

## **Step to Shelter Merseyside Volunteer Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Step to Shelter Merseyside is committed to providing high-quality services to those in need within the Merseyside region. Volunteers play a crucial role in helping us deliver these services effectively. This policy outlines the expectations and responsibilities for all volunteers.

### **2. Purpose of Volunteering**

Volunteers are integral to Step to Shelter Merseyside's mission of supporting individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Volunteering allows individuals to make a meaningful difference in the community while gaining experience and skills.

### **3. Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities**

Each volunteer will be assigned a specific role within Step to Shelter Merseyside. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting with the distribution of food, clothing, and other essential items
- Providing support in shelters and outreach programmes
- Helping with administrative tasks, fundraising, or awareness campaigns
- Offering companionship and emotional support to clients
- Ensuring safety and cleanliness within shelter environments

Volunteers are expected to:

- Carry out their duties to the best of their ability
- Treat clients, staff, and fellow volunteers with respect and dignity
- Maintain confidentiality and respect client privacy
- Follow all health and safety guidelines
- Be punctual and reliable

### **4. Recruitment and Selection**

Step to Shelter Merseyside ensures a fair and transparent volunteer recruitment process.

Volunteers will:

- Complete an application form
- Provide references and undergo a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check where necessary
- Participate in an interview (either in person or virtually)
- Receive an induction and relevant training before starting their role

### **5. Volunteer Expectations**

All volunteers are expected to:

- Act in accordance with Step to Shelter Merseyside’s core values, including compassion, respect, and integrity
- Adhere to all policies, including safeguarding, health and safety, and equality and diversity
- Communicate any issues, concerns, or grievances in a timely and constructive manner
- Inform the volunteer coordinator if unable to attend a scheduled shift

## **6. Training and Support**

Step to Shelter Merseyside is committed to supporting volunteers throughout their time with us. Volunteers will receive:

- An initial induction to the organisation
- Relevant training for their specific role
- Ongoing support from a designated volunteer coordinator
- Access to any necessary resources and materials

## **7. Health, Safety, and Well-being**

Volunteers are responsible for ensuring their own health and safety while performing their duties. Step to Shelter Merseyside will:

- Provide a safe working environment and take all reasonable precautions to prevent accidents or injuries
- Ensure that volunteers are aware of emergency procedures, including fire evacuation routes and first aid protocols
- Offer appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) if required
- Ensure that volunteers are not exposed to situations that might cause emotional or physical harm

## **8. Equality and Diversity**

Step to Shelter Merseyside is an equal opportunities organisation. Volunteers will be treated fairly and equally, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, or any other characteristic protected by law.

## **9. Confidentiality**

Volunteers must respect the confidentiality of all clients and sensitive information. Volunteers should not discuss client details or personal information outside of the organisation unless given explicit consent or required by law.

## **10. Recognition and Feedback**

Step to Shelter Merseyside values the contributions of its volunteers and aims to offer regular feedback on performance. Volunteers will also have the opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences, which will help improve our services.

## **11. Termination of Volunteer Engagement**

Step to Shelter Merseyside reserves the right to end the volunteer relationship at any time, should the volunteer fail to meet the expected standards or if the role is no longer needed. Volunteers may also choose to leave the organisation at any time, with reasonable notice.

## **12. Conclusion**

Volunteers are a vital part of Step to Shelter Merseyside's mission. By following this policy, volunteers help ensure that the organisation continues to offer high-quality support to those who need it most. We are grateful for the time, energy, and compassion each volunteer brings to our cause.