**1. Introduction:**

Volunteer handbooks are a great way to introduce someone to your organisation. If given before onboarding and training the volunteer, they are empowered to decide if the organisation and volunteer responsibility is for them, potentially saving you both time.

A handbook will hopefully cover all the areas that volunteers may ask questions about and will give further detail about the support and procedures in place for volunteers. Handbooks should not be seen as a replacement to inductions, only as something that they can refer to during their time as a volunteer.

Volunteers are also reported to feel more supported by the organisation and have less anxiety.

**2. Useful links:**

Further information can be found within [Beecan.org](https://app.beecan.org/) library of resources.

**3. Actions:**

 Consider what questions you would ask if you were going to volunteer

 Review and amend your volunteer handbook as necessary

 If required, action Appendix 1 and update staff, volunteers and relevant stakeholders

**4. Additional notes:**

A volunteer policy would give further detail about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

For additional support, please contact:
Hull CVS at enquiries@hull-cvs.co.uk for Hull based organisations

HEY Smile at volunteering@heysmilefoundation.org.uk for East Riding based organisations

**5. Disclaimer:**

Whilst we have done our best to source appropriate links and best practice templates to support your organisation, please be aware that due to regulatory changes, these templates may not always be the best example.

We therefore strongly suggest thoroughly reading and amending templates as necessary and conducting periodic reviews of all policies within your organisation to ensure they still meet national guidelines and regulations.

**6. Appendix 1:**

**Volunteer Handbook Example**

This is what a volunteer handbook may look like split into different sections:

A Welcome Page with a message from the CEO/Lead

This could include a welcome to the organisation, a thank you for giving time, something to say what having volunteers means to the organisation, what the handbook contains and how to use it.

Volunteer Specification

This might be a general role description/volunteer specification that applies to all volunteers or a standalone digital or printed copy of a specific role description for that volunteer.
Personal Attributes may include - having a positive outlook, enthusiastic, reliable, willing to learn, accepting of diversity etc. Skills and Abilities may include - good communication skills, able to work in a team, respecting of confidentiality etc.

Volunteer Journey

This will show the volunteer what they can expect in the coming weeks and months and may look something like - Application submitted > Interview > DBS > Essential Training > Induction > Supervisions.

You can go into these more in detail in the following pages, which will help your volunteer feel settled about what is to come and give them the opportunity to ask questions ahead of time. Details may include - time frames, what is expected of them, what training they will be doing, how often they will have supervision etc.

Introduction of the Volunteer Team

This might just be the Volunteer Manager or Coordinator, or it might be a wider team. Include a blurb introducing everyone and an image of them if possible. Give details of a key contact in case of any queries or issues.

Organisation/Service Structure

Give an overview of what the whole organisation looks like so that volunteers understand the context around their role and feel part of the organisation.
Give a brief overview of what categories the volunteer roles tend to come under. Try not to be too specific as these will change and adapt. Examples might be - office roles, public facing roles, service user roles.

Practicalities

Give information on how volunteers would log hours and expenses (and why it’s important they do), reimbursement details and how to use any systems they might need to use.

Expectations

This should include organisation expectations like - provide adequate training and supervision, give feedback, treat you as an equal to staff, help develop your skills.
Volunteer expectations may include - adhere to the volunteer policy, engage in supervisions, report hours, notes, and any risks or issues.

Benefits of Volunteering

It might be that you are able to offer up-skilling training opportunities, in-house mental health support, free gym membership, volunteer socials or another perk. If so, you can list them here.

Additional areas you may want to cover

Information on safeguarding – who the safeguarding lead is, where to report, etc.

Information on volunteer’s place of work – fire escapes, first aid points, facilities, etc.

Information on lone working – checking in and out of shifts, points of contact etc.

FAQ page.