result in legal action and the termination of the volunteer's appointment

13.3 All volunteers will be expected to sign the Volunteer Agreement (see 15) and the Confidentiality Policy. Volunteers making such a declaration will do so on the following terms:

13.4 No volunteer may contact or speak to the press or media in relation to their duties as a volunteer except as authorised by the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved] Committee of Management** or publish any information in relation to their duties via social media or any other broadcast medium; and

13.5 Any records in any medium concerning clients of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** remain the property of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** and a volunteer shall use this information only if authorised to do so by the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved] Committee of Management**

14. Induction of volunteers

14.1 The line manager is responsible for the induction of a new volunteer into their specific role, which will include explaining health and safety issues and outlining relevant systems and procedures. The line manager will also ensure that the volunteer has access to and is aware of relevant funeral home policies.

14.2 All new volunteers are initially placed on a trial period of three months, during which time the suitability of the placement will can be ascertained, by both the line manager and the new volunteer. Any concerns regarding a new volunteer's suitability should be raised by the line manager with the individual at the earliest opportunity. In addition, the new volunteer should

discuss any concerns or queries they have regarding their role with their line manager as soon as possible.

15. Volunteer agreement

All volunteers are required to agree and sign a Volunteer Agreement at the commencement of their volunteering. The Agreement sets out the ongoing support the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** will provide to volunteers. A copy of the signed agreement will be held on the individual's personal file.

16. Training

The **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** will provide occasional voluntary training opportunities and mandatory training sessions.

17. Review Process

In addition to normal day-to-day contact, the line manager will arrange to meet with the volunteer, on an annual basis, for a review meeting. The purpose of the annual review is to:

- Provide an opportunity to recognise contribution and feedback on progress
- Discuss future development
- Address any issues or difficulties
- Explore any other areas of volunteering which may be of interest
- Discuss any concerns regarding the nature and/or demands of the role and the individual's health and fitness

18. Insurance

18.1 Public liability insurance covers all bona fide volunteers acting on behalf of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** for liability arising from negligent acts which cause personal injury to a third party or damage to a third party property

18.2 Employer's liability insurance covers all bona fide volunteers acting on behalf of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** for personal injury sustained as a result of negligence on the part of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** whilst acting in the course of their duties

18.3 Volunteer drivers using their own cars on behalf of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** must produce original documentation verifying adequate business use insurance cover (minimum Third Party Fire and Theft), a full valid driving licence and a current MOT certificate (if applicable) for their vehicle. If required, **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** will provide a form for submission to the driver's insurance company in order to verify that the company is aware of the volunteer's involvement with the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** and that the volunteer is covered by their policy for this work.

19. Expenses

19.1 Volunteers **are/are not (delete as applicable)** entitled to claim travel expenses to and from the client to whom they have been referred. Volunteers who, by the nature of their role, travel on behalf of **[[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** to a client's home may, by prior arrangement, claim mileage in line with **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** policy

19.2 Out of pocket expenses may be paid at the discretion of the owner or manager (if deputed to do so by the owner) of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**

20. Resignation of a Volunteer

20.1 A volunteer may terminate their appointment at any time without notice. The line manager must ensure that the identification badge, property, documents, records, and any safety clothing or equipment are returned by the volunteer within 7 days of notification of resignation or termination of their appointment.. The line manager must notify the Committee of Management of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**.

20.2 **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** reserves the right to terminate the volunteer's appointment at any time. In certain circumstances the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** may need to review the individual's position if the role they undertake has changed or no longer exists, or if their line manager has concerns regarding the volunteer's ability to continue to carry out the role, in the interests of their health, safety and wellbeing.

21. Standards and Values

21.1 Volunteers will never seek to impose their own values on a client or offer advice on any matter which could involve the client in financial loss, injury to health or emotional distress.

21.2 In any case of inappropriate behaviour **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** reserves the right to dispense with the service of a volunteer at any time.

22. Problem Solving Procedure for Volunteers

[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved] considers it good practice to deal openly, fairly and quickly with any complaint raised by its volunteers or against its volunteers.

This is in order to

- Protect volunteers
- Minimise disruption to staff, service users and other volunteers
- Demonstrate **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** respect for its volunteers

- Protect the reputation of the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**

Procedure

22.1 If a volunteer makes a complaint

In the first instance volunteers are encouraged to discuss any grievance with their line manager. Most concerns can be settled amicably in an informal way.

If this is not the case the following procedure should be followed:

Stage 1: Verbal Complaint

The complaint should be discussed formally with the line manager or the Committee of Management of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**.

During the meeting the volunteer may be accompanied by a nominated person of their choice. In the event of a non-resolution of the complaint then the volunteer should proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: In writing

The volunteer should make a formal complaint in writing to the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]**. This formal complaint must be received within 14 days of Stage 1. The **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** will respond to the complainant within 14 days of receipt of any written complaint. Their decision will be final.

22.2 If someone complains about a volunteer

On commencement of their volunteer role volunteers will have a formal induction and will sign the confidentiality policy, a volunteer agreement and be given specific written guidelines for the role they are undertaking. Any other mandatory training will be given as required. Informal training needs will be met as required.

It is expected that this support/guidance will clarify the expectations that the **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** has of volunteers with regard to their conduct, performance and role.

However in the event that a complaint is made against a volunteer the following procedure should be followed:

Stage 1: Verbal Discussion

The complaint should be discussed with the volunteer by the line manager to establish whether the volunteer has a clear understanding of the expectations of their role.

Where appropriate extra support, supervision and training should be offered to the volunteer to assist them to fulfil their role appropriately. The situation should be reviewed again in 4 weeks. The complainant should be informed of the outcome of this stage.

Stage 2: In writing

If the issue is not resolved by verbal discussion then the Committee of Management of **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** should write formally to the volunteer outlining the reason for the complaint.

A formal meeting should be convened with the volunteer, a member of the Committee of management and line manager giving the volunteer the option of being accompanied by a person of their choice.

If appropriate, further help should be offered to the volunteer and objectives set to be reviewed within an agreed timeframe. Notes about this meeting, agreed improvements and review date will be kept on the volunteer's file. If the objectives are met no further action will be required.

However if **[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]** decides to ask the volunteer to leave because of the nature of the complaint the volunteer shall be offered no right to appeal.

23. Record Keeping

All relevant documents and information relating to a volunteer's appointment and time with the **[[PLACENAME Friends of the Bereaved]]** are held on personal files and a database, securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

ENDS