

CAFOD Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Volunteers are integral to CAFOD's work, partnering with us in the Church's mission to overcome global poverty and injustice. Volunteering in CAFOD will enable Catholics to express their faith, working towards a world transformed to reflect the Kingdom of God. They will play an active role in shaping our work and will be recognised, and celebrated, as key partners.

CAFOD was founded by volunteers when Jacquie Stuyt and Elspeth Orchard came together with others from the National Board of Catholic Women, the Catholic Women's League and the Union of Catholic Mothers to organise the first Family Fast Day in 1960. The efforts of these first volunteers led Fast Day collections taking place across dioceses. Today, volunteers continue to lead the Catholic communities of England and Wales to reach out to our brothers and sisters living in poverty overseas.

Aim of the policy

This volunteer policy aims to demonstrate CAFOD's commitment to volunteers by setting out the principles and practices that we follow. These principles and practices affect everyone at CAFOD and this policy is therefore relevant to all staff, volunteers and trustees within the organisation.

This policy aims to give a wholistic overview to volunteering at CAFOD, introducing:

1. CAFOD's approach to volunteering
 - a. What is volunteering?
 - b. Our commitment to volunteers
 - c. What we expect from volunteers
2. Ways to volunteer with CAFOD
 - a. Who can volunteer?
 - b. Volunteer roles
 - c. References and Disclosures
3. Recruitment
 - a. How we recruit
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 - c. Volunteer interviews
 - d. Unsuccessful applications

4. Induction and support
 - a. Support
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 - e. Agreements
 - f. Resolving problems
5. Recognition and completion:
 - a. CAFOD's Volunteer Recognition Scheme
 - b. Exit interviews
 - c. CAFOD references

1. CAFOD's Approach to Volunteering

a) What is volunteering?

CAFOD volunteers put their faith into action by freely giving their time, energy and skills to support our work. Our volunteers are the face of CAFOD in England and Wales; leading prayer, campaigning and fundraising in our parishes, schools and local communities. Volunteers act in partnership with CAFOD staff and can volunteer professional skills in an office and overseas, as well as within their local context. All volunteer roles are unpaid, but volunteers are encouraged to keep reimbursement for out of pocket expenses.

b) CAFOD's commitment to volunteers

To ensure that volunteering is a rewarding, enjoyable and making a difference, we will support volunteers by:

- Treating volunteers with respect, kindness and gratitude.
- Connecting volunteers with a volunteer manager who can offer support and guidance in the role.
- Making appropriate use of a volunteers' skills, experience and availability.
- Explaining the responsibilities and time frame of the role.
- Providing volunteers with the information, training and resources needed for their role.

- Understanding that volunteers can end their volunteering with us at time of say no to tasks that are beyond the scope of their role or they do not have the necessary skills.
- Being in contact with volunteers and offering opportunities for volunteers to meet with their volunteer manager and to meet other volunteers.
- Offering reimbursement of agreed expenses on submission of an expenses claim form and receipt.

c) What we expect from volunteers:

We respect that circumstances in life change and there are no contractual obligations within volunteers' agreement with us. However, in order for us to be effective in our mission, we do ask volunteers to consider the following so we can count on them as part of the team:

- Try their best in their volunteering role
- Treat CAFOD staff and other volunteers with respect and kindness
- Meet time commitments and give us as much notice as possible if you need to cancel a commitment.
- Read and abide by CAFOD's policies, respecting our commitment to child safeguarding, data protection, equal opportunities, health and safety and safe use of social media.
- To act as our representative within their local community; uphold CAFOD's values and avoiding actions that would call CAFOD into disrepute.

2. Ways to volunteer with CAFOD

a. Who can volunteer?

Diversity and Equal Opportunities:

CAFOD promotes a culture of diversity and equal opportunity. As a global charity, we are know the benefit of diversity in enriching and broadening our knowledge and perspective. We seek to overcome any obstacle that prevents someone from volunteering with us, be in financial, linguistic or a disability. We hope to find a way for everyone to contribute their talents and be a part of our mission to reach those living in poverty.

Young volunteers:

CAFOD's Youth Team engage young people in supporting CAFOD whilst in schools and handle applications to volunteer from young people under the age 18s. Our Youth team will ensure that safeguarding measures are in place, risk assessments completed and that all young applicant have written parental consent to volunteer with us.

CAFOD offers a limited number of posts for school pupils seeking a week of work experience with CAFOD.

Volunteers from outside the EU/EEA:

CAFOD welcomes applications from outside the EU/EEA, providing that applicants secure a visa allowing them to do voluntary work in the UK. CAFOD is unable to cover the visa costs or help with visa applications. Refugees and asylum seekers are welcome to volunteer but must have the appropriate documentation. We are not able to sponsor the accommodation or travel costs from overseas applicant wishing to volunteer in the UK. For further information see [the UK Border Agency's website](#).

Friends and relatives as volunteers:

Friends and relatives are also encouraged to volunteer but they should go through the established application process, as outlined above. If the volunteer role requires an interview, the friend or relative will be interviewed by a different member of staff.

b. Volunteer roles

CAFOD offers many volunteering roles, ranging from community focussed roles in parish and schools to overseas placements for our gap year volunteers. We also encourage volunteering in our head office and diocesan volunteer centres, where professional and administrative skills are highly valued.

CAFOD's volunteering roles include:

- Parish Volunteer
- Schools Volunteer
- Events Volunteer

- Office Volunteer
- Campaigns Volunteer
- MP correspondent
- Area Coordinator
- Schools Volunteer
- Campaigns Volunteer
- Trustee
- Step into the Gap volunteer (open to those aged between 18- 25)
- Communications Volunteer
- Volunteer Prayer Writer

c) References and Disclosures

For some of our volunteering roles, we require that applicants provide the names and contact details of two people (not relatives) who know them well and who are happy to provide a reference. It is recommended that one of the referees is the applicant's parish priest.

For schools volunteers, schools coordinators or any volunteering activity with under 18s, we require applicant to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure form. For further information, see [CAFOD's Child Protection Policy](#).

CAFOD will not discriminate against applicants with previous convictions but will seek to treat them fairly taking individual circumstances into account.

CAFOD will fully comply with the Disclosure and Barring Service on the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.

3. Volunteer recruitment and selection

a) How we recruit

CAFOD attract volunteers in a variety of ways. As CAFOD represents the Catholic community of England and Wales, we focus our recruitment the

parishioners that make up this community. CAFOD provides applicants with a description of the volunteering role detailing the tasks, expectation of time commitment and any skills required.

Our recruitment methods include:

- CAFOD website, diocesan blogs and CAFOD social media pages
- Parish bulletins and posters
- Adverts in Catholic newspapers and magazines
- Personal recommendation
- CAFOD volunteer centres
- Speaking at Mass and parish events
- Catholic university chaplaincies
- Catholic schools
- 'Just do it' volunteering website

b) How to apply

Application forms

We ask all those applying to volunteer to complete our application form. This can be completed online or as a hard copy and posted to the applicant's diocesan volunteer centre. This allows us to start the process of finding the right volunteering opportunity for the applicant and is an opportunity for the applicant to explain their interests and why they would like to volunteer with CAFOD.

Volunteer agreement

All volunteers are asked to sign our volunteer agreement, affirming their commitment to our policies and the volunteering role. This agreement represents our mutual expectations of reliability and support and is not intended as a contract of employment.

c) Volunteer interviews

For certain volunteering roles, applicants are invited to meet with the volunteering coordinator for an informal interview. This is an opportunity for the applicant and for CAFOD to establish whether the role would suit them and how they can best participate in our mission.

d) Unsuccessful applications

In some cases, the applicant might not be suited to the role. If possible, CAFOD will endeavour to find an alternative role, better suited to the applicant's skills, location or availability. CAFOD reserves the right to decline an applicant's offer to volunteer.

4. Induction and Support

a) Support

All volunteers will have a named contact who will support them in their role. In some cases this will be a staff member but in others it will be a coordinator volunteer. All volunteers will be able to meet with their coordinator face to face, talk on the phone and be in email contact. In the case of office volunteers, support and supervision would be expected to be more frequent and the volunteer would also be invited to attend team meetings.

b) Communication

Coordinating volunteers can expect to be contacted and/or given an opportunity to meet with their CPC every three months. It is recommended that all volunteers are invited to discuss their volunteering on an annual basis.

In addition to hearing from their volunteer coordinator or supervising staff member, volunteers receive a monthly e-newsletter. This informs volunteers of new resources, events and appeals. Volunteers will receive a copy of 'Side by Side', which gives feedback to volunteers about our overseas work. We also communicate with volunteers via mailings and email to keep volunteers informed about plans and support them in volunteering with us.

c) Induction and training

Different volunteer roles will require different types of support. All CAFOD volunteers are encouraged to attend an Understanding CAFOD day or complete an online version of this introductory course.

Parish Volunteers:

Parish Volunteers will receive support from their area coordinator volunteer and from their diocesan volunteer centre. All parish volunteer are invited to attend Fast Day briefings before Lent and Harvest. This will help prepare volunteers to lead Fast Day appeals in their parishes, enable them to learn more about our overseas work, and inform parish volunteers of our latest fundraising, campaign and prayer resources.

School Volunteers and Schools Coordinators:

In order to prepare for school visits, volunteers must complete two training days and an online safeguarding course.

Area Coordinators:

To introduce new area coordinators to the role and induct them into our ways of working with parishes, all area coordinators need to complete training day 1. To support area coordinator to develop in the role, these volunteers are also invited to attend training day 2 on involving others.

Office Volunteers:

Office volunteers will receive training and induction in our IT systems such as SharePoint, the supporter database and outlook. In head office, this induction will be led by the Volunteer Development and Support coordinator. In diocesan volunteer centres, training and induction will be led by the diocesan staff member (Community Participation Coordinator).

Campaign Volunteers:

Campaign volunteer coordinators have an initial training session with our campaigns outreach coordinator. This training session introduces to CAFOD's campaigns, how we campaign and why it is so important. We hold two days a year for campaign volunteer coordinators to come together.

campaign volunteers receive initial campaign training as part of the 'Understanding CAFOD' day. Training for campaign volunteers could also be offered online or take place in small groups with their diocesan staff member or campaign volunteer coordinators. Additional training could be offered to prepare for the launch of a specific campaigns.

MP Correspondents are invited to attend optional MPC training on the same day as the Parliament reception or exhibition and lobby days. We also have a flexible set of training sessions that diocesan staff (CPC) run locally.

Ongoing training for volunteers and staff:

- Volunteers wishing to develop in their volunteering role are encouraged to attend additional CAFOD training days as suggested by their volunteer coordinator.
- Volunteers are invited to attend local CAFOD events to increase their understanding of CAFOD's work. For example, this could be to meet a visiting international partner, engage in campaign action or attend a volunteer briefing.
- We support Romero House staff to effectively support and manage volunteers in their team by running annual workshops in volunteer management.
- We encourage diocesan staff (CPCs) to continue to develop their knowledge of volunteer management by attend training days run by NCVO.

d) Resources

Welcome pack

New volunteers will be given a volunteer welcome pack containing the following:

- task description
- volunteer agreement
- code of behaviour
- expenses claim form
- volunteering policy

- 'Just One World' pamphlet on CAFOD's work
- information about their team
- other information relevant to the role

Printed copies of these documents are available to volunteers on request.

Online resources

Office volunteers and coordinating volunteers have access to CAFOD's database and SharePoint sites. These volunteers will be given an Outlook email address with which they can access CAFOD's IT systems and shared working spaces. The level of access will depend on which sites the volunteer needs to access for their volunteering activity.

e) Expenses

CAFOD volunteers are entitled to claim out of pocket expenses. If a volunteer is CAFOD will reimburse travel expenses and

Volunteers who operate on CAFOD's behalf beyond their parish boundaries on a regular basis should claim travel expenses for journeys undertaken on CAFOD's behalf outside their parish.

This would cover travel to meetings, training events or schools and Churches they are visiting. They can also claim an allowance for food, if they are working away from home *for four hours or more*, of up to £5.00 for lunch *or £7.50 for an evening meal, on production of receipts.*

f) Agreements

Acceptable use of IT Policy

Confidentiality and Data Protection

CAFOD asks for a volunteer's permission to keep their personal data in the Volunteers' Agreement. All data will be kept securely and only for as long as is necessary.

Office volunteers and coordinating volunteers will also have access to confidential information on CAFOD's database and intranet. We therefore ask

that these volunteers sign **CAFOD's Confidentiality and Data Protection Commitment**.

Health and Safety

CAFOD recognises its responsibility to provide a safe office working environment and to provide guidance for community events organised by volunteers.

Volunteers are required to take responsibility for their own health and safety and that of people working around them and should raise any concerns with their staff contact.

CAFOD's 'How to guides' for community fundraising events, contact health and safety guidance and more information can be found on our website:

<https://cafod.org.uk/Fundraise/Event-toolkits/Health-and-safety>

g) Resolving problems

If a problem arises, we seek to resolve this through an open and respectful discussion. A volunteer should contact their volunteer coordinator or staff supervisor in the first instance. If there is a problem between their volunteer or staff contact, the contact's line manager will assist. The volunteer is welcome to bring a friend and family member with them to any meetings about problem situations.

- In an informal discussion, specific issues can be identified and ways of dealing with them can be agreed. All those involved should be contacted after an agreed time period to check that the issue has resolved.
- If there is need for a second meeting, this should be a more formal interview in which notes are taken of the problems raised and agreements made. The volunteer should be offered the opportunity to volunteer with a different CAFOD team.
- If the problem has not been resolved, a third meeting is required. Any complaints from the volunteer must be documented and followed up. If there is an ongoing problem with the volunteer's practice of their role, at this point the volunteer needs to be offered the choice of a different volunteering role or to continue their journey with CAFOD in a supporter capacity. A volunteer may appeal to the head of the volunteering team if

he/she feels the circumstances have been unfair or require further action.

For more information see **Guidelines with Dealing with Problems.**

5. Recognition and completion

a) CAFOD's Volunteer Recognition Scheme

CAFOD's Volunteer Recognition Scheme recognises the time, effort and commitment of volunteers.

- We celebrate different lengths of volunteering. After 1, 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years, we send volunteers prayer certificates. To mark 25 years of volunteering, we organise for a Papal Blessing to be awarded to the volunteer.
- All volunteers are invited to attend Masses of Thanksgiving. The Masses are offered for CAFOD volunteers and are followed by a celebratory event.
- In recognition of volunteers' activity, we showcase volunteer stories on our online platforms and in local Catholic press.
- Thanks should also be given to volunteers on an informal and day-to-day basis from team members.

b) Exit interviews

If a volunteer decides to step down from their role, we hope to speak to the volunteer about their experience. We aim to find out why the volunteer is leaving, invite them to continue their engagement with CAFOD in other ways and collect feedback. We will invite the volunteer to stay in touch with us and ask if the volunteer would like to continue to receive the e-newsletter, Side by Side and CAFOD mailings.

c) References

We are happy to provide references for volunteers applying for work or a course of study.

Further information

[Child Protection Policy](#)

Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy

Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy

[Health and Safety Guidance](#)

[Just One World](#)

Volunteering Strategy

[Volunteer Expenses Policy](#)

Guidelines for dealing with problems

Involving ex-offenders as volunteers

Policy review

This policy was created in July 2018.