



Volunteer Policy

2017

The Free Store

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1.1 Aims and Principles

The Free Store aims to redistribute perfectly edible surplus food from local cafes, bakeries and restaurants freely to those in need of it. While The Free Store's main mission is feeding the hungry, another major goal is to create the best place possible to Volunteer and contribute meaningfully in community development.

The Free Store is a non-profit organisation with limited resources, so Volunteers are the life-blood of the organisation; working in the store, collecting and giving out food while providing a clean and safe environment; or behind-the-scenes, securing new food suppliers, running events or taking care of you, our volunteers. The Free Store values all those that help us and give their time and energy to our project. Your efforts contribute to helping Wellington become a better, kinder, more community-oriented place to live. Our hope is to build an inclusive community where all can give and/or receive and to encourage social responsibility and connectedness through our work.

The Free Store is committed to consulting with all Volunteers about their involvement in the store and behind-the-scenes and discovering what works for the good of The Free Store and what doesn't work. Lessons learned along the way and Volunteers' candid input will be used to create an even better environment to participate in.

1.2 Statement of Intent

The Free Store is committed to providing Volunteers with:

1. Clear information about the organisation and their role within it;
 - The Free Store will provide on-the-job induction sessions
 - Access to operational manuals/policy about how the store is run
 - Additional specific training, where seen as required
2. A safe working environment;
 - The Free Store will provide clear conflict and dispute resolution processes should a Volunteer be grieved by staff, volunteers or clients alike.
3. Rewarding opportunities;
 - The Free Store will provide increased levels of responsibility when commitment, integrity, aptitude and initiative is shown
 - Should a Volunteer desire to seek paid employment outside of their volunteering contributions the Store Manager will gladly write a letter of reference that reflects the nature and quality of the Volunteer's participation
4. Support and encouragement

2.1 Recruitment and Selection

The Free Store has an informal recruitment policy, relying on self-reporting of abilities and times available. We advertise for Volunteers through The Free Store's Facebook page, through the media, or through word-of-mouth. It is preferred that prospective Volunteers sign up to the online volunteer database through Facebook or our website, however, should internet access prove prohibitive we will endeavour to accommodate.

The Free Store endeavours to make personal contact with each prospective Volunteer within a month of application.

The Free Store has an Equal Opportunity policy, valuing each person's diversity as a way to enrich The Free Store and the community we seek to nurture around it.

2.2 Induction and Training

The Free Store runs an on-the-job induction for all new Volunteers and extra personal guidance can be sought from a Supervisor or Store Manager if anything remains unclear. New volunteers will be partnered with experienced volunteers on their first shift.

3.1 Support and Supervision

The Supervisor, Store Manager, Director and other Volunteers will offer support to all Volunteers. There will be a briefing session at the beginning of each shift to ensure everyone knows their roles.

The Store Manager will support all Volunteers and is available to have meetings with the Volunteers to discuss any problems or issues that may arise. This includes positive feedback, disputes, stress, and dealing with unsettling or distressing stories from clients etc.

3.2 Expenses

The Free Store cannot offer monetary reimbursement for costs associated with Volunteering.

3.3 Volunteer Shifts

The Free Store provides a self-regulated sign up system (utilising "SignUp" online software) allowing Volunteers to flexibly choose which days they want to be rostered on. Although reminder emails will be sent prior to each rostered shift it is first and foremost the Volunteer's responsibility to remember and be present at the shifts they have assigned themselves to. The Free Store ultimately has authority over the Volunteer makeup of each shift and reserves the right to make changes to the roster when deemed appropriate in allowing a balanced representation of Volunteers to participate.

3.4 Health and Safety

The Free Store undertakes a general duty of care to all of its Volunteers and will take all practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of the Volunteer as required under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992. The Free Store will consider hazards when planning and organising their work. The Free Store also asks that Volunteers are to call attention to any dangerous situation or hazard to those working in the store and to staff members tasked with

site maintenance and that Volunteers are to immediately report any accident or injury which arises in the course of their service to their Supervisor. For further clarification see The Free Store Health and Safety Policy and Rules document, which will be discussed at the time of Volunteers signing the Volunteer Agreement.

3.5 Insurance

The Free Store has a valid insurance policy designed specifically for a non-profit organisation, which can be accessed on request; however, in cases of an accident occurring to a Volunteer, this is covered by ACC (Accident Compensation Corporation). Generally, an accident while Volunteering will be classified as a 'non-work injury'.

3.6 Equal Opportunities and Diversity

The Free Store endeavours to ensure that every opportunity to Volunteer is extended to everyone and offers equal opportunities to all. The aim is to ensure that all staff, Volunteers and prospective Volunteers are treated equally regardless of their gender, marital status, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age, religion, or employment status. The Free Store encourages diversity as it affords The Free Store a wider representation of the community it belongs to and serves.

Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding and commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.

3.7 Confidentiality

The Free Store will respect that Volunteers have the right to confidentiality and that their registration and records should only be accessible by The Free Store. Any personal information given or received in confidence for one purpose will not be used for a different purpose or passed to anyone else without the consent of the provider of the information. The Free Store asks Volunteers processing Volunteer information to sign The Free Store's Internet and Computer Policy, and also states in the manuals that Volunteer information is not to be passed on to anyone else, unless they first obtain permission from that particular Volunteer.

3.8 Resolving problems

Despite best efforts to maintain positive relations, sometimes issues do arise that require resolution. In these cases, the following procedures are in place.

➤ The Free Store has an Issue with a Volunteer

The relationship between The Free Store and its Volunteer workers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the organisation is able to maintain its determined culture, agreed standards of service to the clients who use it, and it is also important that Volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

Minor Issues

These are behaviours or performance that is unacceptable, but is not so serious that The Free Store would want to end the relationship, for example:

- Lateness
- Absence from rostered shifts
- One-off behaviour that is rude to Supervisors, Volunteers or Clients
- Minor problems with performance

If your role as a Volunteer does not meet with The Free Store's standards, it will be dealt with in the following manner:

1. Firstly with a meeting with the Store Manager where the concerns will be explained.
2. If this does not resolve the concern, or there is fundamental disagreement, then a meeting with The Free Store Director will be arranged.
3. If your work still does not meet with our standards, culture and vision then we shall have to stop using your services.

At all times you will be able to freely state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

Serious Misconduct

These are behaviours or performance that are simply unacceptable, is determined to be serious and/or endangers others, for example:

- Verbal or physical assault
- Intentional damage or misuse and/or dangerous use of property
- Possession or consumption of drugs (other than prescribed drugs) during the hours of work; or consumption of alcohol during the hours of work
- Reporting for work under the influence of drugs or alcohol that in the opinion of the Supervisor leaves the Volunteer impaired to perform their duties.
- Slander and negative talk about Volunteers, Staff or Clients
- Creating negative atmosphere for Volunteers, Staff or Clients
- Breaking any Health and Safety rules
- Unauthorised removal of any property of The Free Store or any other Volunteer
- Any other form of dishonesty or criminal damage in connection with The Free Store, it's property, or the property of any other Volunteer
- Any other behaviour which is considered as serious as any of the above

In these cases, it will be dealt with in the following manner:

1. You will be asked to leave the premises immediately.
2. An investigation will be conducted by the Store Manager with the appropriate Supervisor who was present at the time of misconduct.
3. A meeting with the Store Manager, Director and yourself (and a support person, if you like) will be scheduled and you will be able to freely state your case.
4. If the alleged offence is shown to have happened, then we shall have to stop using your services.

➤ Volunteer has an Issue with The Free Store

The Free Store takes pride in providing a positive volunteering experience and supporting its Volunteers so shall respond to issues raised by Volunteers and where appropriate, provide conflict resolution or reasonable re-training. Volunteers will be encouraged to contribute to this process.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your Volunteering experience you should:

1. Initially explain your dissatisfaction with your Supervisor.
2. If that does not resolve the concern then a meeting with the Store Manager should be scheduled.
3. If that does not resolve the issue then a formal meeting with the Director should follow.
4. If after this, your dissatisfaction remains unresolved, and we are unable to resolve your grievance due to fundamental incompatibility, then it would be inappropriate for you to continue to be a Volunteer.

At all times you will be freely able to state your case and can have a friend to accompany you.

➤ **Volunteer has an Issue with a Client**

The Free Store expects those who are given food (“Clients”) to maintain a common level of decency, politeness and respect for all other Clients and Volunteers at the store. We will not tolerate any rudeness or inappropriate behaviour displayed towards our Volunteers. It is clear that Volunteers have the authority to instruct Clients in operational matters and can be expected to be listened to.

If you are dissatisfied with the way a Client has treated you, or not treated you, you should:

1. Minor Case (e.g. rudeness, impatience, loitering, not listening to instruction): Explain your dissatisfaction or concerns with your Supervisor. Your Supervisor will address the Client if they are still present, or if not, they will speak to them when next sighted about their inappropriate behaviour and outline ramifications e.g. apologise to Volunteer, behaviour change, ‘stand down period’.
2. One-Off Serious Case (e.g. swearing, getting pushy, threats, stealing): If you have experienced inappropriate Client behaviour please let your Supervisor know immediately. They will speak directly with the Client and inform them that this is unacceptable. This will be followed by a stern response depending on the situation e.g. ‘stand down period’, legal trespass. Should the Client show remorse for their behaviour and the Volunteer wish to do so, The Free Store will make available a *restorative justice pathway*. This will involve the Client, the Volunteer (and a friend for support if desired), the Store Manager and the Director. The Volunteer will have the opportunity to explain to the Client how their behaviour negatively affected them, the Client will have the opportunity to listen and apologise, and the Store Manager will follow through with some form of response e.g. ‘stand down period’.
3. Extreme Case (e.g. verbal, physical, psychological, sexual or emotional abuse): If you have experienced extreme harassment please ask the Supervisor to contact the Store Manager immediately. They will speak to you directly in an extreme event to determine the facts and the appropriate response. The Free Store has a zero tolerance policy on abuse and will pursue strong action – including trespass and legal action.

3.9 Policy Review

This Volunteer Policy is freely accessible to all. The Policy will be reviewed yearly.