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1. Use of Volunteers

Volunteers are the life blood and involvement of volunteers

Volunteers can be involved in day activities, including helping to do so, they can use their skills for the benefit of the charity and the community which the charity might not otherwise be able to do. They can also gain from volunteering, including the satisfaction of

A charity's engagement with volunteer help given by a significant number of whom may spend a considerable

2. Legal Status of Volunteers

There is no legal definition of a volunteer, but in essence a person who, even if he has a volunteering agreement, does not have a contract of employment. A person described as an "intern" on all the circumstances, "interns".

Whatever level of volunteer involvement, the charity must ensure that the individual engaged by it as

If someone is paid or receives expenses (see 'Expenses' section) under a volunteering agreement must ensure that the agreement does not refer to the agreement as a contract of employment. The language or imply any conditions

A volunteer, as opposed to an employee, is not entitled to an employment tribunal claim for discrimination or harassment. A charity has a general legal duty of care to its volunteers.

In addition, the Charity Commission has a power to investigate if the conduct of a charity in relation to its volunteers is in breach of the charity's governing document.

Disabled people have no right to reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

with large and small. The support and involvement of volunteers is essential for success.

Volunteering, administration, or day-to-day activities, including helping to do so, they can use their skills for the benefit of the charity, its beneficiaries and the community which the charity might not otherwise be able to do. They can also gain from volunteering, including the satisfaction of

A charity's engagement with volunteer help given by a significant number of whom may spend a considerable amount of time on volunteering.

There is no legal definition of a volunteer, and it is ultimately a matter for a court to decide whether someone is an employee and not a volunteer, but in essence a person who, even if he has a volunteering agreement, does not have a contract of employment. A person described as an "intern" on all the circumstances, "interns".

Whatever level of volunteer involvement, the charity must ensure that the individual engaged by it as an employee in law its employee.

If someone is paid or receives expenses (see 'Expenses' section) under a volunteering agreement must ensure that the agreement does not refer to the agreement as a contract of employment. The language or imply any conditions other than being reimbursed his expenses. A charity has a general legal duty of care to its volunteers. Great care should be taken to ensure that the agreement should not use the language or imply any conditions which would amount to a contract of employment.

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is good practice for a charity to provide support for those disabled people who wish to become volunteers.

ments for those disabled people

The law also imposes duties on volunteers. For example, in their work with a charity, they are bound by the law where relevant to the protection, confidentiality, equal opportunities, working with children, driving, and fundraising. They also have a general duty of care to service users, and members of the public.

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A volunteer will also be bound by the charity's own internal rules and policies.

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3. Use of Volunteer Agreements

A volunteer agreement is a written document. It should simply set out the terms of the arrangement. There is no legal obligation to provide one, and it is up to each charity to decide if it is going to use one. Some organisations sometimes use a letter rather than an agreement. They might or might not choose to sign any such agreement or letter.

intended to be a legally binding document. It should simply set out the terms of the arrangement. There is no legal obligation to provide one, and it is up to each charity to decide if it is going to use one. Some organisations sometimes use a letter rather than an agreement. They might or might not choose to sign any such agreement or letter.

However, the recommended form is a written volunteering agreement signed by the charity and the volunteer. Both parties should expect of each other that the volunteer will not be an employee. It is also recommended that a copy of the agreement, a [Long Form Volunteering Agreement](#) and a [Short Form Volunteering Agreement](#) be kept in the volunteer's file.

to use a written agreement signed by the charity and the volunteer. Both parties should expect of each other that the volunteer will not be an employee. It is also recommended that a copy of the agreement, a [Long Form Volunteering Agreement](#) and a [Short Form Volunteering Agreement](#) be kept in the volunteer's file.

The **Short Volunteering Agreement** is suitable for use by a small charity which wishes to engage a volunteer for a short period of time (e.g. a few months/week). This form is suitable for use by any type of organisation, including the public sector, non-governmental organisations, and sports organisations.

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The **Long Volunteering Agreement** is suitable for use by a charity or other organisation engaging volunteers for a long period of time. It is suitable for use by any type of organisation, including the public sector, non-governmental organisations, and sports organisations. A charity should consider using this form if any volunteers spend a significant amount of time volunteering (e.g. more than a few months).

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Interns are usually engaged under a contract of employment. These two forms of agreement are not suitable for use with interns.

ement somewhat different from

4. Expenses

Some charities pay their volunteers for expenses which are directly related to their volunteering, such as travel, meals taken while volunteering, and clothing/equipment required while volunteering.

over any costs they have incurred while volunteering, such as travel to and from the place of volunteering, travel, meals taken while volunteering, and clothing/equipment required while volunteering.

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It is generally recommended that where possible since it supports the volunteer, the charity should reimburse him or her for the time he is donating to the charity.

Expenses are reimbursed wherever possible to ensure that the charity reimburses him with recognition for the time

This might also include reimbursement of training courses relevant to the volunteering work, and travel expenses related to the training.

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Apart from any provision of any accommodation, the charity should be aware of any tax or legal implications and advice should be sought.

Accommodation provided in connection with training, or any other volunteering may have tax or legal implications and advice should be sought on such accommodation.

If a volunteer uses a car to travel to and from that work, the charity can reimburse the cost of HMCR's permitted rates if it is necessary.

Expenses incurred in connection with volunteering work or in the course of the charity's work, and if it does not exceed the permitted rates (see 'Insurance' below).

A charity and its volunteer should be aware of the reimbursement of any expenses. The charity should reimburse no more than actual out-of-pocket expenses, with no tax liability. However, if the charity reimburses a sum to cover expenses (i.e. a lump sum to cover actual expenses), or any 'thank you' payment, or if the charity pays them an amount as a reward for their volunteer role, the volunteer may be treated as an employee and any expenses may be reimbursed as an employee and any expenses should be avoided for any work, it also should be aware of any expenses not specifically needed to do the work.

of possible tax implications of expenses paid by the charity are reimbursed by the volunteer, there will be no tax liability. However, if the charity reimburses a sum to cover expenses (i.e. a lump sum to cover actual expenses), or if the charity pays them an amount as a reward for their volunteer role, the volunteer may be treated as an employee and any expenses may be reimbursed as an employee and any expenses should be avoided for any work, it also should be aware of any expenses not specifically needed to do the work.

A charity should, as good practice, give receipts for all expenses and it should keep records of queries from HMRC.

When volunteers complete a claim form and other finance officer of the charity, the charity should keep records of queries from HMRC.

5. Who can volunteer?

When considering taking on volunteers, a charity needs to be aware of any limitations that there may be on who can volunteer, depending on the status of the volunteer himself or the charity's activities. It is strongly recommended that a charity should check any such limitations apply before engaging any volunteers. A charity should not engage a volunteer under 18, is a vulnerable adult, is an asylum seeker or refugee, or is being looked after by any employee of the charity, or some limitation on who can volunteer should, before the charity engages the volunteer and seek advice as necessary.

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6. Insurance

Although it is not a legal requirement, it is good practice and strongly recommended that a charity should have Employer's Liability or Public Liability insurance to cover any claims made against the charity, for example where a volunteer is injured. Generally, a charity should

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it has to provide in respect
in the course of volunteering
and the charity will need
arrangements.

7. Further guidance

Volunteering England is a
about volunteering. Its website
who engage volunteers.

Volunteers drive their own vehicles
insure the vehicle, and the volunteer
responsibility of the volunteer's insurance

Volunteering England provides a good deal of guidance
and a very useful information for charities

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