



volunteer centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Fhine Ghall

FINGAL

# fingal volunteer centre unsuitable placements policy

## Purpose of document

Volunteers may choose roles or opportunities that turn out to be inappropriate or unsuitable. This may happen for a number of reasons, including: where the role has not met the expectations of the volunteer; the organisation felt the volunteer was unsuitable for the role; the circumstances of the volunteer or the organisation changed; or the volunteer centre misunderstood the volunteer and/or the role. This document will set out the procedures to be followed in any of these events occurring.

## Equal Opportunities

At all times the volunteer centre, volunteer and voluntary organisation must consider the part that discrimination may be playing in the decision that a volunteer is unsuitable for a role. Discrimination may be displayed overtly or covertly through policies, procedures and practices. Volunteers and Voluntary organisations should be encouraged to consider if and how discrimination is affecting the decisions being taken and this should be named and challenged. This should occur in an environment of learning and development, rather than censure. Please see the Fingal Volunteer Centre's policy on Equal Opportunities for further information.

## Impact on Future Placements

In dealing with unsuitable or inappropriate placements the Volunteer Centre may acquire information about a volunteer or voluntary organisation that can assist in future decision making about placements.

At no time will the Volunteer Centre share information about a volunteer with anyone else, without the volunteer's prior consent, and sensitive information should only be recorded in Salesforce with the volunteer's verbal consent. If the Volunteer Centre feels that that information would help an organisation better assist the volunteer, the Centre will encourage the volunteer to share that information himself or herself. The only time the Volunteer Centre would share a volunteer's personal information, is where the Volunteer Centre Manager in agreement with a member of the Board, feels there is a significant risk to either the volunteer's or another person's safety.

Where the volunteer centre acquires information about an organisation or a vacancy that would lead to difficulties for future volunteers, the Volunteer Centre will raise this with the organisation. If this can be resolved by improving the information we make available to volunteers – that will be done. If the difficulty is in structures, policies or practices in the organisation, such as poor child protection procedures leaving volunteers vulnerable or a lack of proper health and safety procedures, these will be raised with the organisation. The Volunteer Centre may choose to make all opportunities inactive until the Centre believes the issues have been addressed. The volunteer centre will, where possible, offer support and advice to the organisation in resolving the issue.

## Record Keeping

All discussions and their outcomes will be recorded in Salesforce and any changes to Placement Status will also be updated on the database. Reminders should be set to ensure that the Volunteer Centre keeps in touch with both volunteer and voluntary organisations until an outcome has been agreed.

## Procedures

In all FVC's dealings with Volunteers, the Centre encourages the Volunteer to take ownership of the placement process, and use the Volunteer Centre as a source of information, support and guidance. Volunteers are encouraged in the first instance to deal directly with the Voluntary Organisation and vice versa.

In the majority of cases, the Volunteer Centre furnishes the volunteer with the necessary contact details for the organisation. If they decide not to go ahead with the opportunity without contacting the organisation, no further action is required. FVC's own follow-up procedures will pick this up and adapt the database as necessary. This procedure only applies where the volunteer has made contact with the organisation, or where the Volunteer Centre has made contact on their behalf.

1. Where a volunteering role has not met the expectations of the volunteer, the volunteer is encouraged to discuss this with the voluntary organisation. The Volunteer Centre will assist the volunteer prepare for this discussion if desired. They may cover such questions as: Is this a role the volunteer definitely does not want to do? Would they be interested if some changes were made to it? Would they like to stay with the organisation if they were in a different role? Where no compromise is possible, the volunteer is encouraged to let the organisation know, giving as much feedback on their decision as possible. The Volunteer Centre will confirm this with the organisation. The Volunteer Centre will engage in this process with the organisation if requested by the volunteer.
2. Where a volunteer is deemed to be unsuitable for the role, the organisation is encouraged to discuss this directly with the volunteer. Some organisations may need support in this. Organisations are encouraged to give feedback to a volunteer on why they were deemed unsuitable. Organisations should be referred to their Role Profiles for assistance in this. Those without Role Profiles should be encouraged to consider the importance such documents play and offered assistance in this area. Organisations should also be encouraged to explore other possibilities for engaging the volunteer. The Volunteer Centre will check that the volunteer has been communicated with. At no time will the Volunteer Centre act as a go-between for the voluntary organisation, explaining the organisations decision, but as a last resort the Volunteer Centre will let a volunteer know the Organisation's final decision. The Volunteer Centre may exclude a voluntary organisation from the database if it refuses to communicate its decisions to volunteers on a number of occasions without good cause.
3. Where the circumstances of either the volunteer or the organisation has changed, each is encouraged to contact the other. Again, alternative opportunities are sought that meet the needs of both the volunteer and voluntary organisations – both can be provided with support and guidance on this matter. Where compromise is not possible, the Volunteer Centre will ensure that each knows the outcome. All Salesforce records will be updated with the additional information if the issue blocking the placement applies in other situations. The volunteer will be offered further support in choosing new opportunities.

4. Where the Volunteer Centre misunderstood the Volunteer or the Opportunity, it is important that this is acknowledged. With the Volunteer, accurate information should be sought and the database updated. With the organisation, accurate information should also be sought, but in addition a Role Profile or other information should be requested – where this is not available, the Organisation should be offered support in developing one.

This list is not exhaustive and other scenarios may arise. In all cases, the volunteer and voluntary organisation should be encouraged to resolve the issue themselves, through seeking to adapt the role or finding a different role for the volunteer to engage in. At the same time, there are many other volunteers and volunteering opportunities on the database to meet the needs of either. The Volunteer Centre shall at a minimum, keep updated on these discussions, ensuring that an outcome is reached within a reasonable timeframe. If necessary support and guidance can be offered to both to assist them come to a decision.