



Air Ambulance

Kent Surrey Sussex

Volunteering
Policies
2019



Volunteering Policies

About us

Volunteers are vital to Air Ambulance Kent Surrey Sussex (AAKSS). We rely almost entirely on public donations and volunteers are our link to the community. They are integrated into the structure and operations of the charity and contribute strongly towards the charity's aims and objectives. We currently have over 200 volunteers helping us to provide our life-saving service. This includes members of the Board of Trustees, who are responsible for the overall control and strategic direction of the charity.

The organisation defines a volunteer as someone who commits time and energy for the benefit of others, who does so freely, through personal choice and without expectation of a financial reward.

Volunteers support AAKSS by giving their time to carry out roles which have been initiated by, or agreed with the charity. The volunteer relationship is built solely on trust and does not involve the obligations associated with employment.

We are enthusiastic about attracting volunteers to AAKSS and are committed to providing them with meaningful roles and opportunities. We want them to feel, and be, supported. We hope that all our volunteers have a positive and rewarding experience.

Purpose of our volunteer policy

Our volunteer policy has been created to show our volunteers and potential volunteers that we have spent time and care in planning how volunteers will be welcomed at the AAKSS. It also outlines that all volunteers will be treated in a fair and consistent way. It should also help our volunteers understand what support is available to them and what they can expect from us.

Recruitment, Induction & Training

We always welcome and respect the breadth of experience, skills, dedication and goodwill that volunteers bring to the charity. Volunteers apply by direct application, where two independent references will be taken.

In most cases you need to be over 16 years of age to volunteer independently, and under 18's will be asked for parental consent. In some aspects of volunteering younger people may get involved as long as they are accompanied by a responsible adult. We do not have an upper age limit on volunteering for the charity, but there may be situations that require us to ask someone to withdraw from volunteering – an example may be when health issues are considered a risk to the person concerned or others around them.



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When an application is made by a potential volunteer an interview is arranged with two charity staff members – an adequate form of I.D is shown at this meeting. Following this meeting we write to the two references supplied. If both are satisfactory we will write to invite the potential volunteer to attend an induction at one of our charity bases. They will be asked to sign the Volunteer Agreement as part of their induction process. This agreement outlines the relationship between the organisation and the volunteer.

The Head of Volunteer Development will also arrange and provide training opportunities to specific volunteer roles.

Should the application not fulfil the requirements at any stage of the process, the application will not be taken further.

Health & Safety

The health and safety of volunteers is very important to AAKSS and we are committed to looking after their welfare. We comply with relevant legislation, regulations and codes of practice and we regularly monitor and assess all areas relating to the health and safety of our volunteers.

Equally, you, as a volunteer, have responsibility to take reasonable care over the health and safety of yourself and all other persons who may be affected by your actions or omissions whilst carrying out any activities on behalf of AAKSS. When attending events, you should familiarise yourself with fire and evacuation procedures, including locations of fire extinguishers, fire exit points and meeting points in case of an emergency.

Please report any accidents, incidents or near misses to the Head of Volunteer Development.

Where required, risk assessments will be prepared for activities being carried out in the name of the charity.

Whistleblowing Policy

A copy of this policy is available upon request from the Head of Volunteer Development.

Support & Supervision

AAKSS is committed to providing volunteers with good quality support and supervision. All volunteers will have the Head of Volunteer Development as their main point of contact. Volunteers will also be made aware of other charity staff who may be liaising with them. In some instances new volunteers may be partnered with a more experienced volunteer while they learn the requirements of the role and settle in.



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Equal Opportunities & Diversity

The charity has an Equal Opportunities philosophy to all of its volunteers. It is a key priority within the charity not to discriminate against anyone.

Confidentiality

All volunteers have a duty of confidentiality. This means that they must not disclose confidential information learned as a result of their role as a volunteer without prior consent. Confidential information includes information of a personal nature, for example, the name, address or telephone number of a donor, member of staff or volunteer being disclosed. Confidential information also includes any other information which is not in the public domain (except as a result of your unauthorised disclosure) and which relates to the affairs of the Charity or any of its partners or service users.

Volunteers must not use, disclose, share, copy or retain confidential information they have access to as a result of their role as a volunteer, at any time.

Recognition

AAKSS recognises the value of its volunteers and the time, skills and expertise they offer. AAKSS ensures that although volunteers do not receive financial reward, they are appreciated and valued in other ways. We will hold social events each year to celebrate our achievements; this might be a certificate presentation for volunteers or an annual invitation to the festive lunch. We will take opportunities on our website and Facebook page, annual general meetings, and local and national press to highlight the achievements of our volunteers. Each year we celebrate volunteers week.

Reliability & Commitment

It is important for volunteers to be reliable and to honour any agreed arrangements made with us. If a volunteer's ability to cover an agreed event or talk changes, we request that you let a member of the Charity Staff know as soon as possible. We also encourage volunteers to make us aware of holiday dates, so that we can avoid contacting you during those periods.

Resolving Problems

Whilst we hope that all of our volunteers will have a happy and fulfilling experience with AAKSS, we realise that sometimes problems do arise.

If volunteers do experience difficulty with any aspect of their volunteering, we ask that they speak directly to the Head of Volunteer Development who will do their best to resolve any problems and



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to give support and advice.

If a volunteer was to receive a complaint from a member of the general public, this must be passed directly to the Head of Volunteer Development without delay, so that it can be addressed promptly. Although dealing with complaints can be difficult, it gives us an opportunity to improve the way we do things and provide a better service to the community.

If there are any concerns around a volunteer's behaviour or contribution, the matter will be discussed amicably and steps agreed to address this. However, if these areas of concern cannot be resolved after more formal discussions, their volunteering relationship with the charity may have to cease.

Driving Charity Vehicles

To drive one of the Trust vehicles you must hold a valid driving licence. Authorisation will be declined if you have:

- ◆ A previous ban within the last 5 years
- ◆ More than 1 previous ban
- ◆ 9 or more current penalty points.
- ◆

Your driving licence will be checked annually by the Head of Volunteer Development but if any changes occur in the interim period, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform the charity.

When using a charity vehicle a driver handbook will always be available for you - covering all aspects of driving, safety checks, breakdown cover and emergency contact numbers. We do ask that you log any journey details in the log book.

Driving

If you use your own vehicle on behalf of the charity you must inform your insurers of your volunteering and of the fact that you drive your own vehicle as part of these activities. Insurance companies do not normally charge extra for this but you must keep them informed so that you are fully covered.

In your vehicle you are an ambassador for the Charity and we kindly ask that you take good care of yourself and others around you. It is down to you to check that your car is safe, roadworthy, taxed, insured and has a valid MOT.

If you drive your own vehicle as part of your volunteering activities for the Charity, you must supply us with a copy of your up to date MOT certificate and car insurance certificate and update



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these as a when required.

Insurance

AAKSS has a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered by public liability insurance, which you are advised to read. It covers the volunteering activities you will be doing.

Expenses

The charity recognises that volunteers are giving their time, not their money, and so the charity will ensure that no volunteer is out of pocket through volunteering.

As such, it is the policy of the charity to reimburse volunteers for expressly authorised actual expenses (such as travel and parking), which have been incurred in direct relation to the performance of their volunteer activities. Please obtain a receipt in connection with any expense incurred and attach to your expense form.

If the volunteer uses his or her own vehicle for charity purposes, we will reimburse the volunteer for every mile accrued on Charity business. The present reimbursement rate for a car is 45p per mile and 24p per mile for a motorbike.

Dress Code

If you cease volunteering with the charity please return any branded clothing and your ID badge to the Rochester address without delay.

Refugees

People who have refugee status can volunteer for the AAKSS.

Benefits

Genuine voluntary work should not affect entitlement to any benefit as long as the person continues to meet the conditions of those benefits.

Job Seekers Allowance

JSA claimants are fully entitled to volunteer as long as they meet two conditions:

- ◆ They remain available for work



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- ◆ They remain actively seeking work

Volunteers receiving benefits must tell their job centre that they are intending to or are already volunteering.

Support & Advice

If you would like any further advice on any aspect of your volunteering please contact:

Amy Hamer
Head of Volunteer Development
01634 471900
07884 338317 – Volunteer Mobile Number
amyhamer@aakss.org.uk

Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance Trust
Rochester City Airport
Maidstone Road
Chatham
Kent
ME5 9SD
www.aakss.org.uk

Reviewing Policies & Procedures

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it is up to date and reflects AAKSS's organisational priorities. Where a need is identified, new policies will be created to provide clarification and clear guidance for volunteers.

Last reviewed January 2019