



volunteer centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Fhine Ghall

FINGAL

criteria for non registration or non-placement of volunteers and non-registration of, or non-placement of volunteers with organisations

Introduction

Fingal Volunteer Centre is an independent organisation committed to the promotion, development and support of volunteer participation in the local area. Fingal Volunteer Centre's equality statement affirms its commitment to treat all people equally regardless of age, colour, criminal record, economic status, ethnic origin, marital status, mental or physical health, nationality, political beliefs, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation or any combination of these. As an organisation that deals with people who want to volunteer and voluntary and community organisations looking for volunteers and that actively promotes volunteering to all sectors of society, Fingal Volunteer Centre must at all times and in all circumstances give each person it encounters an equal opportunity to explore their volunteering options and each organisation an opportunity to register their volunteering opportunities.

Context

This document must be read in conjunction with:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Policy on Harassment and Bullying
- Volunteer Policy

Procedures

1. General principles

The purpose of this document is to give guidance to the board, management and staff on those circumstances in which a person (s) or organisation(s) may, after an initial interview, be deemed unsuitable to further access the services of Fingal Volunteer Centre in order to comply with the policies mentioned above. It is not the purpose of this document to discriminate in any way against any person(s) or organisation(s).

1.2 Responsibility

The Fingal Volunteer Centre board, management committee, management and staff are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented efficiently and effectively.

1.3 Measures

This document lists the procedures that must be taken in order to fulfil the above policy. The measures outlined in this document must be adhered to at all times. If they are breached the appropriate complaints, grievance or disciplinary procedures will be used to resolve the problem and to make improvements. Any person(s) or organisation(s) that chooses to take such an action will not be penalised by the organisation or treated less favourably as a result.

2.0 Volunteers

2.1 Potential Volunteers

Any person:

- who by their actions or words when being interviewed as a potential volunteer behaves in a manner that is inappropriate, prejudicial or offensive
- who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- will be excluded from continuing their registration with FVC.

Any person that has registered with FVC and been placed with a group and that subsequently within the context of their volunteering role:

- behaves in a manner that is inappropriate, prejudicial or offensive will be removed from the FVC registrar of volunteers.
- is under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- will be de-registered.

Inappropriate, prejudicial or offensive behaviour may include:

- Inappropriate language, i.e., language that is overtly sexual, insulting, provocative, derogatory, abusive, racist, or slanderous.
- threats including physical, emotional or verbal assaults.
- carrying an offensive weapon

2.1 Organisations

Any organisation/group/society may be excluded from registering with FVC on the following grounds:

- The organisation actively promotes inequality for reason of age, colour, criminal record, economic status, ethnic origin, marital status, mental or physical health, nationality, political beliefs, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation or any combination of these
- The organisation uses volunteers inappropriately, e.g., to replace paid staff
- The organisation actively promotes anti-social behaviour towards governments, people, animals or property
- The organisation actively engages in unlawful behaviours or deeds.

3.0 Methodology for exclusion of person.

3.1 Volunteer(s) registering for the first time

Step 1.

If an individual(s) acts during interview with FVC staff (whether by phone, email or in person) in an inappropriate, prejudicial or offensive manner or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, this person must be verbally warned that this behaviour may preclude FVC acting on their behalf to secure a volunteering role.

Step 2.

If the behaviour is not modified after the verbal warning is issued, the member of the board, management committee, management or staff must reiterate their verbal warning and failing an effort to comply on behalf of the potential interviewee must excuse themselves from the situation.

Step 3.

The management of FVC must be informed immediately of the situation and the reasons the board, committee or staff member excused his/herself must be explained in detail. A written incident report must be prepared.

Step 4.

Based on information obtained in step 3 above, it is the responsibility of the manager to pursue the situation, by contacting the person to:

- Ascertain, if possible, the cause(s) of the inappropriate, prejudicial or offensive behaviour.
- Ascertain, if possible, if this was a once off incident.
- Explain the policy(s) of the volunteer centre to the potential volunteer.
- If appropriate, offer the potential volunteer another opportunity to interview.

Step 5.

If the manager during this contact with the potential volunteer or at a subsequent interview is also subjected to behaviour that is inappropriate, prejudicial or offensive, or finds that the person is still under the influence of alcohol or drugs, then the manager must explain the policy(s) of the volunteer centre to the potential volunteer and clearly explain why the person cannot be registered as a volunteer. It is important that this conversation is based on the policy(s) of the organisation only and that the potential person is offered the right of reply.

In cases where the opportunity to explain the volunteer centres / Centre's policies to the potential volunteer does not occur, then a written explanation of the reasons why the person is not being registered must be sent.

Step 6.

A record must be kept of all conversations, emails, letters and telephone calls.

3.2 Registered and placed volunteer(s)

If a volunteer who has registered with FVC and has been placed in an organisation is reported by that organisation to have behaved in a manner that is inappropriate, prejudicial or offensive, or to have volunteered under the influence of alcohol or drugs then this must be investigated by FVC management

Step 1.

A meeting must be arranged with the group making the complaint to ascertain the reasons for the complaint. A record of the complaint made by the group and of any subsequent meeting(s) must be kept by Fingal Volunteer Centre Ltd. The Fingal Volunteer Centre Ltd. staff member must explain to the group that the volunteer will also be contacted to ascertain their side of the story.

Step 2.

The person about whom the complaint has been made must be contacted and a meeting arranged. It is important that the representative of Fingal Volunteer Centre who attends this meeting is open and fair in listening to the person's side of the story. A record of this meeting must be kept.

Step 3

If having interviewed both the person and the group, the FVC staff member is satisfied that the complain is valid and just, then the volunteer must be contacted and it must be explained that their behaviour precludes FVC acting on their behalf at this time. However, the person must be given the opportunity to re-apply should the situation change.

Step 4.

Once the decision has been made to exclude the volunteer, their entry in Salesforce must be de-activated.

Step 5.

If having interviewed both the person and the group, the FVC staff member is satisfied that the complaint is invalid and unjust then the procedures outlined below must be followed.

Step 6:

The volunteer must be re-assured that FVC will address the issue on their behalf with the organisation/group in question, if that is their wish. If the volunteer does not wish to pursue the matter, it must be explained that FVC will investigate further in order to prevent a similar situation arising.

FVC must contact the board/management committee of the organisation to arrange a meeting and to further explore the issue. It is important the organisation/group is given every opportunity to explain the circumstances and that they are informed, if applicable, of the point of view of the volunteer. If possible or practicable, FVC must mediate between the group and the individual to ensure that the situation is resolved to the satisfaction of everyone.

FVC must offer to work with the group to ensure that the same situation does not arise. This may entail helping to create a volunteer policy etc.

4.0 Methodology for the exclusion of groups from registering

4.1 Steps

Step 1.

If an organisation contacts FVC (whether by phone, fax, email or in person) to register and this organisation is known and recognised to promote inequality, hatred, prejudice, unlawful or anti-social behaviour than it must be explained to them that FVC's policies exclude them from registering.

In circumstances where this explanation is given verbally, a follow-up letter to the organisation must be sent explaining Fingal Volunteer Centre's policies in this regard.

Step 2.

If the group persists in trying to register, or if they are not satisfied with the explanation for exclusion offered by the member of staff, it is the responsibility of the manager to pursue the situation, by contacting the organisation to explain the policy(s) of the volunteer centre to the potential volunteer.

Step 3.

A record must be kept of all conversations/ telephone call/ emails/letters relating to the matter. It must be stressed that an organisation/group can only be excluded under circumstances where there is evidence of any of the event outlined above.

4.2 Non placement of volunteers with an organisation that has registered.

Steps

Step 1

If it comes to the attention of FVC that an organisation is using volunteers inappropriately, then this situation must be investigated. The inappropriate use of volunteers may include:

- Using volunteers in place of paid workers
- Placing volunteers in physical/ emotional danger
- Requiring volunteers to perform tasks for which they have not been trained
- Placing volunteers in at-risk situations.

Investigation may include telephone conversations; visits to the organisation, interviews with other FVC placed volunteers. It must be stressed that any investigation must be handled sensitively and that every opportunity must be given to the group to explain how the information concerning their actions may have arisen

Step 2.

On concluding the investigation and based on its conclusions, FVC must either:

- Offer support, training and information to the organisation in order to help them understand how to work with volunteers. This should be on-going and a bespoke programme must be drawn up with the group to address the issues.
- De-register the group on the grounds that they do not currently comply, nor do they intend to comply with good practice in volunteering.