

LIBER8 VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS



Contents

1 Foreword	2
2 Principles	3
3 The Volunteer's Voice	3
4 Liber8's Volunteer Programme	3-6
5 Recruitment and Selection	6
6 Agreements & Requirements	7-8
7. Expectations	8-11
8. General	12

1. Foreword

Liber8 relies on the contribution of all kinds of people to make its work a success. Working alongside our paid staff are our volunteers, who give their time freely to Liber8. As a volunteer, we value your contribution of time and skills as an essential ingredient to the success of the service. We hope you will find this Handbook useful. It aims to answer most of the questions you may have about volunteering with Liber8. It should be noted for the purpose of this Handbook, the term, 'volunteer' is taken to include placement students from universities, colleges, training providers and or schools.

Liber8 depends upon the commitment and professionalism of all staff and volunteers in meeting its objectives of supporting clients with substance use issues and the continued development the organisation. Liber8 is committed to ensuring development of self, professional and fulfillment needs of all staff and volunteers. We encourage staff and volunteers to work closely, and in partnership with Liber8 ensuring that we all provide a quality service that benefits the service users and the wider community. The commitment from our volunteers enables Liber8 to meet its aims and objectives creating a positive engagement for all service users. Liber8 is committed to:

- *providing a quality service to our services users*
- *providing equal opportunities and operating within the principle of equality regardless of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, political opinion or affiliation, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or disability*

We will apply policies that are fair, equitable and consistent with the skills and abilities of our volunteers and the needs of our organisation. We need your support in implementing these policies to ensure that everyone is accorded an equal opportunity for recruitment and training in all jobs of like work, on equal terms and conditions.

This handbook is designed to outline the principles upon which volunteers are involved in, and to define the roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers. It will also outline to staff, volunteers and users of the service, how and why volunteers will be involved. We welcome you and express our sincere hope that you will be happy here in our team. We ask that you study carefully the contents of this document. This handbook should:

- *prevent decisions being made based on unwritten rules, prejudice or favoritism*
- *clarify what is expected of volunteers, in terms of roles, confidentiality and commitment*
- *clarify what volunteer's rights are, regarding insurance, expenses, support and access to training*
- *ensure that, with the notable exceptions, all policies and procedures will apply equally so that we demonstrate practically that we value and support volunteers in the same way that we value and support paid staff*

- *raise awareness about voluntary work and give volunteers the appropriate status by recognising the value of their work and commitment*
- *be monitored, reviewed and updated on biannual basis*

2. Principles

This volunteering policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- *Liber8 will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to our agency's work.*
- *Liber8 will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.*
- *Liber8 expects that staff and volunteers will work positively together in the interests of the service users and our organisation.*
- *Liber8 recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development; we will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.*

3. The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Liber8 and its work; to offer a platform to the volunteers several options are available:

- *Regular meetings will be held to encourage an open discussion.*
- *All volunteers have an opportunity to discuss any issues with their supervisor/line manager.*
- *All managers operate an open-door policy within Liber8 - any issues should be brought to their attention.*
- *An anonymous evaluation questionnaire will be issued to volunteers on a yearly basis to allow them to evaluate the agency and allow them to offer constructive comments on operational procedures.*

4. Liber8's Volunteer Programme

Liber8's volunteer programme offers a wide range of volunteering opportunities to the communities of Lanarkshire. Our volunteer programme will recruit volunteers from across Lanarkshire and beyond; assisting them in achieving their goals; including, providing experience and skills in a volunteering capacity; gaining experience in their chosen field; practice based training to a professionally recognised level; gathering placement hours to complete their course of study and or enter and progress through the

employability pipeline. Volunteers will add significant value to the development and delivery of our services across Lanarkshire by:

- *enabling services to be delivered which might not otherwise be possible*
- *acting as a link between the community and the service*
- *bringing in new skills and a different perspective*
- *believing in the service and acting as advocates within the community*

Key features include:

- *Volunteers are recruited from diverse backgrounds so that they represent the community as much as possible and so that everyone feels they can access volunteering opportunities.*
- *Volunteers feel appreciated and valued and that they are given recognition for their hard work.*
- *Opportunities for volunteering are made as flexible as possible to ensure that it is possible for a wide range of people to get involved.*
- *A skills audit will be undertaken to ascertain what skills volunteers can offer, what skills need to be developed and what skills are missing which could be provided by new volunteers.*
- *Work given to volunteers is varied and interesting, so that they will feel inspired to carry on and see that they are making a valuable contribution.*
- *Regular reviews with named line manager regarding professional/organisational goals within the service so that they feel there is a real commitment to their development.*
- *Allocated an email/desk where possible so they feel part of the team.*
- *Regular meetings to foster unity and sharing of information.*
- *Development opportunities are provided for volunteers so that they can progress and take on new and different responsibilities.*

Volunteering opportunities include:

- *reception and administration opportunities*
- *substance use support work*
- *student/trainee counsellors*
- *college placement opportunities*
- *qualified workers*
- *board & steering group members*

The volunteering opportunities will be offered throughout the service and will be on a progressive level, beginning with volunteers working in our reception service; leading to other volunteering opportunities once experience and skills are acquired.

Where the applicant has established skills, qualifications or significant experience in a particular discipline they may progress to their chosen area of expertise; as is the case for student placement counsellors. However, all volunteers will be required to undertake a range of tasks where required.

4.1 Liber8 Standards for Volunteers

The standards for volunteers provide a framework to guide you in the types of behaviour required whilst volunteering for Liber8. We value your honesty and reliability and expect this high standard within your volunteering role.

Liber8 requires that:

- *you operate within our guidelines, procedures and standards*
- *your behaviour, attitude and language do not go against the aims and interests of Liber8's vision or purpose or its supporters*
- *you do not discriminate or use abusive or offensive language or behaviour: always treating people with respect*
- *you do not use your position or information gained inappropriately*
- *your volunteer position does not affect your personal relationship with staff, other volunteers or service users*
- *you do not make statements to the media without approval from Liber8's senior manager*
- *you use the internet and IT equipment appropriately and only in relation to your volunteering activities*
- *you are not under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances*
- *you do not engage in theft or any other criminal behaviour*
- *you do not accept gifts, money or vouchers from service users, contractors or anyone without express permission from Liber8 management. Only small gifts such as chocolates, birthday or Christmas cards or other faith based celebration cards can be accepted where refusal may cause embarrassment*
- *you dress appropriately to the circumstances of the activities and tasks required*
- *you adhere to Liber8's Policies, Procedures and Protocols at all times*
- *you familiarise yourself with Liber8's Equal Opportunities, Code of Conduct and Diversity Policies*
- *you familiarise yourself with Liber8's Data Security Framework*

4.2 Liber8's Code of Conduct

Liber8 operates a code of conduct governed by the Board of Directors and adopted from the Scottish Social Service Council code of practice that all workers must adhere to. All volunteers either during working hours or out with working hours are ambassadors of the organisation and should conduct themselves accordingly as per the company code of conduct. This includes but is not exclusive to social networking sites.

4.3 Liber8's Value Base

This statement of shared values base outlines the values that will underpin all work carried out by this organisation. Adopting these values will enable the development of a group identity that involves shared values and promotes a positive care environment. The care value base becomes a way of being, an attitude and should include the following:

- *promoting anti-discriminatory practice*
- *maintaining confidentiality of information*
- *promoting and supporting individual's rights to dignity, independence and safety*
- *acknowledging individuals' personal beliefs and identity*
- *protecting individuals from abuse*
- *promoting effective communication and relationships*
- *providing individualised care*
- *ensure work practices are anti-oppressive*

5. Recruitment and Selection

All prospective volunteers and placement students must proceed with Liber8's recruitment and selection process of:

- *submitting completed Liber8 volunteer application form*
- *attend individual and or group interview*
- *provide two acceptable references*
- *Undertake Disclosure Scotland checks (PVG)*
- *Engage in two-month trial period*

This process allows us to consider the volunteer's skills, experience, suitability and how best their potential might be realised; a scoring matrix will be used to inform the decision.

On the basis of the process outcome, the individual will be offered a place within Liber8 and will be supplied with the appropriate training relative to their remit.

5.1 Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

Volunteers will have a volunteer agreement establishing what Liber8 undertakes to provide for volunteers and what the organisations' expectations of the volunteers are. In addition, they will agree to a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking. Neither of these documents is a contract, these documents are memoranda of understanding. Liber8 has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers. Each volunteer will also receive this volunteer's handbook.

5.2 The Rights of Volunteers

Liber8 recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- *know what is expected of them*
- *have clearly specified lines of support and supervision*
- *be shown appreciation*
- *have safe working conditions*
- *be insured*

- *know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong*
- *be paid appropriate expenses*
- *be trained for the duties they are required to undertake*
- *be free from discrimination*
- *confidentiality*
- *experience personal development through participation*

5.3 The Expectations of Volunteers

Liber8 expects that volunteers will:

- *be reliable and honest*
- *respect confidentiality*
- *attend training and support sessions where agreed*
- *act with due care for their own safety and that of others*
- *adhere to our policies and procedures*
- *carry out tasks in accordance with our aims and values*
- *work within agreed guidelines and remits*
- *be anti-discriminatory in their work*
- *promote equality of opportunity*
- *honour the volunteering commitment they have made*

5.4 Volunteer Requirements

a) Reception/Clerical - minimum requirements:

- *completed application form*
- *interview and group discussions*
- *completion and acceptance of Disclosure Scotland / PVG*

b) Volunteer Support Worker - minimum requirements:

- *completed application form*
- *interview and group discussions*
- *completion and acceptance of Disclosure Scotland / PVG*
- *COSCA Counselling Skills Certificate*
- *evidence of studying for Diploma in Counselling*

c) College/Student Placements minimum requirements:

- *completed application form*
- *interview and group discussions*
- *completion and acceptance of Disclosure Scotland / PVG*
- *COSCA Counselling Skills Certificate*
- *Fitness to practice element of diploma course (Course accredited by COSCA/ BACP/BABCP)*

d) Volunteer Counsellor minimum requirements:

- *completed application form*
- *interview and group discussions*
- *completion and acceptance of Disclosure Scotland / PVG*
- *COSCA Counselling Skills Certificate*
- *completed Diploma in Counselling (Course accredited by COSCA/ BACP/BABCP)*

e) Volunteer Supervisor minimum requirements:

- *completed application form*
- *interview and group discussions*
- *completion and acceptance of Disclosure Scotland / PVG*
- *COSCA Counselling Skills Certificate*
- *completed Diploma in Counselling (Approved by COSCA/ BACP/BABCP)*
- *completed qualification in supervision (COSCA/ BACP/BABCP Approved)*

f) Board Members minimum requirements:

- attendance at governance training
- interview
- completion and acceptance of Disclosure Scotland/PVG
- awareness of and interest in the addiction field

6. Volunteer Induction

The induction is designed to ensure that your volunteering is safe and effective. We want you to know that we value your time and skills. We aim to do the best we can to make your volunteer experience a productive, positive and rewarding one. While you are volunteering with Liber8 we will:

- *provide a full induction on the work of Liber8, its staff, the volunteering role and any equipment or training necessary ensure tasks are fully achievable*
- *introduce you to Liber8, its policies, protocols and procedures*
- *provide you with a named supervisor to give support, supervision and feedback on a regular basis*
- *ensure there are flexibility and personal development opportunities in your volunteering role*

7. What We Expect of Volunteers

a) Commitment to Time and Venue

Minimum time given: A successful and meaningful volunteering programme offering opportunities to all requires operational and organisational planning. Therefore, a minimum of 3-4 hours structured commitment per week is expected from volunteers. You should take serious consideration of this, as any commitment must be realistic and consistent. We can then feel confident

knowing that our service users will be offered a professional and uninterrupted level of care.

We recognise that you may encounter unforeseen circumstances e.g. sickness or bereavement. If so, please contact us as soon as possible so we can make alternative arrangements for any service users affected. Similarly, please let us know in good time if you are planning to go on holiday.

Place of volunteering: Liber8 offers services throughout Lanarkshire and has several bases and satellite venues. Whilst consideration will be given to the volunteers' preference in terms of locality, the needs of the service and service users are of ultimate importance. Therefore, volunteers must be prepared to work in any of the identified Liber8 service premises. Currently there are two main bases, one in Blantyre the other in Coatbridge with satellite venues in Motherwell, Cumbernauld, Lanark, East Kilbride, Cambuslang and Rutherglen.

b) Commitment to Training

Training: All volunteers will receive an induction to Liber8 and relevant training to their own area of work. Training will be provided to meet agreed self-development goals and service delivery needs. There may be occasions where funding constraints or quotas limit Liber8's ability to provide training for every volunteer at the same time. If this happens, Liber8 will discuss with volunteers, allocate training on a priority basis and keep everyone informed of developments. Wherever possible, volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff.

Volunteers will be offered both optional and mandatory training throughout their time with Liber8. No volunteer will be permitted to start their volunteering experience with Liber8 unless they have attended a mandatory induction.

c) Commitment to Supervision and Meetings

Support and Supervision: Our policy is to monitor your work performance on a continuous basis during your time with Liber8. All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will each be provided a named supervisor/support worker who will provide them with regular supervision/support, which is a mechanism to support and protect the service user, the worker and the agency. In addition, support for each worker will be given on a variety of issues, for example to feedback on progress, discuss future developments and air any problems. Liber8 commit to the aim of providing 1 hour's support/supervision every month; this may also take the shape of group support, and may vary subject to operational constraints.

Volunteer group meetings: As with paid staff members, it is a requirement of the volunteer to attend regular meetings within Liber8. Failure to attend meetings will result in the volunteer being suspended and possible termination of their position.

d) Commitment and Adherence to Policies and Procedures

Volunteers are accountable to the same policies, procedures and protocols as paid employees of Liber8, and as stipulated throughout this handbook volunteers must adhere to these. Anyone found not to be adhering to the service guidelines protocols; policies and procedures will endanger their volunteering place within the service. Liber8 also reserves the right to suspend or terminate the volunteer's work within the service for any breach of legislation which could result in danger to the service user, fellow workers or the service.

e) Commitment to Confidentiality and Data Protection

Volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. To secure the best outcome for the service, it is important that the service users have confidence in disclosing relevant information about any problems they are experiencing. Liber8 recognises that confidentiality is of great importance to service users. Therefore, Liber8 has a policy and procedure on the disclosing of information by the service user regarding any allegation of physical, sexual, financial or any other form of abuse by any person. Such a disclosure is not bound by the normal rules of confidentiality and any such disclosure must firstly be reported to the volunteer's named supervisor or Liber8 manager.

If there is reasonable professional concern that a child or other vulnerable person may be at risk from harm, this will override Liber8's duty to keep service user information confidential. This is in accordance with Getting Our Priorities Right, Getting It Right for Every Child, Children's Act and local protocols and operational procedures. The Liber8 service manager has a responsibility to act to make sure that a child or other vulnerable person whose safety or welfare may be at risk, is protected from harm and appropriate steps and action are immediately undertaken. The supervisor will report such allegations to the manager who then has the responsibility of informing the Liber8 steering group.

Thus, in common with other support agencies, Liber8 cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. In a small number of circumstances, we may have to release confidential information, but in all these situations we will make every effort to discuss it fully with the service user first. Every volunteer must abide by Liber8's confidentiality policy. In addition any information that is or has been acquired by you during, or in the course of your involvement with us, or has otherwise been acquired by you in confidence, relates particularly to our business, or that of other persons or bodies with whom we have dealings of any sort, and has not been made public by, or with our authority, shall be confidential, and (save in the course of business or as required by law) you shall not at any time, whether before or after the termination of your involvement with the agency, disclose such information to any person without our prior written consent.

Furthermore, each volunteer should exercise reasonable care to keep safe all documentary or other material containing confidential information, and shall at the time of termination of your involvement with us, or at any other time

upon demand, return to us any such material in your possession. Client files should NOT be removed from the premises.

f) Security Framework

Liber8 have developed a Data Security Framework, the purpose of this is to ensure that necessary records and documents are adequately protected and maintained and to ensure that records that are no longer needed or are of no value are discarded by an acceptable method at the appropriate time.

The policies within the framework apply to all employees, volunteers and contractors of the Liber8 and anyone else working in an honorary or voluntary role, who may create, receive or have access to Liber8 records. The policy applies to all locations in which Liber8 records are created, received and used, including home use. Liber8 have implemented access to IT systems and electronic data based on job role and a 'need to know' basis. This reduces the risk of inappropriate access to particular forms and content of data by staff. This volunteer handbook is implemented in conjunction with other Company policies including but not restricted to; IT and Communications Policy; Confidentiality Policy; Data Protection Policy; Mobile Device Policy; Password Protection Policy, Transfer of Printed Materials Policy.

Sharing of Client Information/Data Protection/

It is recognised that changes in a service user's presentation may require additional sharing of information. This may apply to the referring agent or other relevant agencies. This will only be undertaken with the service user's prior consent and/or in accordance with Liber8's confidentiality processes. No volunteer shall undertake to share client information before speaking to their supervisor or manager for confirmation. We are part of Lanarkshire's Data Sharing Partnership, and all staff and volunteers working within the organisation will receive training and materials that will inform them of the Lanarkshire data sharing protocols.

6. IT and Mobile Data Device Policy

Access to a computer will be available to all volunteers to keep client records, and in some instances volunteers within general administration may have access to the Liber8 database. Volunteers are accountable to the same policies, procedures and protocols as paid employees of Liber8 and as stipulated throughout this handbook, volunteers must adhere to these. The full IT and mobile data device policy can be located in the main offices. Volunteers are not permitted to bring in external data devices for the purposes of uploading or downloading content to or from Liber8 computers. Client information MUST NEVER be stored on any laptop or similar mobile device.

7. Commitment to Equal Opportunities

Liber8 operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. Everyone involved with Liber8 will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy which basically states that the Liber8 is committed to:

“providing equal opportunities and to the principle of equality regardless of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, political opinion or affiliation, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or disability”. A full detailed account can be found in the Company’s Policy and Procedures. Equal Opportunities Act 2010, Equality Act 2010, Race Relations Act 2000, Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

8. General

a) Expenses

All volunteers will have their travel and other expenses reimbursed in accordance with the travel expense policy. However, particular evidence is required in respect to car fuel expenses. All volunteers will be required to have business class 1 on their car insurance, and this along with a UK driving license must be submitted to the administrator before car expenses can be claimed. Evidence of all travel costs and claim forms must be submitted to the named administrator.

b) Insurance - Public and Professional

All volunteers are covered by public and professional liability insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on Liber8’s behalf.

c) Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by Liber8 Lanarkshire’s health and safety policy. All volunteers must avail themselves to the health & safety procedures and protocols of the office they are working from, and familiarise themselves with fire regulations. Each volunteer should make themselves familiar with our health and safety policy, a full detailed account can be found in Liber8 Lanarkshire’s policy and procedures,

d) Refreshment Making Facilities

We provide refreshment making facilities for your use in each office, which must be kept clean and tidy at all times. Any breakages or damage should be reported as soon as possible to the project manager.

e) Smoking Policy

Within each office base of Liber8 you will be required to observe the smoking policy.

f) Counselling Rooms/ Satellite Offices

Each counselling room should be clean and tidy. If any volunteer feels that an acceptable standard has not been maintained they should, in the first instance, speak with their supervisor. The supervisor will record this and bring

it to the attention of the project manager. Each counsellor is responsible for leaving the counselling rooms and satellite offices in the same condition as they found them.

g) Safety during Counselling Sessions

All staff will be supplied with a personal attack alarm when they enter a counselling room with a client. In addition, most counselling rooms have an alarm attached to the wall. If you are in any doubt about your safety, please do not hesitate to use this alarm by pulling the cord attached to the main pin. The full policy on personal alarms can be found in the Policy and Procedures; the health and safety of staff and volunteers is covered in training.

h) Lone Working Safety

A detailed policy regarding lone working procedures is available and will be given to each volunteer. In addition, this procedure will be included in the Operational Policy.

i) Disclosure Scotland Checks: PVG

This type of work is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974). You are not entitled to withhold any information requested by the company about any previous convictions you may have, even if in other circumstances they would be regarded as 'spent' under the Act. This does not mean that prior convictions prevent application to Liber8 Lanarkshire.

An Enhanced Disclosure check /PVG is required from everyone before they take up appointment. It is also a requirement to report to the company any convictions or offences, which you are charged with, including traffic offences, during your time with the practice. Furthermore, Disclosure Scotland Forms must be resubmitted for update every two years from the date of issue.

j) Statements to the Media

No volunteer or staff member shall give any verbal or written statement to the media as being representative or as being the view of Liber8. Any statement to reporters from newspapers, radio or television, in relation to our service, will be given by the project manager after consultation with the steering group.

k) Changes in Personal Details

You must notify us of any change of name, address, telephone number, etc., so that we can maintain accurate information in our records and make contact with you when needed.

l) Employees' Property

We do not accept liability for any loss of, or damage to property that you bring onto the premises. You are requested not to bring personal items of value onto the premises and, in particular, not to leave any items overnight.

m) Grievance Procedure

A separate grievance policy for volunteers is available within the Liber8 Lanarkshire policies and procedures.

n) Alcohol and Drug Policy

A separate alcohol and drug policy for volunteers is available within the Liber8 Lanarkshire policies and procedures.

Conclusion

Liber8 Lanarkshire Ltd have a comprehensive policies and procedures company handbook. Should there be items not covered within this volunteer handbook, reference should be made to the above-named documents. All staff and volunteers are required to read and adhere to ALL policies, procedures and protocols.

Contacts

Management Support Officer: Lynn Speirs

Chief Executive: Margaret Halbert

Useful Numbers

Blantyre Office: 01698 825114