



Volunteer Placement Scheme Policy

Policy

NECA promotes and encourages the participation of Volunteers in all areas of its work. NECA recognises the different but equally valuable contribution of Volunteers in complementing the work of its employees.

We believe that an investment should be made in our Volunteers in terms of their personal development. To this end we will provide regular and on-going support, supervision and training to enable Volunteers to enhance their volunteering work and to provide employment opportunities in the wider community. All staff vacancies are advertised internally and NECA welcomes applications from Volunteers who have the knowledge, experience and where appropriate qualifications, to become members of staff.

All Volunteers can expect fair and equal treatment including payment of travel expenses to work, access to all relevant policies and procedures and involvement in a variety of the decision-making bodies and processes.

Responsibilities

NECA's Volunteer Placement Scheme Policy will be managed by the Human Resources Manager. Area Operational Managers, (AOM), will be responsible for the placement of Volunteers in accordance with this Policy.

Scope Of Volunteer Activity

The roles in which NECA may provide volunteer support, details of which appear on NECA's website, include:

- Administrators - To assist with general administration, filing, phone calls etc.
- Counselling - Volunteer Counsellors will only be considered if they are in their second year of study and working towards a Counselling Diploma recognised by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, or another nationally recognised counselling accreditation. Those in the first year of counsellor training can be encouraged to actively engage in another aspect of volunteering with NECA.

Note: The maximum number of Volunteer Counsellors to be placed across the organisation is nine. Before considering / offering a Volunteer Counsellor placement, AOMs must liaise with their AOM colleagues to ensure that the current number and potential placements under consideration elsewhere do not exceed nine.



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- Complementary Therapists - Volunteers wishing to engage in Complementary Therapies will be required to have a minimum Diploma in Holistic Complementary Therapy prior to their start.
- Student Counsellor Placements - From time to time NECA is approached to offer work experience to students. Volunteer protocols and procedures would apply, liaising with staff at the appropriate education / training establishment. Consideration will be given to offering a limited number of short term placements, usually 20 days, to social work students, which will be determined by NECA's ability to provide the appropriate level of mentor support. The procedures which apply to references / CRB clearance will also apply to all student placements.
- Support Workers - Support Workers will assist and support the work of permanent staff within a project.
- Information Workers - Who can assist with core project activities (under direction) such as, signposting enquiries, taking referrals, arranging appointments, etc.
- Other Activities - Not already identified

Volunteer Vacancies

Where a business need has been determined to provide a placement, (i.e. how many Volunteers in a Project at any given time? could the Volunteer be supported? etc), the AOM will liaise with the ICT Manager to advertise / remove old vacancy details on / from NECA's website. Details will include role, location, contact details. (Where no vacancies exist, the ICT will arrange for this message to appear on the website).

Applicants will be sent:

- Volunteer Placement Scheme Information, Appendix A
- Volunteer Placement Application Form, Appendix B

Volunteer Counsellor placements must not be considered for ex substance misuse users unless they have two years clear non-use. In all other placements each case will be treated on its merits.

Where the applicant is an ex-service user, the AOM will decide whether or not it is appropriate to consider their application for the advertised placement or with a Project in the area where the applicant lives or subject to discussion with another AOM, consideration for a placement in an adjacent Area. (In this circumstance, this assumes that the applicant is willing to travel).

NECA are unable to offer short term work placements due to all Volunteers requiring CRB clearance, the confidential nature of NECA's business, the time taken to induct and train Volunteers, etc.



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Human Resources will be responsible for responding to inquiries received at volunteers@neca.co.uk. General telephone inquiries should be directed to the website if vacancies have been advertised.

Volunteer Vacancies / Volunteer Expression Of Interest - Staff

Where a member of staff indicates they wish to become a Volunteer, the AOM will discuss this with the Client Services Director, to ensure that the proposal and location of the placement is in line with the employee's training and development plan.

Selection Process

The AOM will consider the applicant's Application Form. Where it is considered that the applicant may be suitable for a Project and that the applicant may benefit from undertaking volunteer work, the applicant will be invited for interview.

It is recognised that applicants for a volunteer placement may have limited knowledge and experience in their chosen work area, therefore a different level of assessment / documentation than that used for staff vacancies will apply.

Interviews

Interviews will be held locally and will be undertaken by the AOM / Project Manager. The Interview Panel will jointly assess the Volunteer applicant's suitability using the Volunteer Placement Interview Assessment Form, Appendix C.

If the Volunteer is successful, the AOM will inform the applicant that they have been successful subject to receipt of satisfactory references and CRB check. If the applicant was unsuccessful, they will be informed, explaining the reason why they have been unsuccessful.

References / CRB Check

Following Interview, the AOM will forward the successful applicant's Application Form and Interview Assessment Form to the Human Resources Assistant. The HR Assistant will undertake reference enquiries and will write to the applicant regarding the process for their CRB clearance.

Where the Volunteer has declared previous convictions on their Application Form, they will be compared with the CRB Enhanced Disclosure. The Chief Executive / HR Manager will be informed and a decision taken as to the suitability of the applicant becoming a Volunteer.



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When satisfactory references and CRB Enhanced Disclosure clearance have been received / approved, the HR Assistant will notify the AOM who will contact the Volunteer and agree a start date. Until such notification has been provided, under no circumstances must the Volunteer be allowed to undertake any volunteering activities.

If unsatisfactory references or Enhanced Disclosure are received, HR will notify the AOM, who in turn will notify the applicant in writing that they have been unsuccessful and the reasons for this decision. If appropriate explain to the unsuccessful applicant that they can re-apply after a given period.

Volunteer Placement Agreement

Prior to commencement, the AOM will arrange for the Volunteer to complete and sign a Volunteer Placement Agreement, Appendix D, a copy of which will be forwarded to HR.

Personal Details

On commencement, the AOM will arrange for the Volunteer to complete a Personal Details Form, (available from Human Resources), which will be forwarded to HR.

Induction

Volunteers are covered by the Induction Policy and will receive Induction, including the Induction Training session at Headquarters which is mandatory. HR will write to the Volunteer and invite them to the next available Headquarters Induction session.

Mentor Support

Each Volunteer should be allocated a mentor who is willing to provide generic person centred impartial support within the Project. They should be encouraged to refer regularly to their mentor for information and guidance.

Staff Supervision

Line Managers will be responsible for ensuring that all Volunteers participate in the monthly Staff Supervision process. Volunteers will also be expected to engage in the following supervision.

- Volunteer Counsellors - Monthly Area Clinical Group Supervision.



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- Volunteer Counsellors are able to claim the percentage of the time they participate as an individual in monthly group clinical supervision. However, Counsellors must meet BACP Guidelines in relation to time spent in receipt of monthly clinical supervision. They will therefore be responsible to seek and cover costs of any extra supervision required during their time as a Volunteer Counsellor.
- Complementary Therapists - Monthly Group Case Supervision.
- Support Workers - Monthly Group Case Management.

Training

Volunteers should be included in training activities through the Staff Supervision process. From time to time they may be expected to attend specific training related to volunteering. Alternatively, training may be identified that would benefit their volunteering activities within a Project. The Project Manager will be responsible making a request for training by completing and submitting a Training Authorisation Form.

Volunteer Records

An individual Volunteer Portfolio / File should be maintained within the Project, containing Application Form / Interview Assessment Form, all volunteering activities, monthly Staff Supervision records, record of participation in training events provided by NECA, or other agencies / services, accreditation correspondence / documentation and other related correspondence / documentation.

Volunteers must also complete a diary / log activities undertaken within the Project, Appendix E.

Guidelines For Volunteers On Maintaining Personal And Professional Boundaries.

Failure to set or maintain appropriate boundaries is the most common cause of exploitative practice in volunteer / work relationships. Appendix F details guidelines for Volunteers on maintaining personal and professional boundaries and a copy will be issued to the Volunteer on their commencement into the Project.

Leaving Volunteer Placement – Retention Of Records

When a Volunteer leaves their placement, the AOM or Project Manager will complete a Volunteer Leaving Form, Appendix G, and forward to Human Resources. Volunteer personal files will be maintained by Human Resources and will be destroyed seven years after the Volunteer's placement has ceased.