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|  **INSERT CHURCH NAME:** |

**VOLUNTEER POLICY**

(Diocesan Parish Guide Section 7)

Volunteers play an essential part in the operation of many parishes and the recruitment of them should follow a similar format to that of employees.

**Recruitment**

* Volunteers should be interviewed to check that they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil the voluntary tasks for which they are applying.
* Where a volunteer’s role will involve contact with children or adults who are vulnerable, a DBS check will be required.
* It should be noted that volunteers may only receive training which is necessary for them to fulfil their voluntary tasks. Any general training that they receive may be considered a benefit, thus changing the status of a volunteer to that of a worker.

**Volunteer Agreement**

* It is useful to have an agreement with the volunteer which will state the expectations of both the organisation and the volunteer. This is especially helpful if a period of training is required which will create a significant cost to the organisation.
* However, care should be exercised in ensuring that the language used in the agreement is not contractual in its implications. An agreement should show mutual hopes rather than mutual obligations.

**Training**

* The organisation should provide training for the volunteer that is necessary for them to undertake their role.
* However, it should not allow a volunteer to consider the training as a reward in return for their volunteering as this would be deemed to be a ‘consideration’ given in return for work which would create a contract between the organisation and the volunteer (which would entitle the volunteer to claim the National Living Wage for all the hours that they have “worked”).

**Expenses**

* It is vital that volunteers are reimbursed for their genuine out-of-pocket expenses rather than receiving any payment given in return for work they undertake. Reimbursement is not taxable, does not create a contractual or employment relationship, and will not affect state benefits.

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| * Reimbursement means repayment or refund of money which the individual has actually spent. It will not be considered as remuneration provided that the expenditure was genuinely incurred; necessary for the work; wholly for the work; adequately documented; and reimbursement of the type of expenditure allowed free of tax by HMRC.
* The following are allowed by HMRC as reimbursable expenses provided that the volunteer receives no other payment or remuneration from the organisation: a *mileage allowance* at HM Revenue and Customs agreed rate or less, for genuine car use between home and place of volunteering, or between places of volunteering ; and the *actual cost* incurred for specialist clothing required for the voluntary work, for example uniforms or clothing required for health and safety purposes; the purchase of materials or services required to do the voluntary work; and meals taken during the time of volunteering.
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