

Volunteer Policy

Version Control

Version	Date	Staff Member	Updates/Amendments
1.0	April 2024	RCW & FJ	Annual Review overdue. Updates throughout the document to reflect current practice in recruitment, support provided to volunteers and process for address any complaints. Inclusion of contents table.

Contents

Purpose	2
Introduction	2
Recruitment.....	2
Induction and Training.....	3
Lived Experience	4
Supervision and Support.....	4
Boundaries.....	5
Complaints.....	5
Behaviours and Conducts.....	6
Ending Volunteering.....	7
Expenses.....	7
References.....	8
Confidentiality.....	8
Insurance.....	8

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all One25 volunteers are safely recruited, inducted and supported during their time with One25. This policy sets out the processes which support a positive volunteer experience and standards that One25 expect from its volunteers.

Introduction

One25 value the contribution and commitment of volunteers in the delivery of our services to support women who street sex work in Bristol. We believe that volunteers bring a wealth of expertise which makes a positive difference to the organisation, the local community and women who use One25 services. We are committed to encouraging this participation and celebrate the role that volunteers play in One25.

The following volunteer roles are available at One25:

- Van Outreach Volunteer; (description)
- Van Outreach Team Leader: (description)
- Health Hub Volunteer (description)
- Health Hub Cook
- Store Room Assistant (description)
- Volunteer Administrator

The above roles support the delivery of our Outreach and Health Hub service, as well as the back-office functions at One25.

Volunteers work alongside One25's staff team and are actively encouraged to participate in organisation away days, in an annual volunteer consultation, bi-annual refresher sessions, and input into the development of services and the organisation. Expectations around involvement are set out in each role description and shared throughout recruitment and inductions into One25.

Recruitment

In line with One25's Equality and Diversity Policy, we are committed to recruiting volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds. We are committed to ensuring that volunteering opportunities are open to all and that our recruitment process is fair and transparent. We encourage applications from individuals with lived experience as we recognise the value that this can bring to the organisation and to volunteers.

The Volunteer Manager will complete an annual audit of the equality's information held on all active volunteers to assess how representative the volunteer team is.

Every volunteering opportunity will be accompanied by a clear volunteer role description, and any potential volunteers' suitability for the role will be decided against this role description.

We will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers locally or within One25 while maintaining our commitments set out in our Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy ([link here](#)).

All volunteers will be asked to complete an application form, with help given if required. Once an application is received, the individual will be invited to have an informal interview with the Volunteer Manager, and if this is successful, two references will be taken up.

Volunteers will be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and enhanced DBS checks if required for the role. Volunteers are responsible for providing the required documentation needed for these checks. Where references or DBS checks are not provided, they will be unable to volunteer with One25.

Induction and Training

Once all required checks have been completed, all volunteers will receive the following:

- A signed copy of their volunteer agreement
- A copy of One25's Safeguarding Policy and Managing Boundaries Policy
- A copy of the Volunteer Handbook/Toolkit
- A volunteer induction day at One25
 - o An overview of One25 and our services
 - o An overview of the role of the volunteer
 - o Safeguarding and Incident Management
 - o Boundaries and Confidentiality
 - o Understanding addiction
 - o A tour of the Health Hub and Van
 - o Copies of all relevant policies
 - o Essential procedures i.e. timekeeping, record keeping, claiming expenses etc.
 - o Details of mandatory and optional training opportunities
 - o Trauma Informed practice
 - o Other information as appropriate
- A mandatory probation period/set number of shadowing shifts
- Complete Safeguarding, Managing Boundaries, and One25's Supporting Women who Street Sex Work Training.

All volunteer roles will require the completion of an induction period, which includes the successful completion of core training, completing a set number of shifts and having an end of probation meeting with the Volunteer Manager to sign off their induction.

One25 may decide not to recruit volunteers, or to ask an existing volunteer to cease volunteering if they work (paid or unpaid) with One25 women in a professional environment where this is likely to create a conflict of interest, for example, social work, policing. One25 requests that any new and existing volunteers inform One25 if this situation arises so an assessment of any conflict of interest can be made.

One25 is committed to providing volunteers with training which will enhance and widen their skills, and which will benefit both the individuals and One25. Training will be tailored according to the volunteer role.

Members of staff should be aware of the need to continually assess the training needs of a volunteer and should support volunteers to update their skills. It should be noted that any additional training of volunteers will depend on the need and available resources.

Offers to attend training with the frontline team will be offered to maximise the training resource, upskills volunteers and increase the time that volunteers can spend with the frontline team.

Lived Experience

One25 encourage applications from people with lived experience. This includes street sex work, homelessness, addiction, mental health issues, domestic abuse, or sexual violence. We encourage volunteers to disclose this at point of application to ensure that we can put appropriate support in place if required.

For volunteers with lived experience, we will take a person centred approach in reviewing the length of time that someone has been safe and stable alongside what support networks they currently have in place. For guidance, we would look for an individual being stable and safe for 2 years before volunteering with One25. Additional consideration will be given to someone's safety if they street sex worked in Bristol prior to volunteering.

We have a supportive pathway in place to develop someone's volunteering role with One25. If it is assessed that volunteering in a frontline capacity may not be suitable, we will explore opportunities to first volunteer in a back-office role, or a frontline role that is not client facing. This is a supportive measure due to the challenges that we know can come from working directly in the health hub or on the van.

Volunteers with lived experience will receive additional training or supervision as appropriate to support them in their roles (e.g. safe disclosure, secondary trauma).

Supervision and Support

We value the support of volunteers in delivering One25's services. We understand that volunteers will have a broad range of experience in this sector, some may have worked in this sector previously, while others will have no experience at all. We therefore appreciate that volunteers may experience varying degrees of vicarious trauma, anxiety, or burnout either as a result of their volunteering role, or as they balance their volunteering with other commitments and life events.

All front-line volunteers will receive a probation review meeting after 10 shifts, or 6 months after they started, with the Volunteer Manager. Volunteers in the Health Hub and Outreach service will participate in a pre and post shift briefing and debriefings. In the event of high-risk incidents, follow up support will be provided from either the Volunteer Manager, Services Manager or Operations Manager. As part of the volunteer agreement, van volunteers are required to attend a biannual/annual volunteer refreshers.

Team Leaders on outreach can also call the "On Call" staff member for support, advice, to ask questions or raise concerns they have relating to incidents or issues while they are on outreach ([On Call Policy](#))

All volunteers are encouraged to make contact with One25 Volunteer Manager, Services Managers or Operations Manager for additional support as required (e.g. after a challenging shift or an incident). Where possible, One25 will also provide any updates that we can after a challenging incident relating to the women if this is in line with our confidentiality measures.

Feedback can be given to the Volunteer Manager at any time, and it is actively encouraged to provide feedback through staff, suggestion boxes or through email. Feedback is also sought through our bi-annual volunteer survey and in response to our quarterly newsletter.

Boundaries

Volunteers are required to maintain clear professional boundaries with women using One25 services. Any pre-existing relationships should be declared to the Volunteer Manager during the recruitment process. Volunteers are expected to model positive and professional behaviour, and whilst we offer love and support, the women who use One25 services are not our friends and should not be treated as such. This is to ensure that the women all experience a healthy relationship with One25 which is consistent and does not create a dependency on any one volunteer.

These boundaries include:

- Divulging personal information that compromises your relationship with a woman and which might make them feel uncomfortable in any way. This may include information about your living circumstances, personal relationships, children (as they may have had children removed) or where you live, or previous lived experience that someone may have of street sex work (e.g., it would be inappropriate to agree with robbing punters or shoplifting)
- Giving or accepting personal gifts to/from women. This also includes home goods, money, cigarettes, and alcohol.
- Having any contact with women outside of One25, including social media.
- Socialising with women who use One25 services.

Failure to observe these guidelines or any other guidance around boundaries could result in a volunteer being asked to leave their role. Further detail on this can be found in [One25 Team Boundaries Policy](#)

Complaints Procedures

The relationship between the organisation and its volunteers is entirely voluntary, and although we have a volunteer agreement, this is not a contract. It is important that the organisation can maintain its agreed standards of service, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to the organisation.

If a volunteer is dissatisfied with any aspect of their duties, they should:

1. Initially explain the dissatisfaction to the Volunteer Manager.
2. If that does not resolve the concern, then a meeting with the Volunteer Manager or Operations Manager will be held.
3. If, after this, the volunteer's dissatisfaction remains unresolved, it would be inappropriate for the volunteer to continue in their role. They will be informed of this in writing within two weeks of their meeting with the Volunteer Manager.

4. If the volunteer feels unable to have the initial discussion with their team leader or they are a team leader, they can contact the Volunteer Manager or Operations Manager directly.

Behaviours and Conduct

As a learning organisation, we endeavour to deliver feedback in a timely way, giving volunteers the opportunity to grow and develop. If an individual's role as a volunteer does not meet with the organisations' standards or values, the situation will be managed in the following way:

1. Feedback will initially be given by the relevant manager or team leader. Relevant support and additional training will be provided to support any feedback.
2. If after receiving feedback the volunteer continues not to meet with the agreed standards, they will be invited to a meeting with the Volunteer Manager or Operations Manager who will explain the concerns. Any additional support required will be explored and put in place to support development and reach the standards required for the role.
3. If the Volunteer Manager feels this is appropriate, an agreed time period may be set to review how the person's volunteering develops after receiving this feedback.
4. If the person's volunteering still does not meet the agreed standards by the end of the review period, then the volunteer would be advised that we will be unable to continue supporting their volunteer role at One25. This would be confirmed in writing, with a full explanation of the reasons behind the decision.

There are certain actions which may be deemed serious enough to justify asking a volunteer to cease volunteering with immediate effect, or until the concern has been fully investigated and resolved. These are actions that are deemed to threaten One25s ability to maintain our agreed standards of service or may cause a threat to the safety of the volunteer concerned, other volunteers, employees, or women.

The following are examples of such actions (the list is not complete or exhaustive):

- Refusal to accept or act on reasonable instructions from a member of staff, a volunteer team leader or on call.
- Serious negligence that could or does result in unacceptable loss, damage, or injury.
- Assault or threats, bullying behaviour, or any acts of violence.
- Theft, fraud, or any dishonesty involving One25, its volunteers, employees, service users or authorised visitors or attempts to commit such offences.
- Deliberate or reckless damage to the property of One25, its volunteers, its employees, service users or authorised visitors
- Being unfit to volunteer through use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other prohibited substances.

Depending on the nature of the issue, the volunteer will be invited to a meeting with the Volunteer Manager or Operations Manager who will explain the organisations concerns. If at this meeting the volunteer cannot refute or explain their actions to the Volunteer Manager or Operations Manager 's satisfaction, and no agreement can be reached as to how the volunteer can reach the standards required by One25, the volunteer will immediately be asked to stop volunteering for One25. We would confirm this decision in writing, with a full explanation of the reasons behind the decision.

If a volunteer has a complaint about another volunteer or any staff member, they should refer to One25's Complaints Policy.

Ending the Volunteer Agreement

There are various ways in which a volunteer agreement may come to an end. These include, but are not limited to:

- Volunteer not meeting necessary standards.
- The result of a serious incident or safeguarding concern as detailed above.
- Wising to move on from the volunteer role.
- There being no response to contact for 3 months or more.
- Not returning to an active volunteer role after an agreed period of stepping back.

Where possible, volunteers should provide adequate notice for finishing their volunteering at One25 if they have agreed duties on the current rota.

Volunteers who leave for any reason will be invited to an exit interview or asked to complete an exit questionnaire. This procedure is designed to help improve the support given to volunteers and to record their achievements and provide statistical information.

Expenses

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no financial barriers to volunteering. Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed as detailed below:

Expense	Details	Advanced Approval
Mileage	Return journey from home address to volunteer placement	No
Bus/train tickets	Copy of ticket required	No
Taxi's	Receipt required	Yes
Parking	Where permits cannot be used For duration of the volunteer shift	No
Childcare	As per below.	Yes
Other	Refreshments	Yes

Expenses will be covered through the volunteer induction, and volunteers should highlight to the volunteer manager which expenses they will be looking to reclaim during their shifts.

Volunteers with mobility needs may need to use a private vehicle or taxi.

One25 strives to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement but is only able to reimburse childcare and caring expenses in exceptional circumstances. Any such circumstances will need to be agreed on a case-by-case basis with the Volunteer Manager. Where caring expenses are agreed, the volunteer will be responsible for choosing and paying the carer. It is up to the volunteer who they choose to use for caring, but it is the carers responsibility to ensure

that they are declaring their earnings or paying tax and National Insurance. One25 will reimburse caring expenses on production of a receipt. One25 will not pay carers directly.

All reimbursement of volunteer expenses must be agreed in advance with the Volunteer Manager. To claim expenses, a Volunteer Expenses form must be completed and given to the Volunteer Manager. Except in the case of mileage claims, volunteers must keep receipts of all expenses and attach these to the expenses claim form. Expenses will be reimbursed as quickly as possible to minimise inconvenience to volunteers.

Volunteers who are receiving benefits should seek advice as to their rights and obligations to engage in voluntary work and any impact that this may have on their benefits. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform the DWP about their commitment to volunteering, although One25 would be happy to provide written confirmation of the role and your involvement if needed.

Volunteers should ensure that they are clear as to what they can and cannot claim for, as expenses will not be reimbursed if they fall outside of this policy or have not been agreed with the Volunteer Manager in advance.

References

One25 will provide a reference after the volunteer has passed their probation period

Confidentiality

Volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff and will be provided with a copy of the confidentiality policy.

Personal details of staff, volunteers and service users are treated in the strictest confidence. Information of a confidential nature should not be disclosed to anyone outside One25, without prior permission, and explicit consent of the individual concerned, except in the circumstances set out in the policy.

For more information on anything mentioned in the Volunteer Policy, volunteers can refer to the Volunteer Manager.

Insurance

The organisation has a valid insurance policy which volunteers are welcome to see on request.

All volunteers are covered by One25's insurance policy whilst they are on One25 premises or engaged in agreed work as a volunteer for one of the projects or off-site.

Volunteers will not be asked to use their own private vehicle to deliver car outreach in the event of the van being unable to go out for the shift. This will only be delivered by One25 staff members. Volunteers may still join the shift, but they are not expected to use their car.

One25 has full employee and public liability insurance. One25 is not able to provide insurance relating to private motor vehicles as this must be in the vehicles owner's name.