

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Much of Volunteering Matters work relates to confidential information about individuals and agencies. You must not, at any time, even after termination of your employment or volunteering with Volunteering Matters, disclose any confidential information without prior authority.

Divulging any confidential information to any unauthorised person may lead to your dismissal. If you are in doubt whatsoever concerning the confidentiality or otherwise of information, you must consult your Manager or HR Team, or your volunteer organiser.

Addresses of staff or volunteers should never be given out, but we are always willing to redirect letters sent to headquarters.

From time to time staff and volunteers have been asked by the police to disclose information about other members of staff, volunteers or clients. This information is often asked for in the course of enquiries into quite serious crimes. If this happens to you, you should pass this query to your line manager or volunteer organiser at once.

Declaration

I understand the duty required of me to keep confidential information to which I am party about service users and others involved in their cases/history.

Signed.....

Date.....

Volunteering Matters creates opportunities for people to take an active part in the life of their community.

Volunteering Matters is a registered charity in England and Wales no. 291222 and in Scotland no. SC039171.

Volunteering Matters is a company limited by guarantee no. 1435877

It is bad practice to disclose any confidential information about RSVP's volunteers or service users. Any breach of confidence will be dealt with in accordance with the complaints procedure and is considered very serious.

What exactly is meant by a breach of confidence? This is not as clear cut as it may first seem.

- If a child/person under the age of eighteen makes a disclosure of abuse or something else that may harm them to a volunteer, then the volunteer is obliged by law to follow the procedures laid down by the organisation they are volunteering for [in this case the Volunteering Matters Vulnerable Persons Policy].
- Volunteers should feel free to discuss any worries, questions or general concerns/observations with appropriate staff/regional coordinator/area organiser.
- Most information about service users/other volunteers clearly needs to remain confidential: e.g. there is no reason why a volunteer need know why a service user is disabled. If the information is then revealed to a volunteer by the service user then it is not appropriate to discuss this outside the project and the information should be considered confidential. Personal information about any service user is to be treated respectfully and confidentially even if there is no indication that it need be held so.
- RSVP is committed to confidentiality on a 'need to know' basis and accepts the need for information to be disclosed according to the discretion of the volunteer.
- Confidential matters must not be discussed with the general public nor with other volunteers who may not have the necessary insight into an individual piece of work.
- In training sessions, meetings, and informal discussions, care should be taken not to disclose information where individuals can be identified, or particular happenings in your project made public.
- Personal information about other volunteers even if disclosed in a social setting should not be repeated and should be treated in a sensitive manner.

Aug 2015

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