**EMPOWER ME TOGETHER**

 **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

Empower Me Together (EMT) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to fostering community resilience and supporting individuals to overcome personal and societal challenges. Volunteers will be welcome to join our mission, and this policy outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and support provided to our volunteers to ensure a safe, inclusive, and productive environment.

**2. Purpose of the Policy** This policy serves to:

* Clarify the roles and responsibilities of volunteers.
* Ensure compliance with safeguarding, health and safety, and trauma-informed practices.
* Provide a framework for volunteer recruitment, training, and support.

**3. Recruitment and Selection** EMT is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion in its recruitment process. We welcome volunteers from all backgrounds, provided they meet the requirements of the role. The process includes:

* Completion of a volunteer application form.
* An informal interview.
* Where appropriate, references and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

**4. Safeguarding** Safeguarding is a core responsibility of EMT. Volunteers must:

* Adhere to EMT’s Safeguarding Policy, which is provided during induction.
* Report any concerns about the safety or well-being of individuals to the designated safeguarding officer (DSO).
* Undergo safeguarding training as part of their induction.

Volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults are required to complete enhanced DBS checks and follow all safeguarding procedures rigorously.

**5. Trauma-Informed Practices** EMT recognizes the importance of being trauma-informed in all interactions. Volunteers will be trained to:

* Recognise signs of trauma and respond sensitively.
* Create safe and supportive environments for participants.
* Avoid triggering language or actions and promote empowerment and healing.

Regular resources will be provided to ensure volunteers remain informed and confident in applying trauma-informed approaches.

**6. Health and Safety** EMT is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all volunteers and participants. Volunteers are expected to:

* Comply with EMT’s Health and Safety Policy.
* Attend health and safety training during induction.
* Report any hazards, incidents, or injuries promptly.

EMT will provide:

* Risk assessments for activities and events.
* Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where required.
* Emergency procedures training, including fire safety and first aid.

**7. Training and Support** EMT ensures volunteers are equipped to perform their roles effectively through:

* A comprehensive induction covering EMT’s mission, values, and policies.
* Ongoing training, including safeguarding, trauma-informed practices, and role-specific skills.
* Regular check-ins with a designated supervisor for feedback and support.

**8. Code of Conduct** Volunteers are expected to:

* Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
* Maintain confidentiality in line with EMT’s policies.
* Act in a professional and ethical manner.
* Refrain from any form of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

**9. Recognition and Feedback** EMT values the contributions of its volunteers and aims to:

* Acknowledge and celebrate volunteer achievements.
* Provide regular opportunities for feedback to improve the volunteer experience.
* Offer references upon request to support volunteers in their personal and professional development.

**10. Problem-Solving and Complaints** Should a volunteer have any concerns or complaints, EMT is committed to resolving them fairly and promptly through:

* An informal discussion with the volunteer’s supervisor.
* Escalation to senior management if necessary.

**11. Termination of Volunteer Roles** Either EMT or the volunteer may terminate the volunteer agreement at any time. Volunteers are encouraged to provide notice to allow for a smooth transition.

**12. Monitoring and Review** This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

**Contact Information** For questions or further information, please contact: Angela Whiteley, Volunteer Coordinator Email: support@empower-together.co.uk, Phone: 07731 322 134.