



Exeter Food Action Volunteers Policy

1. Introduction

Exeter Food Action (EFA) is a charity that works to reduce food waste and food poverty in Exeter and the surrounding areas. Volunteers are at the heart of our work and we rely on their time, skills and enthusiasm to achieve our mission. This policy sets out our approach to working with volunteers and outlines the rights and responsibilities of both volunteers and EFA.

2. Aims and objectives

Our aims and objectives for volunteers are to:

- Provide a positive volunteering experience that is safe, rewarding and enjoyable.
- Ensure that volunteers understand our values, goals and activities.
- Where possible, support volunteers to develop new skills and gain experience.
- Recognise and appreciate the contribution that volunteers make to our work.
- Ensure that volunteers are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

3. Recruitment and selection

EFA welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds. We do not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

To become a volunteer individuals must complete an application form, undergo an informal interview with a member of our team and provide a reference, which can be personal, from an employer or from a voluntary work supervisor.

We will provide volunteers with an induction to EFA, including our values, mission and activities. Volunteers will also receive basic training on their role and any relevant health and safety requirements.

4. **Volunteer roles and responsibilities**

Each volunteer will have a basic but clear role description that outlines their responsibilities, including any specific skills or experience required. We will ensure that volunteers have the necessary resources and support to carry out their role effectively.

Volunteers are expected to:

- Follow our policies and procedures, including health and safety, data protection and safeguarding.
- Represent EFA in a positive and professional manner.
- Attend training and meetings as required.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of our clients and colleagues.
- Report any concerns or issues to a member of our team.

5. **Support and supervision**

EFA is committed to providing ongoing support and supervision to our volunteers. Volunteers will have a named contact who they can turn to for advice and guidance.

We will provide regular feedback on performance and recognise the contribution that volunteers make to our work. We will also offer opportunities for volunteers to give feedback and share their ideas for improving our services.

6. **Expenses and benefits**

EFA will reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred by volunteers in carrying out their role in accordance with our Finance Policy. Volunteers will not be entitled to any financial benefits or payments in kind, except in exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Board of Trustees.

7. **Health and safety**

EFA is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for volunteers. We will carry out risk assessments and provide appropriate training and equipment to ensure that volunteers can carry out their role safely.

Volunteers must take reasonable care for their own health and safety, as well as the health and safety of others. They must report any

accidents or incidents to a member of our team.

8. **Data protection and confidentiality**

EFA is committed to protecting the personal data of our volunteers, clients, and stakeholders. We will only collect, process and store personal data in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

Volunteers must respect the confidentiality and privacy of our clients and colleagues. They must not disclose any confidential or sensitive information without permission.

9. **Complaints and grievances**

EFA is committed to resolving any complaints or grievances that volunteers may have. Volunteers are encouraged to raise any concerns or issues with their named contact, who will investigate and respond within a reasonable time frame.

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, volunteers can make a formal complaint using our Complaints and Grievance Procedure. We will investigate the complaint and respond in writing within 28 days.

10. **Termination of volunteering**

Volunteers are free to leave EFA at any time and for any reason. We ask that volunteers provide us with reasonable notice so that we can decide how to cover their role.

EFA may terminate a volunteer's involvement if they breach our policies and procedures or if their conduct is deemed unacceptable. We will follow our Disciplinary Procedure in such cases.

11. **Leave of absence procedure**

Holidays

If a volunteer knows in advance that they will be unable to fulfil their duties for a particular period, to ensure EFA's smooth functioning and provide the best possible support to our beneficiaries, we ask that they inform EFA's Manager or Manager as soon as possible.

Although we acknowledge that this may not always be possible we encourage volunteers to provide a minimum notice period of two weeks.

Sickness

In the event of absence due to sickness we encourage volunteers to provide as much notice as possible. If sickness prevents someone from volunteering very close to or on a scheduled day/shift, we encourage them to phone EFA, rather than emailing or sending a message. This enables staff to take timely steps to arrange alternative cover and minimise any impact on services.

12. Review and evaluation

We will review and evaluate our Volunteers Policy regularly to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. We will consult with volunteers and stakeholders and make any necessary changes in accordance with our policies and procedures.

Conclusion

EFA recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers make to our work, and we are committed to providing a positive and rewarding volunteering experience. We hope that this policy provides clear guidance on our approach to working with volunteers and outlines our commitment to supporting and valuing our volunteers.

Agreed by Trustees on: 28.02.26

Date for review: February 2027