

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Nacoa (The National Association for Children of Alcoholics) is a national charity providing information, advice and support to children growing up in families where one or both parents suffer from alcoholism or a similar addictive problem. This includes children of all ages, many of whose problems only become apparent in adulthood.

Nacoa also provides information and advice to professionals who work with these children, raises the profile of children of alcohol dependent parents in the public consciousness and promotes research into the particular problems faced by those who grow up with parental alcoholism and the prevention of alcoholism developing in this vulnerable group of children.

Volunteers bring an essential and valued contribution to the work of Nacoa. Their involvement helps the organisation to maintain and develop the range of services and support which have been growing since its foundation in 1990.

- Volunteering is a valuable and integral part of Nacoa, and all volunteers deserve support and recognition.
- Volunteering is a matter of free choice and there can be no compulsion to become a volunteer; volunteers are free to opt out at any time.
- Everyone has the right to volunteer without experiencing discrimination.
- Involving volunteers complements rather than substitutes the work of paid staff.

Policy Aim

- To actively support and promote volunteering within Nacoa.
- To promote best practice throughout the organisation by providing a framework which details volunteers' and Nacoa's expectations and responsibilities.
- To ensure a consistent approach to the management and support of volunteers.
- To ensure the application of equal opportunities in relation to volunteering.

Recruitment / Selection

- The selection process for volunteers avoids unfair discrimination and welcomes all prospective volunteers, as detailed in Nacoa's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Volunteers are recruited in a number of ways:
 - through local organisations which place volunteers with charities
 - through the Nacoa website, and other organisations' websites aimed at volunteering
 - through press articles
 - through Nacoa News, leaflets and the Annual Report
 - through Bristol-based urban paint festival Upfest, we are their charity-partner
- Potential volunteers will be asked to:
 - fill out an application form
 - provide details of two referees, not relatives, who will comment on the candidate's previous work.

- Potential volunteers may also be asked to attend an informal interview.
- When a volunteer has been referred by, or placed through, another agency, the above practices will still apply.
- If the opportunity of volunteering in a particular role is not right for a potential volunteer, or he/she is considered inappropriate, Nacoa will attempt to aid them in finding alternative voluntary work, either within Nacoa, or with another organisation.
- DBS checks are carried out for all volunteers working with children, young people and adults. Only relevant offences will be taken into account.

Volunteer Roles

Become a Nacoa Member

- play an active role in the governance and future of Nacoa
- receive preferential invitations to events (including the Stafford Ward Lecture at the House of Commons)
- influence our activities
- make a significant contribution to the financial stability of the charity. Membership fees are.£25pa If you are unable to pay, we offer Honorary Membership.

Volunteer helpline counsellors who are locally based, have undergone the foundation training programme, induction and supervised shifts They undertake the following duties:

- to commit to a regular shift on the helpline
- to commit to on-going training, including Volunteer Monthly Meetings
- to answer the helpline phone and emails
- to listen/write to callers, and provide support, advice and information as appropriate
- to research the specific requests or needs of callers
- to send information specific to callers who request them

Volunteer helpline researchers who are locally based, have undergone the foundation training programme, induction and supervised shifts They undertake the following duties:

- to provide support, advice and information as appropriate
- to research the specific requests or needs of callers
- to send information specific to callers who request them

Be a voice for awareness

- distributing information, posters and leaflets to GP's surgeries, local libraries and schools
- distributing information, posters and leaflets to organisations who may be useful to Nacoa
- Join in with #COAWeek
- spread the word through social media (@Nacoauk)

Nacoa News volunteers

- writing articles for or otherwise contributing to Nacoa News

Website volunteers

- writing blog or otherwise contributing by reviewing website for updates
- consulting on site design
- contributing (anonymously) to the Nacoo personal experiences webpage

Media volunteers

- speaking to the media and press from personal, professional or volunteering experience

Research volunteers

- participating in research studies from personal, professional or volunteering experience

Speaker volunteers who have undergone the foundation training programme

- presenting talks and presentations to organisations about Nacoo's services

Fundraising

- organising and supporting fundraising activities, including Nacoo team events, the London Landmarks Half Marathon, the Big Nacoo Walk and Upfest.
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Volunteers are not restricted to the tasks outlined in their applications, and may change their role at any time. Nacoo is open to ideas from volunteers on how to develop different roles, and aims to work together with volunteers to create the best possible volunteering environment.

Training / Induction

- All volunteers receive training and induction suitable to their role.
- All helpline counsellors, helpline researchers and Speaker volunteers are required to complete the foundation training programme and induction. Training is made available to all other volunteers where possible.
- The foundation training programme consists of:
 - Information on addiction, alcoholism, co-dependency, the family system and abuse
 - Training in listening skills and self-awareness.
 - An induction in helpline policies, procedures, and resources.
- Speaker meetings take place throughout the year for all volunteers. These aim to introduce volunteers to other organisations. Volunteers' Monthly Meetings are provided for helpline counsellors and researchers and provide the opportunity to explore specific issues and areas of interest in more depth.

Supervision and support

- The Volunteer and Training Manager provides support and advice, and supervises the day to day volunteering shifts. In the absence of the Volunteer and Training Manager, a Helpline Supervisor will be available.
- The Volunteer and Training Manager will always ensure that one-to-one support is available to volunteers who wish to raise individual issues that may not be appropriate in a group setting.

- The Chief Executive provides one-to-one supervision to volunteers who wish to raise issues that relate to personal issues or concerns
- The Nacoa support network also ensures that support and advice is accessible to volunteers out of office hours if necessary.
- Student volunteers from the University of Bristol receive additional support from the SCA Co-ordinators, who are responsible for representing students' views at both Nacoa and Student Community Action.
- Volunteers' Monthly Meetings take place, facilitated by the Volunteer and Training Manager. The aim is to provide volunteer helpline counsellors and researchers with:
 - on-going support, and
 - to allow them to raise concerns, which are discussed and addressed
 - to discuss new developments within the organisation
 - to be heard.
- Nacoa recognises volunteers as equal partners in achieving the aims of the organisation, and ensures that their contribution is an integral part of the service. It is committed to promoting the value and contribution of volunteers, and aims to ensure that volunteering with Nacoa is a positive experience.

Volunteers' expectations

- To be respected and valued and to know what they can expect, and what their roles are.
- To be provided with the necessary information to carry out their volunteering role and to know what is expected of them.
- To receive training and induction appropriate to their role.
- To receive support and supervision from Nacoa as an organisation, and from a named person within the service.
- To be provided with a safe working environment, and to be advised of Nacoa's Health and Safety Policy.
- To be covered by Nacoa's Insurance Policy.
- To be reimbursed for all out of pocket expenses whilst volunteering at Nacoa, and whilst travelling to and from the location of a volunteering activity.
- To be free from discrimination, as outlined in Nacoa's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- To have any grievance treated seriously and promptly, as detailed in Nacoa's Code of Practice.
- To be fairly treated in the case of disciplinary measures, according to the Disciplinary Policy.

Volunteers' responsibilities

- To carry out their agreed duties to the best of their abilities.
- To work within the aims, objectives and values of Nacoa.
- To attend training sessions and support groups where agreed.
- To work with agreed policies, codes of practice and guidelines, as explained during the induction process.
- To adhere to Nacoa's Confidentiality Policy, and respect the privacy of helpline callers.
- To agree to work within the guidelines set out in the Nacoa Children/Vulnerable Adult Protection Programme.
- To be honest and reliable, and to inform Nacoa if unable to attend for volunteering shifts.

Nacoa's responsibilities

- To provide information, foundation training and induction to enable helpline counsellors and researchers to meet the responsibilities of their volunteer role.
- To provide foundation training to speaker volunteers.
- To provide on-going support, supervision and on-going training sessions.
- To identify a named person who will maintain contact with the volunteer on a regular basis.
- To welcome any comments and ideas from volunteers regarding ways in which their role may be developed and improved.
- To welcome any comments and ideas from volunteers regarding ways in which the organisation may be developed and improved.
- To protect the interests and safety of both helpline callers and volunteers. In the case that these are compromised or endangered, Nacoa may request that an individual stops volunteering.
- To treat volunteers as equal partners in achieving the aims of Nacoa.
- To ensure that volunteers' tasks are regularly reviewed
- To make freely available and review the Volunteering Policy and procedures on an annual basis.
- To make freely available and review all Policies and Procedures, listed below, on an annual basis.

To ensure best practice, Nacoa works within the guidelines of the Helpline Policies, Protocol and Procedures Manual, which includes the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding Policies (Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults)
- Code of Best Practice
- Complaints Procedure
- Confidentiality Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Helpline Practices
- Helpline Principles
- Privacy Policy
- Volunteering Policy

Some of the above are available at nacoa.org.uk/About Nacoa/Governance. The others are available from Nacoa, PO Box 64, Bristol, BS16 2UH or email volunteering@nacoa.org.uk.