

ERSKINE
VOLUNTEERING POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

ERSKINE IS DEDICATED TO PROVIDING APPROPRIATE BEST QUALITY CARE TO AS MANY EX-SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN THROUGHOUT SCOTLAND, AS IS POSSIBLE FOR AS LONG AS THE NEED IS THERE.

1. Introduction

All voluntary activity at Erskine shall be carried out in direct support of our Mission Statement.

This policy provides overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers, both within Erskine and at its various locations throughout Scotland.

A Volunteer will be anyone who freely contributes their time to undertake tasks, in an unpaid capacity. Whilst the tasks undertaken will be structured and determined by Erskine, the voluntary work will be undertaken by choice, and reimbursement will be limited to travel expenses.

Volunteers, with their wide range of backgrounds and experiences, provide a unique and essential contribution to the work of Erskine. The time, energy and skills offered by Volunteers will complement the work of Erskine staff resulting in the delivery of a high quality service.

Erskine will encourage, develop and support Volunteer involvement. Volunteers, in complementing the work already undertaken, will not replace the roles of paid staff.

Erskine believes that our relationship with our Volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment, within which Erskine and our Volunteers both have rights and responsibilities. We hope that Volunteers will enjoy their involvement and gain from it in terms of their own personal development.

2. Purpose of Policy and Procedures on Volunteers

2.1 Erskine's purpose in adopting this policy is to:

- Supplement paid staff who can focus on core activity

- Highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers
- Recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers and Erskine
- Confirm Erskine's commitment to involving volunteers in its work
- Establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers
- Clarify the roles of volunteers and address the relationship between volunteers, and paid staff
- Commit the organisation to take account of the interests of those who benefit from the work of our volunteers
- Help to ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers

2.2 The advantages of this policy are:

- It provides a basis for the development of volunteer involvement
- It sees volunteer involvement not as an alternative to paid staff, but as a valuable way of extending and adding choice to our residents and their families
- It gives a framework for recruiting and supporting volunteers including people from under-represented groups
- It commits the organisation to identify and adequately meet the financial and personnel costs of the volunteer programme and to support volunteering through funding and other forms of help

2.3 Scope of Volunteer Policy

This policy applies to all volunteers in all duties and projects undertaken by or on behalf of Erskine, in all departments and at all Erskine locations throughout Scotland. The policy does not apply to volunteers who undertake duties for other agencies or employers at Erskine.

3. Volunteer Procedures

3.1 General

- A task list will be prepared for each volunteer opportunity to ensure that the tasks to be performed by volunteers are clearly defined, and all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities
- The organisation will keep records of the work done by volunteers as a basis for monitoring, and volunteers will have access to their records in accordance with the law.
- Opportunities will be given for volunteers to represent their views to Erskine
- All existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers

3.2 Recruitment and Selection

- Before undertaking any duties with, or on behalf of Erskine, a Volunteer will be subject to the Volunteer Recruitment Procedure
- Volunteers will be required to complete a Volunteer Application/Registration Form
- Written volunteering opportunities will detail time, commitment, and actual duties including any particular skills required.
- We will request references for all volunteers before the start of their volunteering activities.
- Placements will match the volunteer's skills, talents and interests with the voluntary work to be carried out.
- Once placed, we will expect volunteers to comply with existing policies and procedures
- There will not be a retirement age for any volunteer, but individual assessments on the capability of volunteers will be made by their Manager and the Volunteer Manager and in consultation with any advice from the Occupational Health service as appropriate. The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be suitability to perform a task on behalf Erskine without putting anyone to risk. Volunteers may remain with Erskine for as long as they are able to carry out their tasks to the appropriate standard

3.3 Support for Volunteers

- Erskine will invest financial and personnel resources for the management of volunteers
- We will provide an induction period and a review session for volunteers to assess the progress of their placements and to resolve any problems at an early stage
- We will provide funding for the payment of volunteers' expenses. Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim. Exceptional expenses must be approved in advance
- Erskine has written procedures for the insurance of its volunteers. Full details can be obtained from the Director of Corporate Services
- Volunteers will be given information on other legislation or policies, which may affect them, e.g. Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities. In these respects volunteers will be treated in the same way as paid staff for liability purposes
- All volunteers will be offered appropriate access to support and supervision on a regular basis and will be informed whom to contact in an emergency
- All volunteers will be offered access to appropriate training to enable them to develop their capabilities and personal competence appropriate to their volunteering role
- Opportunities will be provided for changing volunteer responsibilities as desired by the volunteer and appropriate to the organisation's needs

- Volunteers will be encouraged to provide each other with mutual support
- Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's procedures if there are problems or they have a complaint
- The Volunteer Manager will have responsibility for ensuring that complaints about volunteers conduct are dealt with in accordance with the policy and procedures of Erskine.

3.4 Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers

3.4.1 In engaging volunteers, we recognise the rights of volunteers to:

- Be given meaningful tasks
- Know what is expected of them and to be given clear information and induction
- Have clearly specified lines of support and supervision
- Be shown appreciation
- Know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong
- Be paid travel expenses
- Be trained and receive ongoing opportunities for learning and development
- Experience personal development through their participation as volunteers
- Ask for a reference
- Be consulted on decisions that will affect what they do

3.4.2 We expect the volunteers will:

- Carry out their tasks to the best of their ability in a way, which corresponds to the aims, and values of Erskine
- Work within agreed guidelines and remits
- Be reliable
- Respect confidentiality
- Attend training and support sessions where agreed

3.5 Relationship with Paid Staff

- Steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff at all levels are clear about the role of our volunteers, and that good working relationships are fostered between paid staff and volunteers
- The roles of volunteers and paid staff will be complementary and mutually supportive
- Appropriate training, support and resources will be provided for all those who work alongside volunteers and for those who have a managerial role in relation to volunteers

4. Management of Volunteers

4.1 Responsibility for Volunteer Activities

- The Volunteer Manager will have a role of supporting managers with responsibility for the supervision of volunteers and to ensure that Erskine policy and procedures are understood and complied with.
- The initial co-ordination of all voluntary activity (i.e. recruitment, selection, etc) shall be undertaken by the Volunteer Manager or in the case of Erskine Edinburgh or Erskine Glasgow by the appropriate manager.
- Departmental Directors, with the assistance of the Volunteer Manager, shall have responsibility for planning effective volunteer deployment, assisting staff in identifying volunteer roles and for monitoring and evaluating the contribution of volunteers to Erskine
- The Volunteer Manager will be available to provide support and advice to departmental supervising staff as appropriate

4.2 Volunteer Recruitment Procedure

- Erskine's equal opportunities statement will be adhered to when recruiting and selecting volunteers
- To ensure that all volunteering opportunities are widely accessible they will be promoted by internal and/or external advertisements, as appropriate
- People interested in volunteering with Erskine will be invited for an informal talk and be given an information/application pack
- All volunteers must complete the Application/Registration Form
- Two references will be taken up before commencement
- As volunteers may be working with vulnerable people, they will be asked to provide information about any criminal convictions that they may have through the enhanced disclosure process operated by Disclosure Scotland.
- All such information is dealt with in strictest confidence and will not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work
- Volunteers must be able to meet the demands of their voluntary work without risk to their physical, financial, or emotional well being. Prospective volunteers may be asked to complete the Erskine's Occupational Health Service questionnaire
- Selection will be the responsibility of the Volunteer Manager or in the case of Erskine Edinburgh and Erskine Glasgow with the Manager.
- Prospective volunteers who offer their services will have their offers dealt with as quickly as possible and will be kept informed of the progress of their application.

4.3 The Voluntary Agreement

- Erskine accepts the contribution of all Volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion Erskine.
- Volunteers agree that Erskine may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to end the arrangement.
- A Volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to end their relationship with Erskine. Such a decision should be notified by the volunteer as soon as possible to their supervisor or Volunteer Manager.

4.4 Induction

- The departmental manager will ensure that all appropriate areas in the induction programme are completed

4.5 Probationary Period

- All volunteer placements shall initially be probationary on a four-month trial period
- At the end of this period, a second interview shall be conducted to assess the volunteer's suitability for their post
- The volunteer will then either:
 - Be deemed suitable for their position
 - Request or be offered re-assignment
 - End the voluntary agreement with Erskine

4.6 Supervision

- Departmental managers will be responsible for the day-to-day management and for the guidance of the volunteers within their area of responsibility
- The Volunteer Manager will be available to offer assistance as required

4.7 Communication

- Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their duties
- Volunteers should be included in and have access to all appropriate information, memos and meetings
- Primary responsibility for ensuring that the volunteer receives such information will rest with the departmental manager
- Information of a general nature regarding Erskine will be communicated via newsletters, noticeboards, and if appropriate electronically.

4.8 Training and Development

- All volunteers will receive appropriate induction training to ensure that they can safely and effectively carry out their tasks.
- In the interests of efficiency, and where appropriate, volunteers and paid staff may attend the same training event

- Volunteers, where appropriate, will be urged to attend any courses appropriate to their area of work/interest. Such continuing education enables volunteers to become familiar with any new developments or procedures adopted by the staff, and so help volunteers improve their levels of skill
- Volunteers should not unreasonably refuse to attend appropriate training events.

4.9 Expenses

- All requests for reimbursement of travelling expenses must be made on a Volunteer Expenses Claim Form (Appendix A) and must be countersigned by the Departmental Manager/ Budget Holder before passing for payment
- Payment of expenses will be limited to a maximum of £15 per day.

4.10 Absenteeism

- Volunteers are expected to perform their allocated tasks in accordance with their agreements on a regular and punctual basis
- Periods of absence should be notified to the departmental manager or the Volunteer Manager as far in advance as possible to enable alternative arrangements to be made

4.11 Representation of Erskine

- Volunteers must not make any statements which may obligate Erskine.
- Volunteers must not release information to the media.

4.12 Confidentiality

- Erskine requires its volunteers to maintain the confidentiality of information they may acquire in the course of, or arising from, their tasks. Any unauthorised disclosure or misuse of information may result in the ending of the voluntary agreement.

4.13 Leave of Absence

- The Volunteer Manager will discuss with any volunteer their wish to have leave of absence. Any volunteer who is absent from their duty for more than three months are not guaranteed to be able to return to that position

4.14 Evaluations

- Volunteers shall receive periodic evaluation to review their duties
- Formal evaluations will take place at the end of the volunteer's first year
- Evaluations will:
 - Review how the volunteer carries out their allocated tasks

- Convey appreciation
- Confirm the volunteer's commitment to their duties
- Review and improve the relationship between the volunteer and the Hospital
- The evaluation will be recorded in writing and be kept on the volunteer's personal file. A copy may be given to the volunteer if requested
- After the initial evaluation (at the end of the volunteer's first year), evaluations are to be carried out on an annual basis
- Any issues arising during the interim period will be dealt with as they arise. If necessary, this may lead to a formal evaluation

4.15 Ending of a Voluntary Agreement

- Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of Erskine or who fail to satisfactorily perform their voluntary duties may have their voluntary agreement ended
- No volunteer will have their voluntary agreement ended until they have had the opportunity to discuss the reasons for the problem with the departmental manager or the Volunteer Manager
- No voluntary agreement may be ended by the unit manager without prior consultation with the Volunteer Manager

4.16 Reasons for the Ending of a Voluntary Agreement

- Reasons for the Ending of a Voluntary Agreement may include:
 - consistent failure to perform duties to a satisfactory standard
 - negligence
 - theft (including theft from staff or residents)
 - fraud or attempted fraud
 - intoxication and/or drug abuse on duty
 - wilful contravention of safety regulations or failure to follow safe working practices, thereby endangering others or oneself
 - acts or threats of physical violence against fellow employees, superiors, residents or members of the public
 - breach of confidentiality, that is, disclosure of resident, commercial or confidential information regarding staff to persons not authorised to possess it
 - discrimination and/or contravention of the Equal Opportunities Policy

4.17 Volunteer Concerns Procedure

- A volunteer with a concern or complaint against a member of staff or another volunteer should speak to their departmental manager or if the concern or complaint is against the departmental manager, to the departmental manager's line manager or to the Volunteer Manager. See also Volunteer Concerns Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

4.18 Volunteer Driving

- The following points should be checked before a volunteer uses his/her own car in the course of their voluntary work:
 - The volunteer holds a valid driving licence for the particular vehicle being used
 - The driving licence will be checked annually by the Volunteer Manager or departmental manager to ensure that it is still valid. Details of the licence will be kept in volunteers personal file.
 - The volunteer's motor insurance policy allows it to be used for voluntary duties. This can be established by the volunteer seeking confirmation from the insurance company. A Motor Insurance Declaration Form must be completed by the volunteer and the policy must be sighted by the Volunteer Manager (Volunteer Coordinator at Erskine Edinburgh)

4.19 Recognition

- All staff and Departmental Managers are encouraged to undertake methods of recognition of volunteer service on a regular basis throughout the year. These methods of informal recognition should range from a simple 'thank you' to a concerted effort to include volunteers as participants in decision making and implementation for projects which involve the volunteers
- Volunteers will be recognised annually within national Volunteer Week (1 – 7 June). Certificates will be awarded to those Volunteers completing 1 years service and subsequently on completion of 5 years and multiples of 5 years service. Certificates or other methods of recognition will be issued outwith these times when it is deemed appropriate to do so.
- Volunteers will be nominated for other external awards such as Queens Award, League of Mercy, Provosts Award, MV award and others.
- Erskine will host regular social events to recognise the work of the volunteers and to thank them for their contribution to the Hospital. In addition to an annual event held during Volunteers Week volunteers are encouraged to participate in smaller localised and departmental events as appropriate.