

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer for OCD-UK. Whatever your motivation - we truly value your contribution - however much time you have to give.

Our Vision and Commitment

It is our belief that everyone affected by Obsessive Compulsive Disorder should receive the most appropriate and the highest quality standards of care, support and treatment.

Our Objective

Our objective is to make a positive and meaningful difference in the everyday lives of people affected by Obsessive Compulsive Disorder by providing accessible and effective support services and by campaigning for improved access and quality treatment and care for people with OCD.

Our Long Term Aims

- To promote better understanding and awareness of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder amongst the general public, health professionals, teachers and the media in order to improve response, facilitate early diagnosis and intervention, to eradicate any social stigma attached to OCD and to influence policy makers to make change.
- To fund and support research which ultimately aims to eradicate Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder through improved understanding about the cause of the illness, the development of preventative methods and more effective treatment approaches to influence better practice.
- To lobby to make changes within health authorities to ensure everybody, irrespective of where they live, receives the most appropriate unrestricted quality of care and treatment.
- To be able to provide independent advice, and emotional and practical support at any time, day or night, to anyone affected by Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder to enable an improved quality of life.
- To confidently facilitate a network of support groups that provide mutual understanding and support.

Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out OCD-UK's approach to the involvement of volunteers. It also provides guidance and direction to volunteers, and to staff involved with volunteers. This policy is a cohesive and consistent set of guidelines which:-

- Ensures that volunteers are fully supported during their voluntary role with OCD-UK.
- Aims to provide a foundation on which our involvement of volunteers will be based.
- Contributes towards a constructive and pleasant atmosphere in which to volunteer.
- Ensures that all volunteers know what behaviour they have a right to expect from other volunteers.
- Ensures that all volunteers know what behaviour is expected of them whilst volunteering for OCD-UK.

This code of conduct applies to all volunteers and has been developed for the protection of both service users and volunteers, and outlines the ethical standards to which OCD-UK volunteers are expected to conform.

What is a volunteer?

A 'Volunteer' is defined as someone who commits their time, energy and commitment for the benefit of others, freely through personal choice and without expectation of financial reward, except for the payment of actual out of pocket expenses. This gift relationship is non-contractual, being based on trust and understanding; and depends on mutual expectations.

Be Fair, Honest and Reliable

The nature of volunteering is that an individual is free to decide what activities he or she wishes to do. Consequently no volunteer would be obliged to do any activity they didn't want to. However, if a volunteer takes on a task or a role within OCD-UK, they would be expected to do that task or role and comply with any guidelines or procedures that the role requires.

Volunteers are also expected to work constructively and positively with other volunteers and employees. Consequently, when a volunteer takes on a task or role, he or she is expected to do it in a way which doesn't create excess work or unnecessary tension for others, or unacceptable delays to the task in hand. Volunteers should also respond constructively with reasonable requests made to them from other volunteers or employees.

OCD-UK places a lot of trust in its volunteers both in its internal operations and during contact with the public. Employees and volunteers need to trust each other if they are to work productively together and, as such, OCD-UK expects its volunteers to be honest in all their work for OCD-UK.

Honesty is both presumed and expected at times where a volunteer is contributing to projects, working with employees, volunteers and the public, when completing expenses claim forms and when discussing issues relevant to your work with OCD-UK.

We expect volunteers to treat all people fairly and will not tolerate discrimination against volunteers, employees or members of the public based on a person's age, race, nationality, religion, disability, gender or sexuality.

Making any statement to the detriment of OCD-UK or the employees and volunteers within OCD-UK will be considered inappropriate behaviour.

Freedom of Expression

In order for people to contribute fully to the work of OCD-UK, volunteers need to feel that OCD-UK is a safe space where they are allowed to express themselves without fear or intimidation. This creates an organisation where it is acceptable to have different viewpoints and allows for full debate so that the best conclusions can be made.

Consequently, OCD-UK expects volunteers to interact with other volunteers, employees and members of the public in ways which do not make other people feel threatened. This includes no bullying or harassment, physical or threatened physical assault, ridicule and humiliation.

Abusive behaviour or offensive language directed at other volunteers or employees, or making malicious or unfounded allegations are also considered to be threatening behaviour.

OCD-UK welcomes and encourages its volunteers to offer differing viewpoints and that, inevitably, means that at times a volunteer will disagree with a decision or the content of policies. In these situations, OCD-UK expects volunteers to challenge and behave constructively. If a volunteer is in a minority view with regard to a decision, it is not acceptable to undermine the decision through obstructive behaviour, nor to attempt to overturn the decision through shouting or badgering.

Confidentiality

At times OCD-UK volunteers will come across, or are entrusted with, information either about OCD-UK, or about other volunteers or service users, which is confidential. Peoples trust in OCD-UK will be undermined if any of the charities volunteers or employees unnecessarily discuss issues that should not be publicly discussed, or misuse any confidential information.

Representing the Public Face of OCD-UK

Volunteers will often be the public face of OCD-UK. Consequently, whilst volunteering or identifying themselves as an OCD-UK representative, volunteers should represent themselves in a way which will enhance and not harm the reputation of OCD-UK.

Behaviour which may harm the reputation of the charity includes a failure to effectively carry out activities whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and making negative, unauthorised statements regarding OCD-UK's work, volunteers or employees.

Misconduct

OCD-UK consider misconduct as an incidence of misconduct which destroys the relationship between the charity and the volunteer. In such cases OCD-UK may not wish to continue the volunteering partnership. Examples of misconduct could include but are not limited to:

- Physical assault by a volunteer on any other person.
- Theft or unlawful destruction of property:
- Serious infringement of safety rules or negligence which causes unacceptable loss, damage or injury
- Supplying access codes to any unauthorised person.
- Unauthorised disclosure of information or misuse of trust of a serious nature.
- Making malicious or unfounded allegations of a serious nature.
- Deliberate falsification of any documents or claims, including expenses claim forms.
- Discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, race, sexuality, religion, or disability.
- Harassment of another volunteer, employee or service user.
- Persistent alcohol and drug abuse that impacts a volunteer's ability to conduct his/her volunteering.

Dealing with Misconduct

- Your OCD-UK supervisor will be responsible for advising volunteers if their behaviour is in breach of the Volunteer Code of Conduct, and may ask for a volunteer to amend his/her behaviour.
- All investigations into volunteer misconduct will be conducted by the Chief Executive unless the volunteer is a trustee of the Board. In this case the Chair will take on the investigation.
- The Chief Executive will decide what action to take if a volunteer is found guilty of misconduct. Actions include requests to follow this code of conduct, prevention from performing some volunteer roles and/or termination of the volunteering partnership.
- Volunteers can appeal any decision by placing their request in writing to the chief executive, who will discuss the case with the volunteer project leader and review the case with the charities trustees, who may contact you for clarification of the matter. The decision of the trustees will be final. Every option will be explored to resolve the situation, but on occasions it may become necessary to discontinue the service of a volunteer.

OCD-UK commitment to volunteers

The OCD-UK executive management committee:

- Recognises that without volunteers we would be unable to meet our main objectives and aims.
- Understands that volunteering is an enjoyable activity that should meet the individual's, as well as the organisation's, needs.
- Is committed to making volunteering worthwhile.
- Sees volunteers as complementing, and not replacing, paid staff and, adding significant value to our activities.
- Invests volunteers, as far as possible, with the same rights as other members of the organisation and, in return, asks volunteers to recognise their responsibilities towards OCD-UK.

OCD-UK is totally committed to supporting and developing our volunteer network.

OCD-UK Volunteers can expect:

- To be valued as an individual
- To be respected for their individual knowledge and skills
- To have support, feedback, appreciation and encouragement
- To receive training and support for your role
- To have opportunities to contribute to developments
- To have opportunities for personal development with various volunteering roles
- To have opportunities to discuss concerns or problems relating to their duties
- Not to have their duties changed without prior discussion
- To be reimbursed for out of pocket authorised expenses
- To be kept informed of OCD-UK developments and changes
- To have clear guidelines within which to carry out duties
- To have a clearly defined task description for their role
- A safe working environment
- To be provided with a personal reference, when required, after 12 months volunteering with OCD-UK

OCD-UK expects its volunteers to:

- Show commitment to OCD-UK
- To treat the volunteer placement as if it were a professional assignment
- Protect the interests of OCD-UK
- To behave in a manner expected of an OCD-UK volunteer
- Treat service users, staff and volunteer colleagues with respect
- Work with other volunteers as a team
- To put their health before volunteering
- Have a flexible approach to their duties
- Be sensitive and tactful in their dealings with clients
- Follow procedures and guidelines
- Be neutral in their opinions when working with service users
- To look presentable when working in public facing volunteering roles
- Be reliable and regular in their attendance of their volunteer duties
- Inform the organisation in all cases of absence
- Report any errors, accidents or problems promptly to staff
- Respect confidentiality
- To pass on any receipts for authorised expenses to be refunded
- To let us know about ways they think we could develop or improve services
- Have read and understood volunteer policy and procedures
- Be prepared to undertake appropriate training
- Discuss concerns with the appropriate person/manager
- Consult the appropriate supervisor if in need of help and guidance
- Inform OCD-UK of any relevant police record or other factor, and any change in his/her circumstances
- To not use OCD-UK to bring financial advantage to him/herself or his/her business by directly selling his/her own company's products or services.
- Never underestimate the contribution that you can make to the development of OCD-UK

I understand that by volunteering to participate with OCD-UK I am agreeing to abide by this Code of Conduct