



Volunteer Agreement

Revised: 04/10/2023

LawCare Volunteer Agreement

Introduction

LawCare couldn't continue to do its vital work in helping legal professionals across the UK without our volunteers. We will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding. This Volunteer Agreement describes the relationship between LawCare and you, the volunteer.

Appointment, Termination, and Resignation

All newly appointed **helpline volunteers**, **online chat volunteers** and **peer supporters** will have a six-month probationary period. After this, you may then serve as a volunteer for three consecutive years (a term). Your position as a volunteer may be renewed for further terms at our discretion and refresher training may be expected.

We recognise that volunteering is a big commitment, and that your circumstances may change. If you wish to resign from being a volunteer, please do so with as much notice as possible by writing to the Support Services Manager.

We may request at any time that a volunteer stand down from volunteering or take a break during a term if we consider that the role is no longer suitable or if you have been unable to participate in required training. In these circumstances we will support you to take the steps needed to resume volunteering with us if you wish to.

Induction and Training

We will provide a thorough induction outlining the work of LawCare, our staff, your volunteering role, and the training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role. Volunteers may start their role only after they have attended the required training. There will be further training at least annually which you may be required to attend to support your ongoing volunteering role with us.

Supervision and Support

LawCare strives to do its best to help you develop your volunteering role with us. We will explain the standards we expect for our services and encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.

In order to maintain the service standards and integrity expected we require all **helpline volunteers** and **online chat volunteers** to attend a minimum of three supervision sessions each year, spread throughout the year. **Peer supporters** who are actively supporting callers are also encouraged to attend.

Your wellbeing is important to us. You are encouraged to speak to a member of the Support Services Team if you have any wellbeing concerns. In addition to supervision, we also provide confidential telephone counselling 24 hours a day provided by Care First, who can be contacted at any time.

Expenses

Expenses that have been incurred in connection with LawCare volunteer duties and are in accordance with our expenses policy will be reimbursed.

Insurance

LawCare provides liability cover for volunteers whilst carrying out their volunteering roles which have been approved and authorised by us.

LawCare expects a volunteer to:

1. treat all information received in your role as a LawCare volunteer in strict confidence, with regard to both the nature of the problem and the identity of the contact.
2. maintain appropriate boundaries with service users, limiting contact to telephone or online support, and informing LawCare if boundaries are being overstepped by the service user
3. uphold and support the philosophy and policies of LawCare
4. meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed and give reasonable advance notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible
5. fulfil the role description in the volunteer handbook.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

LawCare is committed to equality, inclusion and diversity. We strive to ensure that everyone regardless of any protected characteristic are treated fairly and given equal respect and opportunity either in terms of employment or voluntary role opportunity, or as a service user or stakeholder. We want our staff and volunteers to be truly representative of the community we serve. By effectively implementing our equality, diversity and inclusion policy (attached) we aim to attract and retain talented staff and volunteers and create a positive working environment for all.

LawCare's policy on the use of volunteers is also attached.

We're very grateful to you for your commitment, time, and enthusiasm. We love being part of a team of people who are passionate about wellbeing in the legal profession and are willing to share their insights and experiences with others. We are happy to have you on that team.

Legal Disclaimer

Both LawCare and the volunteer understand that this agreement is binding in honour only, does not constitute a legally binding contract, and that there is no intention of establishing an employment relationship or other worker relationship either now or at any time in the future.

Undertaking

I have read the LawCare Volunteer agreement and agree to abide by its contents.

I undertake to keep confidential all information I may receive about individuals seeking help from LawCare, including securely sharing information with LawCare staff and destroying notes including sent emails.

I confirm that I have read LawCare's policies, paying particular attention to the confidentiality policy and privacy notice, and will abide by them.

I confirm that I have read the information about GDPR and the lawful basis for retaining information included in the appendix to this agreement.

I agree that I will not use my position as a LawCare volunteer solely for the purposes of furthering my own career, either within law or in any other capacity (although I may include it as information on my CV or LinkedIn profile whilst active in my role).

I agree to my email address being shared with other LawCare volunteers in group emails, with the understanding that it will not be shared outside LawCare without my prior agreement.

Online Chat Volunteers and Helpline Volunteers

I understand that attendance at a minimum of three supervision sessions each year is mandatory and I agree to attend as required.

Peer Supporters

I understand that attendance at supervision sessions is beneficial and I will attend sessions as appropriate when I am supporting a caller.

Helpline Volunteers

I have read and understood the information included in the Important Information for Helpline Volunteers document.

Signed		Date	
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LawCare Data Protection Policy

Introduction

LawCare provides emotional and wellbeing support to members of the legal profession in the UK. It is regulated by the Charities Commission.

LawCare is committed to operating at all times, and in everything that we do, to the highest standards of integrity. However, we recognise that all organisations can occasionally be affected by conduct that is dangerous, against the law, or breaches ethical or professional codes.

By promoting a culture of openness within LawCare, employees and other stakeholders are encouraged to raise issues which are of concern. Knowing about concerns at an early stage, means steps can be taken to safeguard the interests of all and should usually prevent problems before they happen.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. LawCare may unilaterally introduce, vary, remove or replace this Policy at any time.

We are committed to good practice and aim to review our policy annually.

Aim

We aim to provide a high-quality support and information service to people working within the legal community and concerned family members and others. It's important that we know about any problems so we can deal with them quickly and effectively. This also helps us to continue to improve the service we offer.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, the Board of Trustees, volunteers, consultants, stakeholders, and anyone working on behalf of LawCare. It should be read in conjunction with all other relevant LawCare policies. All LawCare staff are expected to comply with this policy and failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action for misconduct.

This policy applies to all personal data processed by LawCare and is part of LawCare's approach to compliance with data protection law. All LawCare staff are expected to comply with this policy and failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action for misconduct, including dismissal.

It should be read alongside our other policies and procedures in particular:

- Confidentiality policy
- Privacy notice
- Data breach policy

This policy sets out LawCare's commitment to ensuring that any personal data, including special category personal data, which LawCare processes, is processed in compliance with data protection law. LawCare ensures that good data protection practice is embedded in the culture of our staff

and our organisation.

‘Data Protection Law’ includes the UK General Data Protection Regulation (‘UK GDPR’) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Data protection principles

LawCare complies with the data protection principles set out below. When processing personal data, it ensures that:

- it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject (‘lawfulness, fairness and transparency’)
- it is collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes (‘purpose limitation’)
- it is all adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed (‘data minimisation’)
- it is all accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date and that reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that personal data that are inaccurate, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay (‘accuracy’)
- it is kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed (‘storage limitation’)
- it is processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures (‘integrity and confidentiality’)

Lawful basis

LawCare records data on the lawful basis of legitimate interest in accordance with Article 6.1(f) of the UK GDPR. Collecting and processing this data enables us to provide the service expected by service users and other stakeholders.

We may also collect special category data under Article 9 in order to better assist service users and ensure that we are reaching all sections of the legal community.

The UK GDPR defines special category data as:

- personal data revealing **racial or ethnic origin**;
- personal data revealing **political opinions**;
- personal data revealing **religious or philosophical beliefs**;
- personal data revealing **trade union membership**;
- **genetic data**;
- **biometric data** (where used for identification purposes);
- data concerning **health**;
- data concerning a person’s **sex life**; and
- data concerning a person’s **sexual orientation**.

Process/procedures/guidance

LawCare will:

- ensure that the lawful basis for processing personal data is identified in advance and that all processing complies with the law
- not do anything with personal data that the user would not expect given the content of this policy and the fair processing or privacy notice
- ensure that appropriate privacy notices are in place advising staff and others how and why their data is being processed, and, in particular, advising data subjects of their rights
- only collect and process the personal data that it needs for purposes it has identified in advance
- ensure that, as far as possible, the personal data it holds is accurate, or a system is in place for ensuring that it is kept up to date as far as possible
- only hold onto personal data for as long as it is needed, after which time LawCare will securely erase or delete the personal data
- ensure that appropriate security measures are in place to ensure that personal data can only be accessed by those who need to access it and that it is held and transferred securely.

LawCare will ensure that all staff who handle personal data on its behalf are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and other relevant data protection and information security policies, and that they are adequately trained and supervised. Obtaining (including accessing) or disclosing personal data in breach of LawCare's data protection policies may be a criminal offence.

Retention of Data

LawCare retains personal data relating to users of its support service for three years from the date of our last contact with them, after which time they will be securely destroyed.

Other data relating to employees/volunteers is retained for seven years from the date the employment/the voluntary arrangement ceases, for example, names and addresses of staff and volunteers, after which time they will be secure destroyed.

Destruction of paper records

Destruction is carried out in a way that preserves the confidentiality of the data. Non-confidential data can be placed in ordinary rubbish bins or recycling bins. Confidential data and records which contain personal data, is shredded. All copies are destroyed at the same time and in the same manner.

Destruction of electronic records

All electronic data, which includes emails, are either physically destroyed or wiped. This is done to a reasonable extent to ensure the data has been destroyed and removed from live and backup systems.

Data Subject Rights

LawCare will facilitate any request from a data subject who wishes to exercise their rights under data protection law as appropriate, always communicating in a concise, transparent, intelligible and

easily accessible form and without undue delay.

LawCare has processes in place to ensure that it can facilitate any request made by an individual to exercise their rights under data protection law. All staff have received training and are aware of the rights of data subjects. Staff can identify such a request and know who to send it to. All requests will be considered without undue delay and within one calendar month of receipt.

Data subjects have the following rights:

Access

Individuals have the right to request information about how personal data is being processed, including whether personal data is being processed. They also have the right to be allowed access to that data along with the right to obtain the following information:

- the purpose of the processing
- the categories of personal data
- the recipients to whom data has been disclosed or will be disclosed
- the retention period
- the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office
- the source of the information if not collected direct from the subject, and
- the existence of any automated decision making.

Rectification

This is the right to allow a data subject to rectify inaccurate personal data concerning them.

Erasure

This is the right to have data erased and to have confirmation of erasure, but only where:

- the data is no longer necessary in relation to the purpose for which it was collected, or
- where consent is withdrawn, or
- where there is no legal basis for the processing, or
- there is a legal obligation to delete data

Restriction of processing

This refers to the right to ask for certain processing to be restricted in the following circumstances:

- if the accuracy of the personal data is being contested, or
- if our processing is unlawful but the data subject does not want it erased, or
- if the data is no longer needed for the purpose of the processing but it is required by the data subject for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims, or
- if the data subject has objected to the processing, pending verification of that objection.

Object to processing

Individuals have the right to object to the processing of personal data relying on the legitimate interests processing condition unless LawCare can demonstrate compelling legitimate grounds for the processing which override the interests of the data subject or for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims.

Responsibility for this policy

The Data Protection Officer at LawCare is Emma Manley. The CEO and trustees of LawCare take ultimate responsibility for this policy and for monitoring compliance with it.

If you have any concerns or wish to exercise any of your rights under the UK GDPR, then you can contact the data protection officer by emailing emanley@lawcare.org.uk.

This policy was last updated in July 2023.

LawCare Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

LawCare provides emotional and wellbeing support to members of the legal profession in the UK. It is regulated by the Charities Commission.

This policy applies to all staff, the Board of Trustees, volunteers, consultants, stakeholders and anyone working on behalf of LawCare. It should be read in conjunction with all other relevant LawCare policies.

LawCare is committed to operating at all times and in everything that we do, to the highest standards of integrity.

We promote an open and inclusive culture, where all can participate, and diversity of thought is valued. We understand there is collective responsibility for maintaining a fair and inclusive culture. We all have a part to play.

Aim

This policy sets out LawCare's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in all its areas of operation and ensuring that those from all sectors of society regardless of any protected characteristic are treated fairly and given equal respect and opportunity, either in terms of employment or voluntary role opportunity, or as a service user or stakeholder. Our staff and volunteers should be truly representative of all sections of society and of our service users. By effectively implementing our equity, diversity and inclusion policy we should attract and retain talented staff and volunteers and create a positive working environment for all.

LawCare is committed to encouraging equity, diversity and inclusion among our staff, volunteers and service users. In providing information and support services, LawCare is also committed against unlawful discrimination of its service users or the public.

The Policy's purpose is to:

- provide equity, fairness and respect for all staff, volunteers and service users.
- not unlawfully discriminate protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- not discriminate due to caring responsibilities, or socio-economic background.
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.

LawCare commits to:

- foster an inclusive culture where everyone can thrive.
- understand, support and meet the diverse needs of the legal communities that we serve by way of an evidence-based approach.
- create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff and volunteers are recognised and valued.
- ensure that EDI is an integral part of all LawCare activities and working practices.
- ensure that EDI is considered within all LawCare policies.
- welcome applications from a diverse range of candidates, commit to an inclusive and equitable recruitment process using inclusive language and where role specifications include only requirements which are necessary and justifiable for the required role.
- promote sector awareness and understanding of the intersection between wellbeing and EDI.
- develop appropriate working relationships with external organisations, regulators, committees and networks to further drive the agenda.
- review digital and physical accessibility of services, events and resources and
- ensure that reasonable adjustments are accommodated where possible and seek to find an alternative solution if appropriate.

Responsibilities include:

- staff and trustees conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment and voluntary positions and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.
- taking seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, volunteers and all persons approaching LawCare for services.
- making opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- reviewing employment and volunteer recruitment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and to update them and the Policy to take account of changes in the law.
- providing regular and appropriate training to all staff and volunteers.

Monitoring

To ensure we are delivering on our commitments we may ask individuals to provide certain personal data and they will be given the option to not disclose or 'prefer not to say'.

This will support us in monitoring the make-up of trustees, staff, service users and volunteers regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief,

disability, care experience and socio-economic background in encouraging equity, diversity and inclusion and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the Policy.

Aggregated diversity data will be periodically reviewed to help us monitor the diversity of our workforce, trustees, volunteers and service users and to identify patterns and trends.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the Policy and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (“EDI”) Committee are working in practice, reviewing them annually and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Reporting

LawCare shall report on EDI within its Impact Report and Annual Accounts.

General

Details of LawCare’s grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in the Office Manual. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance.

Use of LawCare’s grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee’s right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

This policy was last reviewed in June 2023 and will be reviewed annually.

LawCare Policy on the Use of Volunteers

Introduction

LawCare provides emotional and wellbeing support to members of the legal profession in the UK. It is regulated by the Charities Commission.

LawCare is committed to operating at all times, and in everything that we do, to the highest standards of integrity. However, we recognise that all organisations can occasionally be affected by conduct that is dangerous, against the law, or breaches ethical or professional codes.

By promoting a culture of openness within LawCare, employees and other stakeholders are encouraged to raise issues which are of concern. Knowing about concerns at an early stage, means steps can be taken to safeguard the interests of all and should usually prevent problems before they happen.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. LawCare may unilaterally introduce, vary, remove or replace this Policy at any time.

We are committed to good practice and aim to review our policies, notices, and agreements annually.

Aim

We aim to provide a high-quality support and information service to people working within the legal community and concerned family members and others. It's important that we know about any problems so we can deal with them quickly and effectively. This also helps us to continue to improve the service we offer.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, the Board of Trustees, volunteers, consultants, stakeholders, and anyone working on behalf of LawCare. It should be read in conjunction with all other relevant LawCare policies. All LawCare staff are expected to comply with this policy and failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action for misconduct.

The achievement of the goals of LawCare is best served by the active participation of members of the legal community. To this end, LawCare accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers.

The purpose of the policy is to provide overall guidance and direction and does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. LawCare reserves the exclusive right to change any aspect of the policy at any time with the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Definition of "Volunteer"

A volunteer at LawCare is an individual who willingly and without financial compensation, beyond

reimbursement of expenses incurred during their volunteer duties, offers their time, skills, and efforts to support the organisation's mission and initiatives. Volunteers must be officially accepted by LawCare prior to performance of their duties.

LawCare makes use of volunteers for peer support and answering the helpline and online chat service. Champions and Trustees also serve in a voluntary capacity. In order to be a volunteer someone should have worked in the legal profession in a UK jurisdiction and if they have suffered a mental illness, addiction or traumatic event (such as disciplinary proceedings or a bereavement) be two years into recovery or past the event. This is to protect the wellbeing of our volunteers who may find it difficult to support someone with the same issue if it is too close.

Employees as Volunteers

LawCare accepts the services of its own staff and/or trustees as volunteers. This service is accepted provided that the volunteer service is provided totally without any coercive nature, involves work which is outside the scope of normal duties, and is provided outside usual working hours.

Champions

LawCare's Champions are chosen for their commitment, passion & enthusiasm in raising awareness about the importance of good mental health and wellbeing in the law. They operate in a voluntary capacity and may represent LawCare at events, promote our work, fundraise for us, and act as ambassadors. Champions are invited rather than applying and are provided with a welcome pack and badge.

Service at the Discretion of LawCare

LawCare accepts the service of all volunteers on the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of LawCare. LawCare may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate a volunteer's relationship with LawCare. Similarly, a volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever their relationship with LawCare provided they have completed three years of service, or covered 20 helpline or online chat shifts. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible by or to any employee of LawCare.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Specific roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for each volunteer position.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training and orientation to ensure they understand their tasks, responsibilities, and the organisation's policies and procedures.

Volunteers are expected to commit to their agreed-upon schedule and notify the charity promptly if they are unable to fulfil their commitments.

Volunteer Management Procedures

Maintenance of Records

A system of records will be maintained on each volunteer, including dates of voluntary service and duties performed. Volunteers and appropriate staff will be responsible for submitting appropriate records and information to LawCare staff in a timely and accurate fashion. Volunteer records will be afforded the same confidentiality as client and staff personnel records.

Conflict of Interest

No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or programme of LawCare, whether personal, philosophical or financial, may be accepted or serve as a volunteer.

Representation of the Organisation

Volunteers will have no authority to represent LawCare in any interviews with the media. If they are at any time approached to take part in a programme or give an interview, they must discuss the position with the Support Services Manager beforehand.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the total confidentiality of all information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer whether this information involves staff, other volunteers, service users or other persons or involves the overall business of LawCare.

Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

Role Description

A role description for each volunteer post will be given to each volunteer when accepted and used in any subsequent management and evaluation activities. This should be in the form of the Volunteers' Manual.

Recruitment

Volunteers will be recruited based on their skills, experience, and alignment with the charity's mission and values.

It is a requirement that all those staffing the helpline have experience of working in the legal profession and have training on taking helpline calls.

Selection

Volunteers will be asked to complete an application form, providing relevant personal information, interests, and skills.

References will be taken up to ensure the suitability of the prospective volunteer and protect users of LawCare's service.

Acceptance and Appointment

Service as a volunteer with LawCare will begin with appropriate training. No volunteer will begin performance of any task until they have been officially accepted and have completed all necessary screening and paperwork.

Code of Conduct

All volunteers are expected to adhere to a code of conduct that promotes respect, integrity, and professionalism.

Discrimination, harassment, and any form of harmful behaviour will not be tolerated.

Volunteers must maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information they may come across during their service.

Volunteer Training and Development

Orientation

All volunteers should receive a general orientation on the general nature and purpose of the organisation, an orientation on the nature and operation of the programme or activity for which they are recruited, and a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the tasks for which they are recruited.

Supervision and Evaluation

Supervision

Primary responsibility for supervision of volunteers will rest with the Support Services team. The supervisors will be responsible for the day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and they will be available to the volunteer for consultation, help and advice. Volunteers should feel comfortable seeking assistance or expressing concerns to their supervisor.

LawCare support staff receive monthly group supervision sessions with LawCare's consultant Mark Hepburn. This is an opportunity to discuss difficult calls and matters which may be impacting on staff. Where appropriate, volunteers and other staff may also be invited to attend.

Helpline Volunteers receive informal brief supervision at the end of each shift. More information about this is in the Support Services Manual. They also receive monthly supervision from Mark Hepburn. Helpline Volunteer should attend supervision at least three times each year. Peer Supporters are also welcome to attend.

LawCare also offers a counselling service called Care First which offers telephone counselling 24 hours a day and can be contacted at any time. The number is 0800 092 0809.

Corrective action

In appropriate situations corrective action should be taken following an evaluation. Examples may include the requirement for additional training, reassignment to a new position or dismissal from volunteer service.

Dismissal of a Volunteer

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the organisation or who fail satisfactorily to perform their assignments may have their appointment terminated. No volunteer relationship will be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for dismissal with the supervisory staff.

Reasons for dismissal

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- gross misconduct or insubordination,
- being under the influence of alcohol or drugs,
- abuse or mistreatment of service users,
- failure to abide by LawCare's policies and procedures, and
- failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

Resignation

Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with the organisation at any time after giving three years' service or covering twenty helpline or online chat shifts. The exception to this is ill-health, in which case the volunteer may resign without regard to this requirement.

Volunteer Support and Recognition

Reimbursement of Expenses

Volunteers are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred while undertaking work for LawCare. Prior approval must be sought for any expenditure exceeding £15.

Insurance

Volunteers engaged in LawCare's business are covered under LawCare's liability and accident insurance.

Recognition

All staff responsible for volunteer assignment and supervision are encouraged to undertake methods of recognition of volunteers' service on a regular basis throughout the year. These should range from a simple "Thank you" to a concerted effort to include volunteers as full participants in decision making and implementation for projects which involve volunteers.

This policy was last reviewed in October 2023