



Volunteer Policy

Mission:

EK Community Food Bank is a short-term care initiative that aims to help families who are facing financial difficulty and who do not have enough to buy all the food they require as a family. Food packages are given out freely to families without question or judgement.

We partner with a number of churches throughout the town to provide support and services throughout East Kilbride. We also partner with and signpost to other agencies to provide additional support and help address underlying issues.

We also provide Community Cafes at all of our drop in locations where we provide a warm welcoming environment, free tea/coffee/food, and a listening ear, creating a sense of community.

Why Include Volunteers?

We recognize that volunteers play a vital role within the foodbank and that their contribution enables us to deliver our services. We want to ensure that there are good working relationships with volunteers, and that volunteers are well supported.

- Our role is to encourage voluntary activity, and therefore, we want to take a leading role in the involvement of individuals from the community as volunteers to help deliver our services
- We need people from all walks of life, who can bring their different skills and experiences to our foodbank
- Volunteers bring a different perspective, often reflecting the views of the local community
- Volunteers help to extend the services we are able to offer

Who is a volunteer?

A volunteer is any individual who undertakes unpaid activities on behalf of the foodbank of their own free choice. Work experience placements are different to volunteering and further guidance should be sought from volunteer foodbank manager.

Volunteers may be involved in short or long-term activities or as a one off. Typical activities may include:

- Supporting fundraising or awareness raising events
- Involvement in direct delivery of our services and projects
- Working in our unit
- Uplifting donations and making deliveries

Roles and Responsibilities

Each volunteer will be supported and supervised by a designated member of our team within the foodbank. The designated volunteer member will provide guidance, support and supervision to the volunteer to ensure that the volunteering experience is a positive and rewarding one.

The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no contractual obligation for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks. However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability and a reciprocal set of expectations:

Volunteers can expect:

- To be given a great experience.
- Being responsive to your requirements.
- Providing you with an induction.
- Providing support throughout your volunteer experience.
- Explaining the standards we expect and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.
- Doing our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us and opportunities for personal development.
- Being flexible in relation to your volunteering hours, recognising your need for holiday time and other commitments.
- Honouring the time commitment you have agreed to give us and not to expect more from you unless offered and agreed.
- Providing training required to undertake the role.
- Providing adequate training and ensure you know what to do to stay safe, in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy.
- Providing adequate insurance to cover for volunteers whilst undertaking volunteering approved and authorised by us.
- Ensuring that all volunteers are treated fairly and in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Trying to resolve fairly any issues or difficulties you may have whilst you volunteer with us before they become problems.
- Follow up on any feedback or questions you may have regarding your involvement as a volunteer.
- To receive reimbursement for reasonable expenses
- To be recognised and appreciated
- To be able to say 'no' to anything which they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable.

The foodbank expects volunteers:

- To perform their volunteering role to the best of their ability.
- Work as agreed in the volunteer role description.
- To uphold the foodbanks values and follow the policies and procedures.
- Familiarise themselves and ask if not sure about what to do to stay safe whilst volunteering.
- Maintain the confidential information of the organisation and adhere to the confidentiality policy.
- Meet time and other commitments as agreed but when unable to do so to give reasonable notice so that other arrangements can be made.
- To be reliable, open and honest
- To make the most of opportunities given, e.g. for training

Recruitment

Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview and the taking of references where appropriate.

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to when recruiting volunteers and an additional form will be used to record monitoring information for our Equal Opportunities Policy.

Where it is reasonable to do so we will be flexible with the tasks within role descriptions e.g. where some tasks may be difficult for a person with anxiety, or to better fit the motivations of the individual.

Recruitment of volunteers will be supported by the Community Outreach Worker who will draw up role descriptions with the relevant volunteer. Opportunities will be advertised on our website and via social media. All enquiries will be responded to within 7 days.

The Community Outreach Worker may assist in the recruitment process but the final decision regarding recruitment of any individual volunteer will be made by the relevant member of the team, i.e. head of relevant drop in or unit supervisor. We will also advise on the use of disclosures and other safeguarding measures where relevant to individual roles.

Where applicants are not able to be placed into their preferred role they will be given feedback and the opportunity to discuss other roles with ourselves or other local organisations.

Induction and Training

Volunteers will receive a full induction which will include:

- 1) An introduction to other volunteers
- 2) A tour of the premises with particular attention to the location of exits and the assembly point
- 3) A copy of the Volunteer Handbook, copies of all policies in respect of Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality and Safeguarding
- 4) Expenses Form and verbal instruction as to its completion
- 5) Health and Safety procedures including verbal instruction regarding the Fire Evacuation Procedure
- 6) Housekeeping e.g. use of kitchen, location of toilets

In general, training will be provided by the volunteer's supervisor in an 'on the job' basis. Occasionally additional training may be given by the Community Outreach Worker e.g. in safeguarding issues or confidentiality.

Taster period

Each volunteer will be offered a taster period. At the end of the period they will meet with their supervisor. If both are happy with the placement they will continue in their role.

Support and Supervision

Each volunteer will have a named supervisor who will be responsible for training and supervising the volunteer, as well as giving feedback and answering queries. They will also plan work for the volunteer.

Volunteers and supervisors will agree on appropriate arrangements for catch-up sessions. This will vary according to the nature of the role and how often the volunteer comes in. We recommend that each drop in/team that involves volunteers holds volunteer meetings at least every quarter to allow volunteers the opportunity to speak with other volunteers, as well as to raise any queries or concerns.

Recognition

Volunteers will be given the opportunity to share their views and opinions of their experiences of volunteering with us. We will also recognise their contribution through social media, during Volunteers' Week and by saying thank you in a variety of ways at different points.

Confidentiality

All volunteers are bound by the requirements for confidentiality as laid down in our confidentiality statement within our handbook. Volunteers who will have access to confidential information will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement, contained within our Volunteer agreement. Breach of confidentiality is taken very seriously and may result in us asking the volunteer to leave.

We are bound by the Data Protection Act to ensure that we treat volunteer information with respect. Only volunteers who need to see information for purposes related to volunteer involvement will be able to access it. We will not pass information on without permission.

Expenses

It is the policy of foodbank to reimburse relevant volunteer expenses against the production of receipts or proof of travel payments.

Mileage expenses will be reimbursed in line with the current rates paid by HMRC.

Problem-solving Procedure

We acknowledge that sometimes problems do arise. In the first instance, any volunteer with a complaint or concern should bring it up with their supervisor. If the issue cannot be resolved by informal discussion, then it can be taken up formally to the leadership team of the relevant church.

Health and Safety

We appreciate that all volunteers have the right to work and volunteer in a safe environment. Therefore, all volunteers must carry out their duties in line with the Health and Safety Policy whilst engaged in their volunteering activity.

Volunteers are covered by Public Liability Insurance of whichever church they are volunteering under but if they wish to use their car to carry out any aspect of their volunteering role, the onus is on the volunteer to notify their insurance company to ensure that they are covered on their vehicle insurance.

Moving On

When volunteers leave their role, they will be asked to complete an exit survey to provide feedback on their volunteer experience. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses more fully if they wish to do so. Responses from exit surveys should be anonymised and kept confidentially, although key information should be used to ensure continuing good practice.

Diversity

All volunteers will be expected to have an understanding and commitment to equal opportunities and diversity and should therefore ensure that they have read the Equal Opportunities Policy. Volunteers are expected to comply with this policy at all times.

We are very sensitive to different cultures, lifestyles, backgrounds and languages and strives to ensure equality of opportunity to ensure that individuals are given equal access to information, services etc and requires all volunteers to follow these principles. We will strive to provide extra support and make reasonable adjustments, if needed, for volunteers with additional needs including disability, language or mental health.