



Volunteer Code of Conduct & Declaration Hand Book

Approved at a Board Meeting 13th October 2020

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Overview

This policy has been developed to provide our Volunteers with the necessary information to understand their role and responsibilities in respect of the Community, Voluntary and Charity (CVC) sector, volunteers are one of DVI's most valuable resources and we encourage and support them to get involved at all levels of our organisation and within all appropriate activities in accordance with best practice guidelines for organisations in the voluntary and community sector.

About Deaf Village Ireland

Deaf Village Ireland is an inclusive state of the art social, administration, religious, community, sports, heritage and educational complex providing a range of facilities for both Deaf and hearing people. DVI is Deaf led with a unique integrated communication ethos where both Irish Sign Language (ISL) and spoken English are used. The DVI is a collaborative organisation represented by all Deaf organisations in Dublin.

Our Values

Deaf Village Ireland will express the Vision and Mission Statement by embracing the following values in our day-to-day work and relationships within the centre.

- Recognise and encourage the use of Irish Sign Language;
- Respect the different ethos and abilities in the community;
- Maintain the spirit of cooperation with all organisation

Legal Structure

Deaf Village Ireland (DVI) is a company limited by guarantee not having share capital. There are Directors that make up the Board of Deaf Village Ireland. Any appointments/resignations are notified to the Companies Registration Office (CRO) in a timely manner in line with current Company Law.

The Company number of DVI is 517309.

Charitable Status

The DVI is a registered charity. The charity number is (RCN) 20101329 provided by the Revenue Commissioners. On 16th October 2016, a regulatory body called the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) was established. The CRA and the Revenue Commissioners are two distinct bodies. The CRA has responsibility for the registration and regulation of charities in Ireland, not the Revenue Commissioners, which DVI become an automatic member of CRA. This is the number, which is legally required to appear on all printed/fundraising materials, website, email signatures etc.

Legal Requirements

The DVI is required to file an Annual Return to the CRO. Annual Returns received more than 28 days after the company's annual return date will be liable to a late filing penalty of €100 with an additional daily penalty of €3 accruing thereafter up to a maximum of €1,200 per return. This penalty is in addition to the standard filing fee. Failure to file an Annual Return and the relevant financial statements could result in the prosecution of the DVI and its directors and/or striking off the DVI from the register of companies.

The current annual return date is 30th September with an additional 28 days online.

Compliance with the Companies Act 2014

The Companies Act 2014 contains a number of legally binding obligations which directors must ensure that both they and the DVI comply with these include:

- Maintaining proper financial books and records and submitting financial statements with the Annual Return;
- Maintaining a register of members and directors;
- Holding Annual General Meetings, no more than 15 months apart;
- Making Annual Returns to the CRO; Notifying the CRO of any special resolutions and of any changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association;
- Notifying the CRO of any changes in the directors, secretary, auditors or the registered office of the company;
- Keeping minutes of all meetings

Memorandum and Articles of Association

DVI Constitution sets out the rules by which DVI is governed and managed. Companies limited by guarantee are required by law to have a two document Constitution made up of a Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. These documents form the legal basis for the DVI. The main purpose of the Memorandum of Association is to set out the objectives of the DVI.

The Articles of Association are essentially the rules setting out how the company will be governed.

These documents are very important as they set out the DVI's rules and procedures and outline what rights members will have in terms of having a say in how the DVI is run. In the event of a dispute involving the DVI, the courts will look to the Memorandum and Articles of Association as being the internal legal documents, which govern the DVI's activities.

The DVI must lodge their Memorandum and Articles of Association with the Charities Regulator, 3 George's Dock, IFSC, Dublin 1, D01, where they are publicly available.

Review of the Memorandum and Articles of Association:

These will be reviewed regularly and amended to reflect the agreements and procedures of the DVI in the following circumstances:

- A new policy or procedure in relation to any aspect of governance
- A change in the mission or objectives of the organisation
- A change to any significant aspect of the organisation 's activities or structure

If the review results in a recommendation that the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association should be amended this will have to be put to *the members of the DVI at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) or Annual General Meeting (AGM)*.

Amendments to the Memorandum and Articles of Association:

It is the responsibility of the board to ensure the Memorandum and Articles of Association accurately reflect the governance structure and decision-making processes. The board will formally review these every year. Any changes to these documents should be approved at an EGM or AGM of the DVI by way of a Special Resolution.

A completed G1 form should then be sent to the CRO. The board may engage a third party professional, if deemed necessary, to oversee any changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Management of Volunteers

Volunteers are individuals that contribute their time in a variety of ways as opportunities arise. It is understood that volunteers give their time freely, and are not in any contract of service. An example of this volunteering is at the Deaf Christmas Day Dinner.

From time to time, the charity may have availability for those seeking work experience i.e. those who wish to gain on-the-job experience/training. Deaf Village Ireland will agree the duration and nature of such work experience/ training. In such circumstances, Deaf Village Ireland will agree the duration and nature of such work experience and will design training for the duration and nature of the role. Individuals on work experience give their time freely and are not in any contract of service.

Recruitment

Anyone who is committed to the aims and values of the organisation is eligible to be considered as a potential volunteer. Deaf Village Ireland will provide an accurate description of the tasks that we expect volunteers to undertake for roles that require particular skill-sets we will draw up a specification for volunteers. We meet with potential volunteers, to ensure a good match between role and volunteer. We require references. We reserve the right not to select someone as a volunteer

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers have the right to be treated fairly, the right to effective supervision and the right to full involvement and participation, and right to recognition for work well done. Volunteers will not be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability or membership of the travelling community. In return, volunteers agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the mission and ethos of Deaf Village Ireland.

Volunteer Support

- We respect volunteers' right to privacy and confidentiality
- We reimburse any previously agreed out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the course of undertaking voluntary work for our organisation
- Where possible volunteers can avail of training and development opportunities
- We aim to thank our volunteers for their contribution
- We provide references for current and former volunteers on request

Managing Volunteers

The DVI Manager has the full responsibility ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for all volunteers and that they are properly managed and supported. All volunteers have a named supervisor as their main contact. They will be provided with regular supervision, as appropriate

and can discuss any developments and or problems with the person. Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning DVI and its work.

Garda Vetting

- DVI is committed to the protection and welfare of the Deaf Community. DVI will comply with relevant legislation and recommended best practice in recruitment and selection procedures for both employees and volunteers, and will conduct Garda vetting, where appropriate. Incidental contact with vulnerable people or children is not sufficient reason to be garda vetted. The need for garda vetting under the garda vetting legislation involves regular contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, therefore this is not applicable to most volunteering opportunities at DVI.
- Under the legislation, occasional volunteering will not require vetting. It stated in the act that the act does not apply to ;_“Giving assistance by an individual on an occasional basis and of no commercial consideration at a school, sports or community event other than where such assistance includes coaching, mentoring, counselling, teaching or training”

Confidentiality and GDPR

Information held by DVI on individuals and not independently available to a third party cannot be disclosed without the individual’s consent and permission from DVI Management.

DVI collects and makes the use of anonymous service user information as follows:

- For the purpose of statistical analysis, which enhance and improve DVI services;
- To help DVI in accessing funding and other resources for the service;
- To comply with the Law in some cases;
- To develop DVI, for example policy, communications and training;
- To undertake advertising, marketing, recruitment and public relations task;
- To meet insurance policy requirements;
- To provide personnel, payroll and pension administration services;
- To update databases within DVI;
- To provide screening services, including Garda Vetting.

DVI is responsible for ensuring that all volunteers involved in dealing with confidential information and data receive appropriate supervision and support regarding the confidentiality policy. Confidentiality is a contractual agreement for all employees and volunteers to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Data Protection Principles

DVI takes seriously its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act. DVI is aware of and acts in accordance with the following Data Protection principles regarding information:

1. Obtain and process information fairly;
2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes;
3. Use and disclose information only in ways compatible with these purposes;
4. Keep it safe and secure;
5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date;
6. Ensure it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
7. Retain for no longer than is necessary;
8. Allow individual's access to their personal data, on request.

Complaints

All volunteers have access to a complaints procedure to address any issues or difficulties about any aspects of their work or how they are managed. If a volunteer is unhappy in their role or has a grievance they wish to discuss, they may approach their supervisor or the DVI Manager. This matter will be dealt with in a private and confidential manner in line with the DVI complaints Policy. We aim to act quickly and fairly if difficulties arise. If a volunteer is verbally asked to leave the premises, this will be followed up with a written communication. If a volunteer is deemed to have behaved with extreme detriment to DVI's reputation or to the health and safety of others involved in the organization, DVI has the right to end its relationship with the individual with immediate effect.

Dismissal

Grounds for being dismissed or asked to leave the premises include, but are not limited to the following:

- Gross Misconduct
- Being under the influence of drugs (including alcohol)
- Theft
- Misuse of equipment and materials
- Abuse (verbal, physical or through ISL) of clients and co-workers
- Breaches of confidentiality
- Failure to abide by Policies and procedures
- Failure to complete duties to a satisfactory standard.

Code of Conduct for Volunteers

All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in an acceptable way when carrying out their duties on behalf of DVI. We reserve the right to discontinue the relationship with any volunteer who does not adhere to the organisation's rules or who fails to perform their volunteer assignments satisfactorily. Volunteer involvement will not be ended until the individual has an opportunity to discuss the reasons for being asked to leave with the DVI Manager.

Law, mission, policies

- The volunteer will not break the law or act against any regulation in force.
- The volunteer will support the organisation's mission and actively promote it.
- The volunteer will abide by organisational policies and procedures.
- The volunteer will seek to maintain and promote integrity, good governance, effectiveness and efficiency for the delivery of the organisation's mission.

Guardian of the organisation's reputation

Volunteers will not speak or write as a representative of DVI to the media or any public forum (including online social media) without the prior written approval of the Board of management's chairperson or the DVI Manager. If asked to represent the organisation, any comments the volunteer makes will reflect current policy even if they do not agree with that policy.

When speaking as a private citizen the volunteer will aim to uphold the reputation of the organisation and those who work and volunteer for it. The volunteer will respect organisational and individual confidentiality. The volunteer will take an active interest in the organisation's public image. A volunteer of the Deaf Village Ireland (DVI), has a responsibility to act in the best interests of the organisation.

Interpersonal Relations

Volunteers will act with honesty and integrity when dealing with all people in the organisation including board members, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries or anyone they meet in their role as a volunteer.

Dress Code

It is DVI's policy to encourage reasonable and appropriate standards of dress and appearance for those who represent the organisation. DVI is mindful that its reputation rests, at least in some part, on the behavior and demeanour of those who represent the organisation.

Conflicts of Interest

The volunteer will always act in the best interests of the organisation.

Volunteer Declaration

I have read and understood the volunteer code of conduct and agree to abide by all the rules and policies in this document.

Signed _____ Witnessed by _____

Name _____ Name _____
(Printed) (Printed)

Dated _____ Date _____