

Volunteering Policy

Waterford Hockey Club's mission is

To encourage, promote, develop and manage hockey in the Waterford area.

Why volunteers are so important to the club

Hockey in Waterford Hockey Club could not function without the ongoing support of volunteers at all levels. For this reason, volunteers are recognised as an integral part of the club.

Definition of a volunteer

A volunteer contributes time and service, but is not paid, to assist the club in achieving its goals. Their role is beneficial to others as well as being satisfying to themselves. In return they are encouraged and supported in the volunteer activity they have chosen.

Who this policy applies to

Unless specifically stated, standards in this policy apply to all volunteers involved in any activity on the behalf of the club.

Equal opportunities

The club is committed to being an equal opportunities organisation. All volunteers should be free from discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, race, sexuality, religion, disability & membership of the Traveller Community.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are expected to keep information related to club confidential. Volunteers are considered to be authorised representatives of the club & therefore have access to information relevant to and necessary for the successful completion of their role. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in the termination of the volunteer's relationship with the club.

Speaking on behalf of the club

Volunteers must in all cases seek approval from the club committee prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate the club. These actions include public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organisations or any agreements involving contractual or financial obligations.

Alcohol & drugs

Whilst volunteering for the club, volunteers are prohibited from:

- Being under the influence, using, possessing, selling or otherwise being involved with illegal drugs.
- Abusing alcohol.

PROCEDURES

Volunteer activities

Volunteers are involved in activities which provide direct services to the club.

Services involve contact with the club and include:

- Coaching in the club
- Support at club activities
- Roles on the club committee

The list is not exhaustive and volunteer activities are based on the expressed needs of the club. They are designed and carried out in accordance with the club's mission to promote the sport of hockey.

Role descriptions

The club will define the roles and functions of volunteers. Every time a volunteer is involved, a club committee member will agree the tasks that the volunteer will undertake. Volunteers will be adequately prepared for such tasks prior to commencing the voluntary work.

Each volunteer should be familiar with his/her role description and feel comfortable in offering suggestions for change and improvement.

Recruitment

The club recruits volunteers for specific tasks and this is done through formal (website, direct email) and informal (notice boards, word of mouth) channels.

The following will be sent to those responding to club recruitment campaigns:

- Job Description
- Information about the club
- Waterford Hockey Club's Volunteer Policy
- Waterford Hockey Club's Code of Ethics for Young People (when dealing with U18s)
- Application form (if appropriate and/or if dealing with U18s)

All volunteers offering their services to the club will have their offers dealt with promptly and be given a warm welcome.

Interviewing

The interview is an informal chat with the club committee member who will be supporting the volunteer. This gives the prospective volunteer a chance to learn about the club, its mission and available volunteer roles. It will also help determine the suitability of the individual to perform voluntary work on behalf of the club. The interview will often take place over the telephone. For positions involving U18s, a face to face meeting may take place. A date for induction will be set if both the volunteer and the club agree to the mutual benefits of a partnership.

Code of ethics

Volunteers that have substantial access to young people will be subject to the procedures included in the Waterford Hockey Club's Code of Ethics for Young People. This includes the following:

- Submission of application forms
- Provision and checking of two references
- Interview with two Hockey Ireland representatives

- Signing of a Code of Conduct and Self-Declaration
- Vetting via An Garda Síochána
- Induction
- Ongoing reviews

Volunteers with access to U18s will be asked to provide two references, neither of which should be from an immediate family member. These could be from an employer, school or college, a community representative etc. The club will contact the referees by telephone to ask a standard set of questions relating to the potential volunteers suitability for the position.

Placement

No volunteer will be placed in a position for which he/she is not qualified or for which the club do not provide adequate training.

Induction training

All volunteers will receive induction training where the volunteer has planned time with a member of the club committee. This induction will cover:

- The club's mission, values and goals
- An overview of the club's services
- Volunteering for the club and details of the specific volunteer role
- Introduction to relevant club members

Training will be tailored to suit the individual volunteer role and available resources.

Support

All volunteers will receive regular support from a designated named committee member. The level of support will be commensurate to the complexity of the task being carried out.

Volunteer performance standard

Volunteers are asked to give a commitment to ensuring that their involvement maintains and contributes to the standard of services being provided by the club. Volunteers are expected to inform their supervisor of an impending absence as far in advance as possible so alternative arrangements can be made for the completion of work.

Volunteer involvement will be reviewed regularly and may in some instances be discontinued. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to, gross misconduct, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, theft, breaches of confidentiality, abuse of clients and co-workers, failure to abide by Waterford Hockey Club's policies & procedures, and failure to complete duties to a satisfactory standard.

Volunteer complaints

If a volunteer wishes to make a complaint they should initially discuss their grievance with the committee member responsible for volunteer supervision and support. If problems cannot be resolved they can put their complaint in writing to the President/Chairperson who will consult with the appropriate staff members and/or members of the committee. They will jointly decide on further appropriate action. If the volunteer is dissatisfied with the reply she/he may then write, within 14 days to the Chairperson/President who will convene an Appeal Commission as outlined in the Constitution.

Recognition

Waterford Hockey Club will ensure that all voluntary input is recognised and appreciated.

Insurance

Volunteers themselves are covered by club insurance when carrying out club approved activities.

Those using their own cars to volunteer transport must have their own fully comprehensive insurance. Waterford Hockey Club recommends that they ask their insurance company to sign a form to say they are aware of the volunteer doing volunteer driving. This typically does not attract an additional premium. In some instances volunteers may have to come to an arrangement with their insurer.

Volunteer drivers

If a volunteer is willing to use their car for volunteering, Waterford Hockey Club recommends that they:

1. Ask their insurance company to sign a form to say they are aware the volunteer is using their car for volunteering. Some insurance companies do up a letter themselves, some reissue the insurance certificate with specific mention of the volunteer organisation, but most use a form provided by the organisation as this is the easiest option. This should not attract any additional premium.
2. Send a photocopy of their insurance certificate (fully comprehensive) and the signed form from your insurance company to the club.

Volunteers leaving

The nature of volunteering is that it is transitory as people's ability to volunteer, and their other commitments often change over time. The club would like to conduct a short exit interview by telephone or in person to:

- Get feedback on the volunteering experience, both positive and negative elements
- Find out if they were satisfied in their role and reason for leaving
- Thank them for their contribution