

2019-2020



restore

working for mental health

Volunteer Handbook

RESTORE, Manzil Way, Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1YH

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Welcome to Restore

Thank you for giving your time to volunteer with us we couldn't achieve what we do without you.

This aim of this handbook is to help you understand what you can expect from your time here at Restore, and what we can expect from you.

What's included:

- Volunteer process
- Training to support you in your role
- What happens when you're ready to volunteer
- What you can expect as a volunteer:
- What we expect from you
- Policies and procedure
- Volunteering whilst on benefits
- What to do if you are unwell
- How to make a complaint

My supervisor is:

Contact details:

Our Values:

We believe...

- Everyone has talents and abilities, and the capacity to make a valuable contribution to the community.
- People with mental health problems have the right to work and the right to the support they need to become and remain employed.
- The stigma associated with mental health problems damages our whole community and we work to challenge this discrimination.

Volunteer process:

Checks:

Many of our service users are vulnerable these checks are to ensure their safety and yours.

- ✓ Informal interview

- ✓ Complete a criminal records check via the Disclosure and Barring service

- ✓ 2 references received

Training:

You will be asked to attend three days of training if you are doing recovery and 4 if you are doing coaching. It is important to attend these days in order for you to gain the skills and knowledge to support our service users.

- ✓ Introduction to Restore, Boundaries and confidentiality (1 day)

- ✓ Mental Health First Aid (2 days)

- ✓ One to two days training for Coaching and Opportunities project volunteers

You're ready to volunteer:

- ✓ You will be sent an e-mail saying you are ready to volunteer with us and you will be contacted by your supervisor
- ✓ Induction: You will meet the people you will be volunteering with and have a chance to look around. You will be shown important things such as fire exits, where to meet if there is a fire.
- ✓ If you are doing coaching, you will be asked to meet with the Coaching Co-ordinator to go through paperwork.
- ✓ Policies: at the start of the volunteering we will ask you to read through the policies and procedures.
- ✓ If you are working in the café, gardens or woodwork you will be asked to read risk assessments to ensure everyone is safe whilst using the equipment.
- ✓ You will be given a 6 week trial period and 1-1 supervision session to determine whether we have placed you in the right role.

What you can expect as a volunteer:

- You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect in accordance to the Restore equal opportunity policy
- You can expect to be supported by a named member of staff
- You can expect to be given a clear description of the role you will be asked to carry out
- You can expect to receive training that is relevant to your role
- You can expect to be reimbursed for any reasonable out of pocket expenses that you may incur whilst volunteering
- You can expect to be covered by Restore's insurance policy
- **Support:** There will be a staff member who is responsible for you within the service you are volunteering. This may be a Recovery Group Co-ordinator if you are based in the recovery groups, but will be another named member of staff if you are volunteering elsewhere. This person will support you on a day to day basis and it is their job to ensure you feel comfortable and know what is expected of you.
- **Debriefing sessions (if you are a Recovery volunteer):** a chance at the end of the day to talk things through, in particular anything that felt difficult or uncomfortable. Of course if anything happens during the day that felt difficult or upset you, do report it straight away.

➤ **Supervision** (a group meeting or 1-1 meeting): a chance to meet every 6 weeks or so (depending on your role) with your supervisor and maybe the other volunteers in your service to talk about how you feel as a volunteer at Restore. It will include what you like about it, and also what you don't like about it. It is a safe place to talk and the point of it is to make sure we are doing the best for you.

Training and events:

On-going training:

We hope that all volunteers will have completed this training within their first 12 months at Restore. Training will be offered on a monthly basis in 3 hour sessions. You will be expected to attend at least 3 sessions. If you have any difficulty attending the training dates, please let us know and we will do our best to enable you to attend. Please also let us know if you have any learning support needs that we need to be aware of in order for you to get the most out of the training. All information will be treated as confidential and treated with sensitivity.

Volunteer Forum: A chance to give us feedback on what you enjoy about volunteering and what improvements could be made.

Volunteer celebration event: A chance for us to say thank you to you for all your hard work and for your commitment to Restore. The day will include a BBQ, forum, training sessions and an award ceremony.

How to claim expenses:

You should not be out of pocket as a volunteer, so we aim to give you the money to cover any reasonable out of pocket expenses. This is not payment, and will not affect any benefits you may get.

What you can claim for:

- Travel by public transport
- Travel by car (40p a mile to cover petrol costs)
- Travel by motorbike (24p a mile)
- Lunch if a part of the recovery service or from the café
- Travel by bicycle (15p a mile)

What you cannot claim for:

- Travel by taxi unless agreed by your supervisor
- costs for journeys taken on a regular basis that exceed 40 miles.

Please get any expenses agreed in advance to ensure your supervisor is happy to authorise the payment. You will need to fill out an expenses form (ask your supervisor for one) and return that to your supervisor with your proof such as bus tickets, petrol receipt.

Remember to keep all your receipts and transport tickets as we cannot reimburse you without them!

What we can expect from you:

- That you treat all staff, service users and volunteers with respect and dignity and abide by Restore's equal opportunity policy
- That you also abide by Restore's confidentiality and boundaries policies
- That you arrive on time on the day/days you have agreed to volunteer and that if you are unable to come in, you let the relevant member of staff know as soon as possible
- That you remain committed to the aims and ethos of Restore
- That you attend debriefing and supervision sessions when invited to do so
- You attend training sessions wherever possible

That you share any concerns or worries you have as soon as possible with your supervision.

Policies and procedures:

As a volunteer you will need to be aware of our policies and procedures:

Confidentiality

The aim of the Restore confidentiality policy is to create a safe and secure environment for everyone connected with Restore. If you have not attended the training session on confidentiality before your induction, it is essential that you read the confidentiality policy and discuss the contents with either the Volunteer Co-ordinator, the Recovery Group Supervisor or Recovery and Personalisation Manager.

It is very important that you have a clear understanding of why confidentiality is so important. We will ask you to sign and date a form which confirms that you have read, understood and agree to abide by the confidentiality policy. This form is not legally binding and is not a contract in any way; its purpose is to ensure that you have understood the importance of confidentiality within Restore.

Boundaries

All new volunteers should have a clear understanding of Restore's Boundaries Policy. Should you find yourself in a situation where you feel uncomfortable or are unsure of the correct way to deal with it – please talk to staff.

Please note: Volunteers cannot give service users a lift in their own cars under any circumstances. Restore's insurance policy does not cover you to do this.

Please make sure you read all the policies relevant to your role before and after a couple of weeks of volunteering.

Volunteering whilst on benefits:

Current guidance from the Dept of Work and Pensions states that:

‘Volunteering shouldn’t affect your right to benefits, as long as the only money you receive is to cover your volunteering expenses, such as travel from home to the volunteering location.

There are no limits on the amount of time you can volunteer for as long as you continue to meet the conditions of the benefit or tax credit you are receiving.

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/Gettinginvolvedinyourcommunity/Volunteering/DG_064299

This means that providing you still meet the conditions of your benefit, you should be fine to volunteer. For example, if you are on Jobseeker’s Allowance, you must still be actively seeking work, able to attend an interview at 48 hours notice and able to start paid work at one week’s notice.

Disability Living Allowance is not affected by volunteering.

We strongly encourage you to inform your benefits advisor that you are volunteering, and receiving expenses if this is the case.

What to do if you are unwell:

If you are not feeling well, and this includes mental ill health as well as physical ill health, please call us as soon as you can but please stay at home.

We want you to get better as soon as possible and the best way to do this is to stay at home, and get the relevant help that will support you to become well.

Many volunteers feel guilty about staying away when they are ill, and whilst we greatly appreciate the commitment, we know it is best for both you and Restore for you to take some time off to recover

What to do if you have any concerns or want to complain:

The aim of regular debriefing sessions and supervision is to deal with any concerns or issues before they turn into problems. We strongly encourage you to be open about how you are finding the experience as a volunteer with Restore, and we want to hear the bad things as well as the good. We hope that by encouraging an environment where people feel they can talk, we reduce the likelihood of issues arising that cannot be dealt with.

Please discuss any concerns as soon as you can with your mentor/supervisor. If this does not result in a satisfactory outcome, please contact the Director of Volunteering and Training. You can do this email, telephone or in person.

That leaves us to say thank you so much for offering your time to volunteer at Restore.

You really are making a difference to the lives of people experiencing mental health problems.