



## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### Definition of a Volunteer

*Someone who undertakes work for the benefit of others beyond immediate family and friends and/or for the benefit of the community or the environment, as well as for self. It is undertaken by choice and is unpaid.*

This policy refers to:

- ✓ All volunteers on YMCA Scotland Committees
- ✓ Volunteers on other full-time programmes
- ✓ People who participate in the staffing and management of YMCA Scotland Programmes in other ways, but are not paid by the organisation

### Statement of principles of good practice

- We welcome support and participation by volunteers of all ages
- We aim to provide a constructive and supportive environment for all volunteers
- We hope that volunteers will enjoy their involvement and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives
- We believe that our relationship with our volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment. We recognise that our volunteers have rights and responsibilities
- Volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid staff
- Opportunities will be given for volunteers to represent their view about their work and about YMCA Scotland
- The tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities – i.e. volunteer task descriptions
- The organisation will keep records of the work done by volunteers through either:
  - Recorded minutes in the case of committee members and those involved in management of programmes
  - Support and supervision records
- These will act as a basis for monitoring and volunteers will have access to these records.
- Implementation and monitoring of the policy will be the responsibility of the National General Secretary

## 2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- 2.1 The YMCA Scotland equal opportunities statement will be adhered to in relation to recruiting and selecting volunteers. In the event of elections for volunteers, YMCA Scotland constitution will be adhered to.
- 2.2 Promotion of volunteering opportunities will specify the task to be undertaken and will draw attention to the benefits and experience to be gained from participation in volunteering with YMCA Scotland.
- 2.3 Written task descriptions will delineate time, commitment and necessary skills and actual duties for Committee Officer posts.
- 2.4 In selecting volunteers who are to work with children, young people and other vulnerable groups the procedures and standards laid down in the YMCA Scotland Safeguarding & Child Protection and Protection of Protected & At-Risk policies will be followed.
- 2.5 People who offer to volunteer will have their offers dealt with as quickly as possible.

- 2.6 Once placed, we will expect volunteers to be covered by and comply with existing policies and procedures including health and safety, child protection, vulnerable adults, equal opportunities and staff code of conduct.
- 2.7 Where applicable a PVG will be sought.

### **3 SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS**

- 3.1 We will invest financial and personnel resources for the management of volunteers.
- 3.2 We will provide an induction for all volunteers.
- 3.3 Volunteers will be provided with copies of relevant policies, including Health & Safety, Safeguarding & Child Protection, Protection of Protected & At-Risk Adults, Drug & Alcohol and Volunteer.
- 3.4 We will provide funding for the payment of specified volunteers expenses. Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.
- 3.5 Volunteer activity is covered by the organisation's public liability insurance.
- 3.6 Non-committee volunteers will be allocated a named support worker who will retain a monitoring and support role as part of their job description. Volunteers will be informed who to contact in an emergency.
- 3.7 Training to develop volunteer capabilities and personal competence appropriate to their volunteering role will be made available where deemed necessary.
- 3.8 Volunteers will be encouraged to provide each other with mutual support.
- 3.9 Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's complaints, grievances and disciplinary procedures and of who to contact if they have a grievance or complaint about any aspect of their work.
- 3.10 On leaving, volunteers will have the opportunity to evaluate and feedback their experiences as a volunteer with YMCA Scotland.
- 3.11 In addition, we recognise the rights of volunteers:
- to be shown appreciation
  - to have safe working conditions
  - to know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
  - to ask for a reference
  - to withdraw from voluntary work and to be consulted on decisions that will affect what they do.

### **4 EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS**

- 4.1 Volunteers should carry out their tasks in a way that corresponds to the aims and values of this organisation.
- 4.2 Volunteers must be reliable i.e., with time keeping, with completion of task to which they are committed and with support to YMCA Scotland staff.
- 4.3 Where a volunteer (excluding volunteer committee members) has failed to responsibly fulfil an agreed role, a meeting with a member of staff shall seek to re-affirm the position or to address retention of the volunteer. A right of appeal to any decision taken shall apply and shall be directed to

the National General Secretary. Such an appeal must be submitted in writing no more than 10 working days following a decision re a volunteer position. This appeal shall receive a written response from the National General Secretary within a further 10 working days from lodgement. The decision of the National General Secretary is final.

- 4.4 Volunteer committee members shall retain the right of appeal as defined above relating directly to the Chairman of the National Council.

## **5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH PAID STAFF**

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 Volunteers will not be engaged in times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff. They may continue with their regular work, but will not be asked to undertake additional duties.
- 5.3 Supervision and support staff will be able to access training on volunteer support issues.

## **6 CONTRACTS AND SERVICE AGREEMENTS**

In entering into contracts or service agreement, such as with lead bodies and funders, which involve volunteers, we will ensure that:

- 6.1 The contract or service agreement provides for the necessary resources for involving volunteers.
- 6.2 The impact of volunteering and its benefits are promoted and acknowledged.

### **Responsibility for Policy –**

**Operational Practice: National General Secretary**

**Executive Responsibility: YMCA Scotland Executive Committee**

**ACCEPTED AS THE VOLUNTEER POLICY BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ National Council Chairman**

**SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ National General Secretary**

This policy will be reviewed at 18-month intervals.

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR YMCA SCOTLAND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### 1.1 Participation in meetings

- Participate fully and openly in meetings.
- Share ideas and suggestions and do not be afraid to ask questions.
- Confidential information or material provided to the committee or discussed at meetings must remain confidential and must not be discussed outside the committee.
- Criticise in a constructive way and, where possible, suggest an alternative course.
- Attend all meetings and give apologies when it is not possible to attend. Three consecutive meetings showing non-attendance and no recorded apology will result in action being taken to confirm their membership status.
- Being a committee member may involve taking on some action points as a result of attending meetings.
- Bring a fair mind and an open view to all meetings.
- Complete a code of conduct and register of interest form
- If an issue comes up in discussion in which you have an interest, declare that interest before the discussion commences.

### 1.2 Relationships with paid staff

- As an employer you retain a responsibility to hold staff accountable for their actions. A balance should be sought between accountability, trust and core information required.
- Contact with staff of committee members regarding National Council matters shall be through the National General Secretary unless otherwise agreed.

### 1.3 Representing the YMCA

- The extent to which any one volunteer or small group of volunteers is empowered to speak for or take action on behalf of the YMCA must be a matter for all members to decide together. Such decisions must be recorded.
- Act as an ambassador for the YMCA. It is important to maintain the YMCA reputation and committee members shall not bring the YMCA into disrepute.

### 1.4 Taking on responsibility

- If insufficient information is provided in order for you to take on a task assigned at a meeting, you should ask for further assistance from the Chair, or from the National General Secretary in the first instance.
- Keep informed of what is going on in the organisation through reading newsletters, papers and other mailings which are going out – as well as attending NC meetings etc
- Members must make decisions together and take joint responsibility for them. Members must accept responsibility as a member of the committee, not as a member of the Local Association nominating him/her.
- Do not let personal interests affect decisions made, gain financial or material benefit for yourself, family or friends.
- Claim appropriate expenses for involvement in the organisation as a volunteer – as outlined in the YMCA Scotland Volunteering Policy
- Undertake training as agreed within the committee and organised for the benefit of committee members.
- Do not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to other organisations which might influence your in the performance of your duty as a member of the board.

## **VOLUNTEER ROLES**

### **Committee members**

#### **Strategic and financial responsibilities**

- Make planning and policy decisions which follow the goals and purposes of the organisation based on all the facts and consideration of information.
- Monitor the implementation of those decisions and evaluate their results
- Ensure that decisions can be realistically financed.
- Participate in fundraising campaigns and open doors for others to raise funds.
- Highlight all instances where policy or practice should be changed.

#### **Responsibilities as an employer**

- Ensure clear understanding of the scope of authority between committee and staff – in particular – the National General Secretary.
- Work with staff – respecting roles and balancing trust and accountability
- Ensure that the organisation is operating legally and within statutory requirements re finance, staffing, health and safety etc.
- Provide counsel, advice and encouragement to staff

#### **Representation and democracy within the YMCA in Scotland**

- Represent the view of Local Associations
- Serve on sub committees, small working groups and attend external meetings on behalf of the YMCA etc as requested and where possible, committee members may be asked to take a leadership role.
- Represent YMCA in the community, nationally and internationally where appropriate.
- Be accountable to the Scottish National Council of YMCAs
- Be responsible for the election of new committee members and officers in line with the constitution of the Scottish National Council of YMCAs.

#### **Person Specification**

Committee members should:

- Understand and support all YMCA Scotland objective, goals, purpose and programmes
- Be able to commit the time required to fulfil their role
- Be able to assess information and make important decisions.
- Be able to state view on important issues
- Be able to keep collective unity in committee and support decisions which are democratically made
- Be able to deal with problems and issues with staff, other board members or other organisations in a sensitive and constructive way.
- Have a commitment and interest in young people, their problems and their potential.
- Have an interest in youth and community organisations and volunteering.
- Be proud of the YMCAs traditions but always eager to improve them.
- Be prepared to grow and learn through the experience of volunteering for a YMCA Scotland committee.

## **Officers Job Roles**

### **Chair (elected annually)**

- To ensure that National Council meets twice each year
- To chair National Council meetings effectively by:
  - Assisting in the preparation of the agenda
  - Enabling open and inclusive debate
  - Ensuring decisions are made and recorded in the minutes of each meeting
  - Ensuring that appropriate papers for the meeting are circulated by staff in good time to allow for preparation by those attending
- To chair Executive meetings and meetings of the Officers
- To represent the National Council locally, nationally and internationally
- To provide leadership within the movement
- To provide a support and supervisory role to the National General Secretary
- To strive to achieve best practice in all YMCA Scotland activities

### **Honorary Treasurer**

- To oversee the finances of YMCA Scotland
- To consult with and advise budget holders in the preparation of annual budgets
- To present to the FPP Committee, Executive and Council annual budget statements with appropriate recommendations. The final budget agreement should be made by the Executive by March in each year at the latest.
- To present full financial statements prepared by headquarters to each meeting of the FPP Committee
- To present summary financial statements and where judged appropriate full financial statements to the Executive and Council.
- To explain and interpret these accounts as and where necessary
- To advise the FPP committee and Executive on appropriate action in relation to financial strategies
- To work alongside the National General Secretary in the management of the financial resources of National Council.

### **Vice Chair**

- To provide leadership within the movement
- To chair at least one committee of YMCA Scotland – e.g., the FPP or Programme committee
- To step in for the Chair at National Council and Executive meetings in their absence
- To represent the National Council locally, nationally and internationally.