

## Volunteer Issue Resolution Policy

### 1. Our commitment

The NSPCC wants all volunteers to enjoy their role, and feel supported to discuss and resolve any day-to-day concerns or issues as they arise.

Additionally, we have an expectation regarding the suitability, performance and conduct of our volunteers to help us achieve our mission to fight for every childhood. This policy provides a route for you as a volunteer or a volunteer manager to share any concerns and provide appropriate resolutions.

### 2. Aims of this policy

- To provide all volunteers with a simple, accessible process to use if they ever have concerns about any aspect of their volunteering
- To provide volunteer managers with a process to use should they have any concerns about their volunteers

### 3. Who this policy applies to

This policy is applicable to all NSPCC volunteers and volunteer supervisors / managers. It does not apply to other NSPCC colleagues outside of volunteering.

### 4. Principles

- We want to do all we can to promote a positive volunteering atmosphere, and will therefore help you tackle issues that relate to your volunteering.
- All volunteer supervisors will, where possible, use informal procedures to address any issues. However, we recognise that on occasion this might not always be possible, and therefore a more formal route to solving the issue might be necessary.
- We will treat the resolution of issues seriously and fairly but it may not always be possible to reach a solution that is to the satisfaction of all the parties involved.
- It is our goal to ensure that our volunteers feel fulfilled and supported throughout their volunteering. However, ultimately we will always make decisions that are in the organisations' best interests, and we would ask all our volunteers to accept such decisions in the spirit they are made.
- Issues raised by volunteers will be treated with discretion and we will only consult with those who are involved and whose views need to be considered.
- Similarly, if we raise an issue with a volunteer, it will be discreet and only involve those individuals who it is necessary to involve. In return, we ask that volunteers treat the airing and resolution of issues in a discreet and confidential way.

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- Where you raise an issue about another volunteer or a member of staff, we will usually have to make that individual aware of the complaint and who has raised it in order for a thorough investigation to take place.
- At any time during the procedure we may ask you to withdraw from volunteering activities pending the outcome of any investigation. Where an issue is very serious, the volunteering arrangement may be ended with immediate effect. If you are asked to withdraw from volunteering you must not attempt to enter any NSPCC premises or contact any volunteer or member of staff involved in your complaint.
- You may be accompanied at any formal meeting under this policy by a companion who must be a fellow volunteer. The companion may ask questions but should not answer on your behalf. Accurate records of all issues raised and addressed through the policy shall be kept on file for at least three years.

## **5. Issue resolution – raising a concern (informal)**

Unless the issue is a serious one, volunteers should first raise the issue informally with their volunteer supervisor. Your supervisor will try to resolve the issue informally and agree a solution with you.

If your issue is more serious, or you are unhappy with the outcome of an informal meeting, you can use the formal stage of this issue resolution policy instead.

Supervisors should also address concerns informally about a volunteer's suitability, performance or conduct. This will be a balanced and fair process and the aim is to ensure the volunteer understands what the issue is and has an opportunity to put across their views.

It may be necessary to agree a review period to ensure that any agreed actions are working well. At the informal stage, the volunteer supervisor should keep a file note of any action taken or requests made.

## **6. Raising a concern (formal)**

### **6.1 Formal Meeting (Volunteer concerns)**

If the issue is of a more serious nature, or if it proves impossible to resolve a more minor issue informally, then volunteers should submit a complaint in writing to your supervisor's line manager, copying in your immediate supervisor (unless the complaint is about your supervisor).

The letter must set out clearly what the issue is and you should be prepared to give examples. The manager will listen to the complaint, either in a pre-arranged telephone call, or by inviting you to a meeting. If a formal meeting is required, you will be given reasonable notice and will be offered the opportunity to bring a companion.

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Once the line manager has considered the issue fully (which may involve further investigation) you will be informed of the decision in writing. You will also be given the opportunity to request a review of the decision.

## **6.2 Review of decision**

If you do wish to request a review of the decision, you must submit your request in writing to the 'Head of the relevant function within five working days of receiving the outcome of stage (ii).

Your letter should set out clearly the reasons for requesting the review. The Head will consider the reasons and may ask you to attend a further meeting. Following that meeting, you will be informed of the decision in writing. This decision will be final and is not open to further appeal.

In all cases an Issue Resolution Review report must be completed and sent to the head of volunteer & employee engagement and development.

## **6.3 Formal meeting (manager / supervisor concerns)**

Where informal action / discussions have not been successful, or if the issue is either more significant or a series of cumulative issues, then the volunteer supervisor's line manager or senior manager will normally be involved.

The manager will ensure you understand what the issue or complaint is about and confirm in writing that it is being investigated using this formal procedure.

If a formal meeting is required, you will be given reasonable notice of that meeting and will be offered the opportunity to bring a companion. The manager will always warn you in advance if the issue is of such a nature that it may have to consider ending the volunteer arrangement.

Once the line manager has considered the issue fully (which may involve further investigation) you will be informed of the decision in writing. You will also be given the opportunity to request a review of the decision. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the NSPCC to make some sort of change to a volunteer arrangement as a result of an issue. The NSPCC will consider a range of options which may include redeploying you into an alternative role, or ceasing the volunteer arrangement altogether.

## **6.4 Review of decision**

If you do wish to request a review of the decision, you must submit your request in writing to the 'head of the relevant function within five working days of receiving the outcome of stage (ii).

Your written submission must set out clearly the reasons for requesting the review. The relevant manager will consider the reasons and may you to attend a further

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meeting. Following that meeting, you will be informed in writing of the decision which will be final.

#### **7. Related policies and further support**

- [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#)
- [Dignity at Work Policy](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

#### **8. Policy version and effective date**

Version 1.1

Effective Date: November 2018

Date of last review: September 2018

Date of next review: September 2020

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