

Volunteering Leave Policy

The Bristol Methodist District. (Charity Number 1134873)

First Issued	January 2025
Last review	January 2025

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We actively encourage and support employees who wish to do voluntary work.
- 1.2 We recognise the positive difference that volunteers can make to our local communities, and we also recognise how volunteering can provide employees with a sense of community and purpose.
- 1.3 This policy sets out our commitment to supporting employees who want to volunteer during working hours.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees employed by us. It does not apply to workers, contractors, volunteers or interns working for the organisation.

3 Types of volunteering that we support

- 3.1 We understand that volunteering opportunities are diverse. We support any activity that positively impacts the community, helps vulnerable people in our society and/or helps to improve the environment.
- 3.2 We want you to be involved in something that you genuinely care about and understand that organisations that you can volunteer for are likely to be registered charities, not-for-profit organisations, educational institutions (such as schools and colleges) or hospitals.

4 Volunteer leave

- 4.1 All employees are entitled to a maximum of two days paid volunteer leave per year, or a pro rata equivalent if you work part-time.
- 4.2 Volunteer leave may be taken as full days or half days. Any unused volunteer leave may not be carried over from one year to the next.

5 Volunteering opportunities

- 5.1 While you can use your volunteer leave for voluntary activities of your choice, we can at your request help you search for volunteering opportunities relevant to your interests.

6 Requesting volunteer leave

- 6.1 You must give as much notice as possible when booking volunteer leave.
- 6.2 All volunteer leave must be approved in advance by your Line Manager.
- 6.3 Every effort will be made to meet your request for volunteer leave. However, there may be circumstances where your Line Manager may turn down your request due to operational needs, where there is insufficient capacity within the organisation to accommodate high levels of leave or they consider that a conflict of interest may arise.

6.4 If your Line Manager considers that your absence could cause difficulties to for the organisation, they will ask you to take your volunteer leave at a different time or for a different organisation.

7 Insurance

7.1 If you perform voluntary work under one of our own arranged volunteering programmes, we will ensure that you are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury.

7.2 We will also ensure that you are provided with professional and public liability insurance.

7.3 If your volunteer leave is independent to us, you will need to check with the organisation you are volunteering with.

8 Expenses

8.1 Any claim for travel and subsistence expenses while carrying out voluntary work must be agreed in advance by your Line Manager and submitted in accordance with the organisation's Expenses Policy

9 Standard of behaviour

9.1 During any period of volunteer leave, you are representing the organisation, and you must behave in an appropriate, mature and responsible manner.

9.2 In particular, you must not behave in a way that could cause reputational damage to the organisation or do or say anything that risks breaching confidential business information.

10 Suggestions for new volunteering opportunities

10.1 We encourage you to make suggestions for developing volunteering partnerships with organisations, or other volunteering opportunities that could be initiated under this policy.

10.2 You can do this by making suggestions to your Line Manager.

11 Data protection

11.1 When dealing with volunteer leave, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with the organisation's Data Protection Policy. In particular, we will record only the personal information required and keep the information only for as long as necessary.

12 Review

12.1 This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of any member of staff, but it will be automatically reviewed two years after initial approval and thereafter on a biennial basis unless organisational changes, legislations, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

13 Definitions

13.1 The Bristol Methodist District ("we", "us", "our")

13.2 The Employee ("you", "your")

Document control box

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