

NORTH OF TYNE VOLUNTEERING AREA OF EXCELLENCE

INDUCTION OF VOLUNTEERS

A good induction to your organisation will ensure that new volunteers start off with the right information and receive instructions on safety requirements relevant to their role. This is a new volunteer's first formal introduction to your organisation and their role and is an opportunity to familiarise volunteers with supervision and support processes.

Before the formal induction, or as part of it, you can ask your volunteers to access the training on the Elements Portal on Becoming a Volunteer.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE HEALTH CHECK FOR VOLUNTEER-INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS

The Health Check for Volunteer-Involving Organisations considers the extent to which you have an induction process in place, whether you have a Volunteer Handbook and the extent to which you communicate your policies and procedures to volunteers.

INDUCTION CHECKLIST

An Induction Checklist is a good way to ensure you cover all relevant information as well as providing a consistent approach to all new volunteers. Your Induction Checklist will likely apply to both employees and volunteers, with some sections that only apply to one or the other.

An Induction Checklist should include:

- General information such as an overview of your organisation, including vision, mission, and values.
- Office and facilities information such as information about workstations, parking, location of facilities and first aid kits, and emergency exits.
- Security information such as passwords, storage of information, and what to do in an emergency.
- Policies and procedures overview, including work, health and safety requirements, privacy and confidentiality requirements, and information on anything else relevant to the volunteer's role such as information on reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses.
- Practical requirements such as providing notification if there are occasions when they are unable to volunteer, who to go to for support, and any organisational benefits that are available to volunteers.
- Getting your volunteer to sign a Volunteer Agreement and/or Volunteer Code of Conduct.

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

There are likely to be a number of policies and procedures that are applicable to volunteers. It is important that legislative and other compliance requirements are communicated with volunteers from the outset. Further, volunteers must also comply with privacy and confidentiality requirements, background checking requirements (if relevant to their role), and anti-discrimination. You should also ensure that they are aware of and understand that they should not overstep any professional boundaries. Lastly, your insurer may have directed what volunteers can and cannot do to be covered by insurance.

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It is important to go through all these things during induction; however, it might not be practical to have volunteers go through all policies and procedures at once. There can be an overwhelming amount of information so it is useful to have a **Volunteer Handbook** with all of the information in one place and to assign volunteers 'further reading' which can then be covered at a later stage. Ensure that you communicate the most relevant ones have been communicated and that your volunteers have a good understanding before they commence their first volunteering duties.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

The Volunteer Agreement sets out the expectations of the volunteer and documents that both parties (the volunteer and the organisation) agree that all necessary information was conveyed to and understood by the volunteer. Not only does the Volunteer Agreement help to mitigate risk and to meet work, health and safety requirements, but it also demonstrates to the volunteer that you take their involvement seriously and are committed to protecting their physical and mental wellbeing in the workplace.

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

A Volunteer Code of Conduct is a collective agreement to which all members of a cohort of volunteers agree. It covers expectations regarding behaviour, personal responsibilities and team responsibilities, including care for other members of the team. By agreeing a collective Code of Conduct, an organisation can foster team ownership of collaboration and equity.

