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**Volunteering and Internship Policy**

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| Policy Status: | Draft |
| Approved by: | Board |
| Date: |  |

Table of Contents

[Volunteering and Internship Policy 1](#_Toc29387437)

[1. Introduction 3](#_Toc29387438)

[2. Commitment 3](#_Toc29387439)

[3. Definition 3](#_Toc29387440)

[4. Statement of Values and Principles 3](#_Toc29387441)

[5. Volunteer Management 4](#_Toc29387442)

[6. Recruitment and Selection 4](#_Toc29387443)

[7. Training and Development 4](#_Toc29387444)

[8. Support, Supervision and Recognition 4](#_Toc29387445)

[9. Expenses 5](#_Toc29387446)

[10. Insurance 5](#_Toc29387447)

[11. Confidentiality and GDPR 5](#_Toc29387448)

[12. Settling Differences 5](#_Toc29387449)

[13. Rights and Responsibilities 6](#_Toc29387450)

[14. Document Details 7](#_Toc29387451)

**15. Revision History………………..………………………...…………………………8**

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| Introduction  |
| **1.1** | This Quality Assurance and Control Policy is our approach to making Thrive Women’s Aid even better, now and into the future, by building on the firm foundations of quality services, dedicated staff and strong values.  |
| **1.2** | This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement at Thrive Women’s Aid (TWA). It is of relevance to all within the organisation, including volunteers, staff, members and those elected or appointed to positions of responsibility.  |
| **1.3** | The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of TWA and its volunteers. |
| Commitment |
| 2.1 | TWA recognise the right that people have to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering. We also acknowledge that volunteers contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique and that volunteering can benefit users of services, staff, local communities and the volunteers themselves. |
| 2.2 | TWA values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions and in ways which are encouraging, supportive and which develop volunteering. TWA recognises its responsibility to arrange its volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer’s time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned. |
| Definition |
| 3.1 | Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship as well as an important component of democracy. Volunteers are people who, unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community. |
| Statement of Values and Principles  |
| **4.1** | Volunteering is a legitimate and crucial activity that is supported and encouraged by TWA and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteers complements, but does not replace, the role of paid staff. |
| **4.2** | Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. |
| **4.3** | Volunteers will not be used during times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff. |
| **4.4** | The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity. Likewise, TWA cannot be compelled to provide either regular work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer. |
|  | Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and responsibility. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what TWA expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation |
| Volunteer Management |
| 5.1 | All volunteers will have a nominated member of staff or volunteer to offer guidance and advice to help the volunteer carry out tasks effectively. Volunteers will be informed of who to contact to receive support and supervision. |
| Recruitment and Selection  |
| 6.1 | TWA is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs or offending background that does not create a risk to vulnerable groups including children. The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual’s suitability to carry out agreed tasks. Information about the volunteer not relevant to the performance of the volunteering tasks concerned will be disregarded by the organisation in terms of recruitment and selection. |
| 6.2 | Volunteering opportunities will be widely promoted in ways that makes them accessible to all members of the community. |
| 6.3 | Volunteers who are considered unsuitable for a role due to current or recent involvement in specialist support services will either be offered alternative voluntary involvement with TWA or referred to the nearest volunteer centre.  |
| 6.4 | All volunteers will be asked to produce two references and be invited to attend an informal interview. New volunteers may be required to undergo a DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service). |
| 6.5 | Volunteers will have a clear and concise task description, which will be subsequently reviewed every six months.  |
| 6.6 | New volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence. |
| Training and Development |
| 7.1 | All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to all of TWA’s relevant policies, including those related to volunteering, Health & Safety, safeguarding and equal opportunities. |
| 7.2 | The development of training and support for volunteers is a high priority for the organisation in order to equip them with the necessary information and skills to carry out their tasks. It will be the responsibility of the designated volunteer manager to see that this training is provided. It is the responsibility if the volunteer to attend relevant training. |
| 8. Support, Supervision and Recognition  |
| 8.1 | Volunteers will have a named person to whom they can take their volunteering concerns and seek guidance and support. |
| 8.2 | Volunteers will have access to regular support and supervision. This will enable both the volunteers and the supervisor to identify, monitor and evaluate the volunteer’s involvement, recognise achievements and identify individuals training needs, including that relevant to their particular volunteering role and to their wider personal development. The frequency, duration and format of supervision will be negotiated between the volunteer and the designated manager referred to above. |
| 8.3 | Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation’s wider staff, at meetings etc. |
| 8.4 | TWA will formally recognise the contribution of volunteers at their AGM, through newsletters and articles in local publications.  |
| Expenses |
| 9.1 | TWA recognises that the reimbursement of expenses incurred in travelling to and from the place of volunteering or in the course of volunteering is important from an equal opportunities point of view. This is necessary to ensure that all individuals have access to voluntary opportunities. |
| 9.2 | The organisation’s volunteers are able to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure. What can be reclaimed and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses. |
| 9.3 | The organisation has a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses which are the same for volunteers and paid staff and are approved by the Inland Revenue. |
| 9.4 | It is the responsibility of the designated volunteer manager to make volunteers aware of the reimbursement of expenses. |
| Insurance |
| 10.1 | The organisation’s liability insurance policies include the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. |
| 10.2 | The organisation does not insure the volunteer’s personal possessions against loss or damage. |
| Confidentiality and GDPR |
| 11.1 | The organisation will advise the volunteer on its GDPR responsibilities, confidentiality policy and procedures where relevant.  |
| Settling Differences |
| 12.1 | The organisation aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. We seek to ensure that all volunteers’ views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and aim for a positive and amicable solution based on the organisational guidelines for settling differences. |
| 12.2 | The designated volunteer manager is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer complaints or conduct and these should be referred to her. In the event of a problem, all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible. Support will be provided by TWA to the volunteer while they endeavour to resolve the problem in an informal manner. If an informal resolution proves impossible, TWA’s wider disciplinary, grievance or complaints policies and procedures will be referred to. |
| Rights and Responsibilities |
| 13.1 | TWA recognises the rights of volunteers to:* Know what is (and what is not) expected of them
* Have adequate support in their volunteering
* Receive appreciation
* Have safe working conditions
* Be insured
* Know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
* Receive relevant out of pockets expenses
* Receive appropriate training
* Be free from discrimination
* Be offered the opportunity for personal development
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| 13.2 | The organisation expects volunteers to:* Be reliable
* Be honest
* Respect confidentiality
* Make the most of training and support opportunities
* Carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation
* Work within agreed guidelines
* Respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute
* Comply with organisational policies and procedures
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| 14. Document Details |
| **14.1** | **Document History** |
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| Version Number | Approved v.1.0 |
| Date approved | Jan 2020  |
| Approved by | Board |
| Next review due | Jan 2023 |
| Who this policy applies to | All employees, volunteers and interns.  |
| Who is responsible for the policy | The Director |
| Links with other policies | * Complaints
* Grievance
* Whistleblowing
* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
* Data Protection
* Support and Supervision
* Monitoring and Evaluation
* Finance and Expenses
* Communications
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| Links with other documents  | * Volunteer role descriptions
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| **14.2** | **Document control** |
|  | All enquiries with regard to this document should be addressed to the Director. Expired issues of this document will be retained by the Director.  |
| **14.3** | **Document review**This policy and procedure will be reviewed every three years, unless:* There are significant changes to legislation or regulation
* There are found to be deficiencies or failures in this policy and procedure which result in complaints from managers or staff members
* The policy and procedure is deemed to be no longer effective or in line with business requirements

At which point, the Director will initiate an immediate review. |

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| **15.** | **Revision History**

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| Version 1.0 | January 2020 | Director  | Approved version |

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