



Vale of Glamorgan Council Corporate Employee Volunteer Policy

**Human Resources Division
Directorate of Resources**

Employee Volunteering Policy

Purpose

Volunteering is about giving your time and skills, for the benefit of others and the local community.

This policy will allow you to volunteer during working hours with the opportunity to get to know some of our partner organisations as well as committing time for charitable causes. Through volunteering, you will be able to develop your professional skills in challenging environments and gain new experiences.

This policy aligns with our Corporate vision, Working Together for a Brighter Future, and Wellbeing objectives, adding value and strengthening relationships with the local community.

- To work with and for our communities
- To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth
- To support people at home and in their community
- To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment

By giving your time, you're helping the charity or organisation and building a stronger connection between the Council and the wider community, thus contributing to social change.

Benefits

Volunteering has huge benefits both for you and for the community. Volunteering can:

- Help you be part of the community
- Help you learn new skills and experience
- Help you gain confidence and provides an opportunity to try something new
- Have a real and valuable impact on people, communities and society
- Help you meet different types of people
- Improve your morale, physical health and work-life balance
- Be fun!

Who can get involved

Employees who have a permanent or temporary post can apply for 1 day of volunteer leave per calendar year to volunteer which must be agreed with their line manager prior to their attendance. Volunteer leave should be booked in the normal way through the current annual leave/absence booking process.

Managers can also consider contract duration for temporary contracts before accepting the application – usually 12 months or longer would be required to obtain the full day, although managers can be flexible depending on the circumstances.

What projects can I support?

The scheme gives employees one paid day off each annual leave year to volunteer for their chosen charity or local community project, which support communities within the Vale of Glamorgan.

You can support any charity or Vale of Glamorgan Council service that operates within the Vale of Glamorgan Council area. For example, care homes, day centres, education establishments or any other locally focused activity.

Alternatively, you can volunteer for a charity of your choice with links to the local community upon agreement of your line manager and provided it aligns to our Corporate Plan and Wellbeing objectives.

The Organisational Development Team may also assist you in identifying volunteering opportunities across the Vale.

Any activities which cannot be shown to be of benefit to the local community, such as organisations who look to make profit, volunteering to support a friend or family member, will not qualify under this scheme.

In addition to the above, every year the Vale of Glamorgan Council commits to supporting the following dates as part of its committed to Project Zero and Corporate Plan; further supporting our local communities. These projects would be run as group volunteering days and co-ordinated by our Organisational Development Team in collaboration with our Neighbourhood services team.

If an employee chose to opt for the group volunteering day this it would be classed their 1 day and not an additional day.

A team of cross functional employees derived from nominated volunteers will be coordinated by our Organisational Development Team and Neighbourhood Services team and a team leader will be appointed to co-ordinate the group. Agreed dates to support will include.

- World Earth Day
- World Oceans Day
- World Environmental Day
- Global Recycling Day

You should not participate in any activities that could be in conflict to your Vale of Glamorgan Council role or one which may impact on your health and wellbeing.

Expenses/Equipment

As we are accountable for public funds we will not pay any expenses you may have through the volunteering activity. We will not provide or pay for any equipment required for your chosen volunteering role. You should discuss this with the organisation that you are volunteering with as they may offer to pay reasonable expenses.

Health and Safety

It is your responsibility to ensure you are meeting all health and safety standards, no matter the type of volunteering arrangement you choose to do. You should ensure that the organisation that you are volunteering with has enough insurance cover for the role that you undertake and that there are appropriate risk assessments in place. Our Health and Safety team can advise and support with this if necessary.

Time Off

With the exception of Chief Officer grades, all employees will be granted paid time off to attend all types of volunteering events up to a maximum of 1 day (pro-rata for part time staff) per annual year i.e., April to March.

Chief Officers will still be able to participate in these opportunities but should take a day's annual leave.

Employee Requests

Employee requests to undertake volunteering

If you wish to take part in the volunteering, you should speak to your line manager about your request and then request the leave via the normal leave booking system.

Approval of time off will be subject to the needs of the Service. The Vale of Glamorgan Council will support as many requests as possible however there may be times that this cannot be accommodated for the following reasons:

- Has a negative impact on the organisation and service needs;
- Work within the service cannot be re-arranged to accommodate the employee's varied hours;

- The cost of cover would be too great.

Only 2 applications per year should be submitted for up to the maximum of 1 day per year for a full-time employee (pro-rata for part time).

Approved volunteering

The decision of your application will be confirmed with your line manager and can be booked via the normal annual leave process.

Refused volunteering

Where a request is declined, your manager will provide some justification for the refusal.

Receiving a refusal does not prevent you from requesting time off to volunteer in the future.

Human Resources and OD

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