

On Call Africa (OCA) Volunteering Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles on which the relationship between volunteers and OCA is based, and to provide the basic information about volunteering with us.

This policy applies to all our volunteers and does not form part of any contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

We involve volunteers in the majority of our work from trustee to medical staff, community health workers, community engagement and fundraising, we would be limited in the way that we could carry out our activity if it were not for the help of those that volunteer to supplement our staff.

Involving volunteers

We distinguish volunteers by following two basic characteristics.

- Volunteers are unpaid and do not receive any material reward for their involvement; and
- There is no contract of employment between the charity and our volunteers, they do not have any rights as employees, workers or otherwise under any employment legislation.

There are however obligations which apply to our volunteers as well as our paid employees, goodwill and volunteering are no defense to claims and legal liability. As a charity, we take our responsibilities towards our volunteers seriously, and expect that as representatives of the charity, volunteers will also act appropriately. In both the volunteers' and our interests, the main obligations applicable to our relationship with volunteers are set out below.

Expectations of volunteers

- To carry out volunteer roles, as described in our role descriptions, to the best of abilities and within the scope individuals have volunteered to do.

- To adhere to all reasonable directions given by the charity, ensuring rules, policies and procedures are followed to high standards in all aspects of volunteering.
- To meet time and duty commitments, except in exceptional circumstances, or to provide adequate notice so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- To develop and promote an open and professional relationship with supporter(s) when representing the charity.
- To work collaboratively with other volunteers, our employees, and the public.
- To be guided by common sense and be prepared to act accordingly.
- In any case where further action following activity is required, that is not in accordance with volunteering role, this is to be reported as soon as possible to our volunteer coordinator.
- Whilst in a position of trust as a volunteer, you must not do anything which does, or could be seen to undermine or abuse that trust. This includes the organisation and maintenance of appropriate and professional boundaries whilst carrying out volunteer responsibilities
- To maintain confidentiality throughout volunteering activity
- To notify of any change in circumstances that may affect your volunteering

Expectations of the charity

- We will respect the skills, dignity and individual needs of our volunteers adjusting roles to individual requirements and do our best to match skills and experience with the right role wherever possible.
- We will provide adequate information, training, and assistance so that volunteers can meet the responsibilities of their volunteer role.
- We will, where necessary, provide appropriate support and training, including placing volunteers with trained members of staff who can further guide and advise involvement.
- We will be receptive to any comment(s) from volunteers regarding ways in which we might mutually better accomplish activity's and will listen to motivation and aspiration needs.
- We will do what we can to ensure that volunteers enjoy their involvement.

Supporter expectations

- Except when expressly authorized in writing, no volunteer has any authority or right to assume any obligation of any kind express or implied on our behalf to bind or commit us in any way.

Individual fundraising

Volunteers are encouraged to hold and assist with fund raising activity, plans to organise or arrange any fund-raising activity for us should be discussed in advance. If the activity is approved, we will support it with such fundraising material and help as practicable.

We will not support any fund-raising activity of which we do not approve, and as the organiser of any such event you must not use our name or logo or in any way imply or permit it to be believed that the fund raising is approved by us.

Public Relations

Volunteers may sometimes have contact with supporters in a personal capacity as friends, family, or colleagues. In this situation, please take care to avoid any apparent conflict of interest.

Use of social media is welcomed and should be used properly, keeping comments positive avoiding arguments, criticisms, or aggression.

As a volunteer, you may not at any time:

- Make any statement about the charity or our activities to the press or other form of public media, except with our written consent; or
- Represent yourself as working for or employed by or in any way for the charity.

How we talk

Whether speaking on behalf of, drafting an email or writing a letter, this should be carried out with professionalism and recognising cultural sensitivities.

The way we talk is a key part of our personality and our 'voice' is an important tool for helping people understand who we are and what we do – consistent, clear, and easy to understand.

What we wear

Volunteers should dress appropriately for the cultures they are engaging with, for example the covering of legs generally whilst volunteering in the rural communities of Zambia.

T-shirts and/or Branded polo shirts will be provided for wear whilst carrying out duties as a volunteer.

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Motor Vehicles

The driving of charity owned vehicles in Zambia is not permitted.

Should volunteers drive any motor vehicle in connection with volunteering activities in the UK, they shall, whenever requested, permit us to take copies of a driving license and current certificate of insurance.

If volunteers use their own car whilst supporting volunteering activity in the UK, we will reimburse every mile at a rate of 25p per mile, up to a maximum of £25 per day.

Expenses

Expenses incurred in Zambia will only be paid in exceptional circumstances with prior agreement.

Expenses incurred in the UK, up to an agreed maximum level per day to include mileage, parking and refreshments that are reasonable out-of-pockets expenses will be reimbursed.

Taxi, bus, and train fares in the UK will only be paid in exceptional circumstances with prior agreement.

Tickets and receipts must be provided to reclaim any agreed out of pocket expenses.

Expenses are paid monthly and can be claimed using an expense claim form that should be submitted by the end of the month in which they are incurred.

It remains the decision of the volunteer as to whether they wish to claim expenses or not.

Gifts

Volunteers should not give or accept personal gifts to or from staff or supporters. This does not include donations for the use of charity auctions and/or raffles.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Volunteers are not permitted to smoke, drink alcohol, or use recreational drugs during their voluntary activity or whilst visibly wearing any uniform and/or identity badge that identifies us

Insurance

We maintain insurance against risks which we consider necessary, including loss and damage to, or destructions of our property and the injury or death of members of the public affected by our activities and of our employees and volunteers undertaking authorised work for us.

Volunteer doctors are required to inform their medical insurer of activity in Zambia to ensure they have the necessary medical indemnity insurance whilst practicing as a doctor.

International volunteers are required to take out an emergency evacuation and treatment insurance policy whilst in Zambia, OCA will provide further information regarding this.

Insurance does not extend to unauthorised activity. It is therefore important volunteers comply with their role descriptions and do not do anything which might result in the insurance being voided.

Health and Safety

Activities carried out on a voluntary basis are covered by the same health and safety legislative requirements as those carried out by employees. It is important that volunteers understand and accept personal responsibility towards promoting and maintaining health and safety standards to provide a safe environment for all, including:

- Volunteering in a safe and efficient manner without endangering either their own health and safety, or that of colleagues or the public.
- Not doing anything which does or might injure any other person or expose any other person to risk
- Making full and proper use of all safety and protective equipment and clothing
- Adhering to all procedures specified by the charity or any instructions issued at any given time
- Inform a member of staff of any personal health and safety requirements that you have; and
- Reporting any actual or potentially unsafe conditions, systems, buildings, vehicles, or other equipment to a member of staff.

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- For more information, please read the charities specific policies on: Health and Safety Policy

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Volunteers will have access to the names and contact details of volunteers, colleagues, and supporters, they must ensure they are kept securely not left, for example, in a car overnight. They must not pass on the name or contact details of any person without their permission.

All information relating to the charity, patients, supporters, and prospective supporters should be treated as confidential. Volunteers should not use or disclose information except as authorised or required by the charity, this also includes the prevention of use or disclosure of it by any other person.

Information should be regarded as confidential indefinitely but shall cease to apply to information which in its entirety has become public knowledge.

It is important to keep any personal information about others private, even though it may not be considered an issue to be sensitive about, it may be very private to someone else. This means taking care not to gossip about the private life or family history of others.

If a volunteer needs to discuss someone or something because they are concerned or need advice, they should approach a member of staff and take care that your conversation cannot be overheard.

Any records in any medium (whether written, computer readable or otherwise) including accounts, documents, drawings and private notes about the charity and our activities and all copies and extracts of them made or acquired whilst volunteering for us shall be:

- Our property
- Used for charity purposes only
- Returned to us at any time on demand
- For more information on data protection including the storage of personal information about volunteers, please read the charities Privacy Policy.

When and how to break confidentiality

Under common law, it is permitted to disclose personal information if it will either; prevent a serious crime, support the investigation of a serious crime, or prevent serious harm to others.

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If, whilst volunteering, something causes a volunteer distress or concern; or if anyone tells a volunteer something that they are concerned could mean someone is either suffering or mentioning about abuse, or if they have concerns about the health of another volunteer, staff member or supporter, they should contact a member of staff to discuss any concerns in confidence, either by telephone or in person if they wish.

Ideally the person(s) concerned should consent to this disclosure; If consent to disclose is not granted, the person(s) concerned should be informed of the intention to disclose. In extreme circumstances this may not be possible: For example, if there is fear of a violent reaction.

If a volunteer requires support to gain consent, they should contact a member of staff.

For more information, please read the charities specific policy on safeguarding and Whistleblowing.

Policies and charity decisions

Volunteers should always, support, respect and adhere to our organisational policies, guidelines, and management decisions, including all aspects of equal opportunities, health and safety and data protection.

Resolving Concerns

Any problems or complaints about volunteering should be reported immediately to a member of the programme team. We will take these seriously and will try to resolve any difficulties experienced.

Termination

We reserve the right to refuse the offer of services of any volunteer, generally or in any case, and to terminate any work being done by a volunteer, we may exercise these rights at any time, with or without prior notices and without giving any reason.