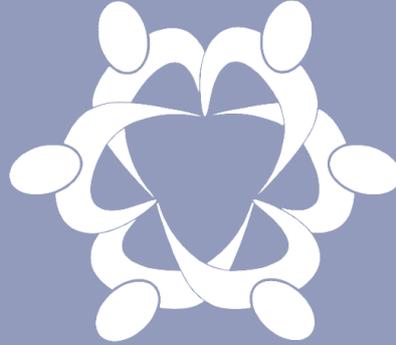


**Rotherham
Federation**



Strengthening Communities

Volunteer Handbook

Rotherham Federation

Strengthening Communities

Content Page

	Page number
About RotherFed	3
RotherFed and Volunteers	4
What is Volunteering and why Volunteer?	5
Legal Practicalities	6
Expenses	10
Volunteer Support	13
Induction Checklist	18
Training Record	20
Organisational Structure	21
Note Pages	22

About RotherFed

Hello, we're Rotherham Federation and we believe that Rotherham needs strong local communities. We support communities to grow and develop, working with them to build their sense of belonging, community pride and spirit. We work with and through grass root community groups that are committed to bringing communities together, giving all communities a voice and creating local solutions to local issues.



Note from our CEO

I would like to thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer with Rotherfed.

As a charity that is led by the community, it's important for me that we support all our volunteers to get the most from the time you spend with us.

I hope that you find the information in this pack helpful and that your experience as a Rotherfed volunteer is both rewarding and fulfilling.

Phil Hayes

RotherFed And Volunteers

Working with volunteers

The purpose of this handbook is to give you a background about the organisation you have chosen to volunteer for and provide you with a good understanding of your role as a volunteer. It also highlights guidance and key policies that may be relevant to your role and provide reference for where to find out further information. Many of our volunteers have been with us for many years, with many continuing to recommend the experience to family, friends and colleagues. We hope you will do the same.

We want you to ensure that you enjoy your time volunteering with us and we will do all we can to support you in your role. We aim to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently.

Without your support we would not be able to provide the services to local people, allowing us to shape support to meet the needs of local communities, right down to different neighbourhood's needs.

We strive to place volunteers as quickly as possible, but certain things slow down this process, for example waiting for references to be returned and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, if required, to come through.

What can volunteers expect from us?

- To volunteer in friendly atmosphere and to feel your role as a volunteer is respected and seen as a vital part of the RotherFed team.
- The role will be supervised by a named member of staff.
- An induction to RotherFed and to your role.
- To be given ongoing support, supervision and relevant training to enable you to undertake your role.
- Agreed out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed on production of receipts/tickets etc.



What is Volunteering and Why Volunteer?

There are a number of different definitions of volunteering. However, for the purpose of this handbook, we are going to use the Department for Work and Pensions definition of a volunteer. This states:

A volunteer is a person who is:

- not given any money other than expenses
- not legally obligated to volunteer
- doing something for a not-for-profit organisation
- doing something for someone who is not family

What Could I Gain From Volunteering?

You could make a real difference to the lives of people in your community. Volunteering can give you the opportunity to make new friends, develop yourself and learn new skills.

We have a variety of volunteer roles that can suit many people.

Our roles are great for a person who would like to stay active and give something back to the community or for someone looking for valuable work experience. If you enjoy meeting new people, are interested in the wellbeing of other people and work well alongside others as part of a team, one of our roles may be just what you're looking for.

Volunteering is a great way to share your life experience and expertise and make a positive contribution in your local community. So, why not put your skills to good use, make new friends, or even discover or develop new talents or skills you never had?

Volunteers of all ages

We welcome volunteers of all ages, from people in their teenage years through to those who are in their 90s. Volunteers under the age of 18 should contact us before applying so that we can find the right role and talk you through the practicalities of volunteering with us.



Legal Practicalities

Confidentiality policy

As part of your role at RotherFed, you may be asked to sign a confidentiality policy declaration. The aim of the policy is to:

- ensure that people and their interest are treated with respect
- provide practical guidance which will add credibility to the organisation and instil confidence in it
- protect the organisation and its trustees, staff and volunteers
- comply with contract requirement and to comply with the Data Protection Act 1984 for organisations and maintaining complete records.

Once the policy is signed, you may be given information about a service user or a community group to help you to fulfil your volunteer role. This information should not be shared with anyone else. You will be told if the information that you have been given is confidential and who you may share that information with.

Confidentiality may only be breached in extreme circumstances, including issues related to safeguarding.

Confidentiality and Personal Information

Only relevant information should be requested from you during selection. You should be told why it is needed. Anything in writing should be kept confidential. We will not disclose any of your personal details without your prior consent. Any information that we keep will comply with current GDPR guidelines.

Equal treatment

RotherFed will respect your interests as both an individual and a volunteer. There is no discrimination on race, sex, sexuality, age, class, disability or history of illness. You must not, in turn, discriminate against others.

Health and safety

RotherFed has a responsibility and is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all volunteers. We aim to ensure that you are aware of and understand the health and safety risks associated with your role and provide you with the appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training required to enable you to work safely whilst volunteering for RotherFed.

As a volunteer you must:

- take reasonable care of yourself and others
- follow the health and safety policy and procedures of RotherFed (a full copy of the policy is available on request)
- co-operate fully with your RotherFed and within your role
- report on any health and safety concerns you may have in good time
- report any accident that you may have while volunteering.

Reporting accidents/incidents

While you are volunteering you must report any accidents or incidents that occur to yourself, any staff member, volunteer or service user. Accident/incident report forms are available from your staff contact. This includes near misses and incidences of violent or aggressive behaviour.

Safeguarding concerns

As part of your role at RotherFed, you will be required to understand safeguarding procedures. To help you do this you will be asked to undertake safeguarding training. As a volunteer, you may find that you have concerns about a person, or a person may confide in you that they have been or are being abused.

- If a person confides in you, reassure them, but keep questions to a minimum.
- Try not to ask closed questions.
- Write down and sign and date what you have been told as this may be needed later and it is useful to have notes instead of trying to remember what you were told a couple of weeks later.
- Talk to your named staff contact or another member of RotherFed staff if they are unavailable as soon as possible.
- RotherFed has a clear safeguarding policy, supported by trained staff who provide support and advice on safeguarding issues. They will take any necessary action once you have reported your concerns to them.

Whistleblowing

This is when a staff member or volunteer is troubled by something that involves a danger to service users, professional misconduct, or financial malpractice and they report this information to the senior management team. This can include incorrect financial reporting, unlawful activity, activities that are not in line with RotherFed policies and activities that otherwise amount to serious improper conduct. RotherFed has safeguards to protect those involved in a whistleblowing process. If you feel that you need to report an issue, your first port of call should be your named staff



contact. However, if you feel unable to do this, please take your concerns to your named contact's line manager.

Signposting

You may, at times, come across people who are struggling with specific problems. If the person expresses the wish to seek help or additional support, then you may guide the person towards relevant RotherFed staff member. Do not be tempted to advise the person directly.

RotherFed Volunteer ID

Volunteers who are doing their role away from the RotherFed's offices must carry a RotherFed identity card. If you lose your RotherFed identity card report it to your named staff contact immediately and we will issue of a replacement card.

Identity cards must be returned to RotherFed when you leave the organisation.

Claiming benefits and volunteering

People can volunteer and claim benefits at the same time and there is no limit on the number of hours that you can volunteer for, however you need to ensure that you can still meet the requirements of your claim. For example, if you are receiving Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), you still need to be able to look for work and go for interviews. In practical terms this means that you can spend up to 50 per cent of your time volunteering, which is 17 1/2 hours a week. As long as you can prove that you are searching for a job for 17 1/2 hours you can spend any additional leisure time volunteering in your role; this means that there are no time limits on the hours you spend volunteering.

If you receive Income Support, Employment Support Allowance or Disability Living Allowance, you can likewise volunteer for as many hours as you like. Just like if you are receiving JSA, the volunteering that you undertake can not cast doubt over your capacity to meet your claim. If you are claiming benefits and volunteering, you must always inform the DWP.

Gift relationship

The volunteer role is a gift relationship. Unlike an employment contract there is no enforceable obligation for volunteers to attend, do tasks or give a minimum amount of time. Likewise, RotherFed does not provide regular hours or payment for any activity undertaken. Agreed out of pocket expenses can only be paid after receipts and expenses forms have been provided. Arrangements with volunteers are not intended to be legally binding.

Refugee status, asylum seekers and failed asylum seekers

People who have refugee status, are asylum seekers or are failed asylum seekers can volunteer. The role that they volunteer in has to have a community benefit, not a personal benefit. This means you can not undertake unpaid work such as performing a paid role without the pay as this will have a personal benefit.

RotherFed volunteers should be able to demonstrate conversational English language skills to a level two standard. We also welcome volunteers who can speak more than one language.





Expenses

Claiming expenses

Without our volunteers, we could not deliver our services to people to the current scale and quality. You can claim out of pocket expenses in line with current RotherFed guidelines. This can include travel expenses to the place where you volunteer and lunch expenses if you volunteer for over 6 hours. Please record your mileage, keep all appropriate receipts and submit your expenses claim to your named staff support. We cannot accept liability for expenses that result from activities not agreed beforehand. If you are in receipt of benefits ensure you inform the relevant claims department that you are undertaking voluntary work. Out of pocket expenses should not affect your benefits. Talk to your named staff support about how to claim expenses.

All volunteer expenses must be exact. For example, if you volunteer for RotherFed five times a week and have bought a weekly bus pass to undertake your volunteering, you can only claim for the actual days that you are volunteering, otherwise it will be deemed as receiving financial reward for your volunteering. In practical terms this means, if you buy a weekly bus pass for £7 and volunteer for 5 days, you will receive up to £5 towards your bus pass. If you do not want to purchase a weekly bus pass and make up the extra payment yourself, you must purchase bus tickets on a daily basis and claim them back individually, even if that proves to be a more expensive option.

Insurance (Motor)

RotherFed does not provide motor insurance cover for volunteers using their own vehicles. There are many different insurers and products available on the market providing different covers.

If you use your own vehicle in connection with your volunteering role for RotherFed, you will need to approach your own insurer advising exactly the purposes for which you use your vehicle. This may be as simple as commuting to and from RotherFed's premises to volunteer. It could extend further to using your vehicle running errands on behalf of RotherFed for example picking up someone to come to a Housing Involvement Panel.

We will need to be provided with evidence that the correct cover is in place before you use your vehicle on our behalf. Adding the fact that you are volunteering to your current policy should not cost you any extra. However, failing to inform an insurer that you are using your car to volunteering may invalidate any claims you may make.

Insurance

RotherFed has Employers Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity insurance. Volunteers are covered within the policy. However, this does not mean that you are covered under RotherFed insurance unless negligence is proven.

For example, if you were to fall over while out door knocking as part of your volunteering and break your arm, this could be deemed as an accident, where it was no one's fault and therefore you would not be insured. This would be treated in a similar fashion to if you had broken an arm while playing football in your own garden or a similar place in which you are not insured. In this case, RotherFed would not be responsible and would therefore be able to offer no financial support for any loss of income etc which may come with an inability to go to work or any extra expenses this may cause.

Due to this, some volunteers may wish to sign themselves up to an income protection scheme or other similar benefits based policy.

Volunteer Expenses Claim Form



Name _____

Month(s) claimed for _____

Date	Journey Details e.g. home to Eastwood to home	Reason for journey e.g. meeting, training	Time away Length of meeting, training etc.	Method of transport e.g. car, bus, bicycle, taxi	Cost of public transport Receipts must be attached	Number of miles For bikes & cars only	Details of passengers include addresses where collected and dropped off	Additional expenses	
								Item	Cost

Total amount of miles _____ @ *45p per mile for cars _____ I certify that this is a true and correct statement of expenses
 _____ @ 23p per mile for cars _____
 _____ @ 20p per mile for bikes _____ Signed _____ Date _____
 cost of public transport _____
 cost of additional expenses _____ Approved by _____
TOTAL CLAIM £ _____ Signed _____ Date _____

***for the first 50 mile, 23p per mile thereafter in a return journey. . Please note it is your responsibility to have business cover if you travel on our behalf.**

RotherFed Volunteer Support Session



Name:

RotherFed Staff Member:

Role:

Date:

1. How are you?

2. What have you been doing since our last meeting? (What has gone well? What could have been done differently? Praise? Any problems? Possible solutions?)

3. Do you need any training/extra support? (Do need any training – internal and external? Review of any training been on since last meeting? Is there anything else you need to do her role?)

4. How is the community that you are working in? (What has happened in it? Does it feel stronger now? Have you any visions/ideas for it moving forward?)

5. How is your development? (What impact has this role had on you? How would you like to expand your role going for ward?)

Review of Goals Previously Set

Goal	What did you want at achieve?	Have you achieved it or is it still an ongoing goal?	How did you achieve this?
Learning			
Wellbeing			
Community			

New Goals

Goal	What do you want to achieve?	When do you plan to achieve this by?	What will help you to achieve this? Do you need to complete development action plan?
Learning			
Wellbeing			
Community			

Volunteer Signature: _____

RotherFed Worker Signature: _____ Date: _____

Volunteer Support

Supporting volunteers

When starting with RotherFed you will be assigned a named member of staff to advise and guide you and who has overall responsibility for ensuring you are well supported in your role. In addition, you may volunteer with a number of other staff and volunteers while undertaking your volunteering activity.

When you join RotherFed you will undertake induction training. Your induction training will help you to understand what your volunteer role entails, explain what the organisation's goals are, how it goes about achieving them and helping volunteers to understand where they fit within the organisation as a whole.

Regular contact

Regular contact with your named staff support will enable them to check that you are enjoying your volunteering and ensure a continued understanding of your role. This will include being invited to attend support sessions and meetings on a regular basis. The number of support sessions/meetings that you are invited to will vary from volunteer to volunteer, depending on your role and the time commitment that you have offered. However, if you feel like you need an extra support session, please ask for one and it will be arranged instead of waiting for your next support session. RotherFed aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. If you ever encounter a difficult situation or have any questions about your role at anytime, speak to your named staff contact. If you are feeling unhappy at any time during your volunteering please speak to us as soon as possible.

Reviews/Support Sessions

Reviews are set times to support the ongoing process of having open and honest conversations, giving and receiving feedback, providing recognition and focusing on opportunities for continuous improvement and development.

Volunteer reviews are an opportunity to:

- Be clear of your volunteering role
- Receive feedback from your named staff contact on how your volunteering is going and any concerns there may be, to make any revisions and decide on whether to continue your role or look at other volunteering opportunities with Age UK Rotherham
- Give us feedback to improve our performance
- Discuss your training and support needs

Training and development opportunities

Volunteering with us might involve interaction with vulnerable people and it is important that we deliver relevant training to ensure you are equipped for the role.

Initially you will complete an induction training, which will give you an overview of the volunteer role and Age UK Rotherham.

You may be offered other development training and refresher training depending how long you volunteer for us and the nature of your volunteering role.

Time commitment

When people volunteer with RotherFed, we ask them to give varying amounts of time, depending on the role. This might be:

- helping out for a couple of hours at an event,
- volunteering to help with a group on a regular basis as a Community Leader,
- Leading a litterpick in your area every week,
- Running a weekly digital session at a neighbourhood centre,
- Attending a council meeting to represent your community.

Whatever time you have to spare and whenever you are available, we will try to find a role that suits you.

Health and wellbeing

Most volunteers get involved with RotherFed because they would like to 'give something back'; they are passionate about our work and proud to say they volunteer for us.

For many, it is something worthwhile to do with their spare time. There may be many reasons why you volunteer but it also has the potential to impact positively on your general health and wellbeing. For instance, making new friends and helping others. Many volunteers feel an improvement in their own self-esteem.

Holiday, sickness or other absences

We understand that you are giving your time to RotherFed freely and that you can volunteer for as many hours as you choose and take time off when you require. We would ask that you inform us in advance (where possible) that you are unable to volunteer.

Volunteer records

Details based on the information that you provided are held on our database and a paper volunteer file. We comply to all GDPR guidelines with our storing and sharing of records. Please inform us of any changes so we can keep them up-to-date. We may use your details to inform you of RotherFed news and training opportunities. Please tell your named staff support if you do not wish to receive mailings from us.

Keeping volunteer records

No clear guidelines exist for the retention of volunteer records, but we are bound by certain regulatory bodies including the GDPR guidelines and must follow any guidelines set out by the appropriate body. The Disclosure and Barring Service code of practice on disclosure information must also be adhered to.

The Limitation Act 1980 sets out timescales for retention of certain records that might also apply – such as the time limit for personal accident claims (currently 3 years in most cases). Where volunteers are providing advice or similar services, the act imposes a six year time limit for damages claims other than personal injury. Were such a case to be brought, training records and similar information might be needed to demonstrate that the organisation had taken adequate measures.



Dress code

Volunteers are requested to arrive dressed appropriately for the tasks that they will be performing. If you are provided with any protective clothing to undertake your voluntary placement please use it.

Accepting gifts from service users

As a volunteer, you should make it clear to service users that it is your role to help them and you can not accept gifts and money from them. Should the service user still wish to make a donation of money towards RotherFed, they should contact a member of RotherFed staff, as volunteers should not put themselves in a position of handling money.

RotherFed does understand that there are exceptions to this rule and that service users may wish to give you gifts on special occasions such as birthdays and at Christmas. In this situation, gifts would need to be reported to your named staff contact and a decision will be made on whether or not it is

possible to keep that gift. These types of gifts would be items such chocolates, biscuits, flowers, toiletries etc.

Social media

We encourage our volunteers to like and share our social media pages and posts, this includes our RotherFed staff pages on Facebook and Twitter. We also respect that your own social media pages and posts are private. Therefore we ask both staff and volunteers to look at their security settings in order to keep them private. There is further guidance regarding social media in our Media and Communications Policy.

Smoking

All premises and vehicles used on business for RotherFed must be smoke free. This means as a volunteer you cannot smoke within an person's home when visiting or within your own vehicle if transporting a person anywhere. RotherFed operates the same system for vapour/e-cigarettes as it does for any other form of cigarettes.

Severe weather

RotherFed recognises that at certain times of the year you may face difficulties in travelling to and from your place of volunteering. We advise you to listen to travel warnings and if you are in any doubt of whether it may be safe, do not travel. If our office our closed due to severe weather, your named staff support will contact you.

Satisfaction

We want our volunteers to enjoy the time spent at RotherFed. Therefore, we ask you to keep us informed of any suggestions that you may have or if there have been any changes to your role. Quite often a small change can help improve not just your experience but other people's as well. If you are unsatisfied with anything connected to your role please let us know as soon as possible and don't wait for a support session. We will aim to discuss and offer a resolution to any concerns that you may have as soon as possible. If you are unable to reach a solution we have a complaints procedure that we can help you through.

References

You can get a reference. Currently, RotherFed has a policy of giving a reference on headed paper which contains only factual information. This applies to both staff and volunteers. The reference will include the dates that you have volunteered with us as well as the title of the role that you have undertaken.

In addition to this reference, RotherFed staff will support and encourage you to create a folder that shows examples of your work and includes all training certificates and copies of any compliments that you have received while volunteering at RotherFed.

Parking

We have limited parking at the Springwell Gardens (although there is on-street parking very close by). We will reimburse the cost of parking incurred as a result of your volunteering as long as you attach a parking ticket stating the date, time and cost to your volunteer expenses claim form.

Catering facilities

Those who spend a full day (over 6 hours) in their role are entitled to a meal allowance of up to £5. This must be authorised by your named staff support and receipts must be kept (see volunteer expenses for more details). At Springwell Gardens, tea and coffee facilities are located in the both the upstairs and downstairs kitchens.

Ending your volunteering

You can stop volunteering whenever you wish but we ask that, wherever possible, you let us know prior to your last day. On leaving we will ask you to complete a questionnaire about your volunteering experience with us.

Other policies

We have an extensive list of policies (see insert which should have been given to you with this handbook). If you wish to read any of these in full, please let your named staff contact know and they will give you either a printed or electronic copy.



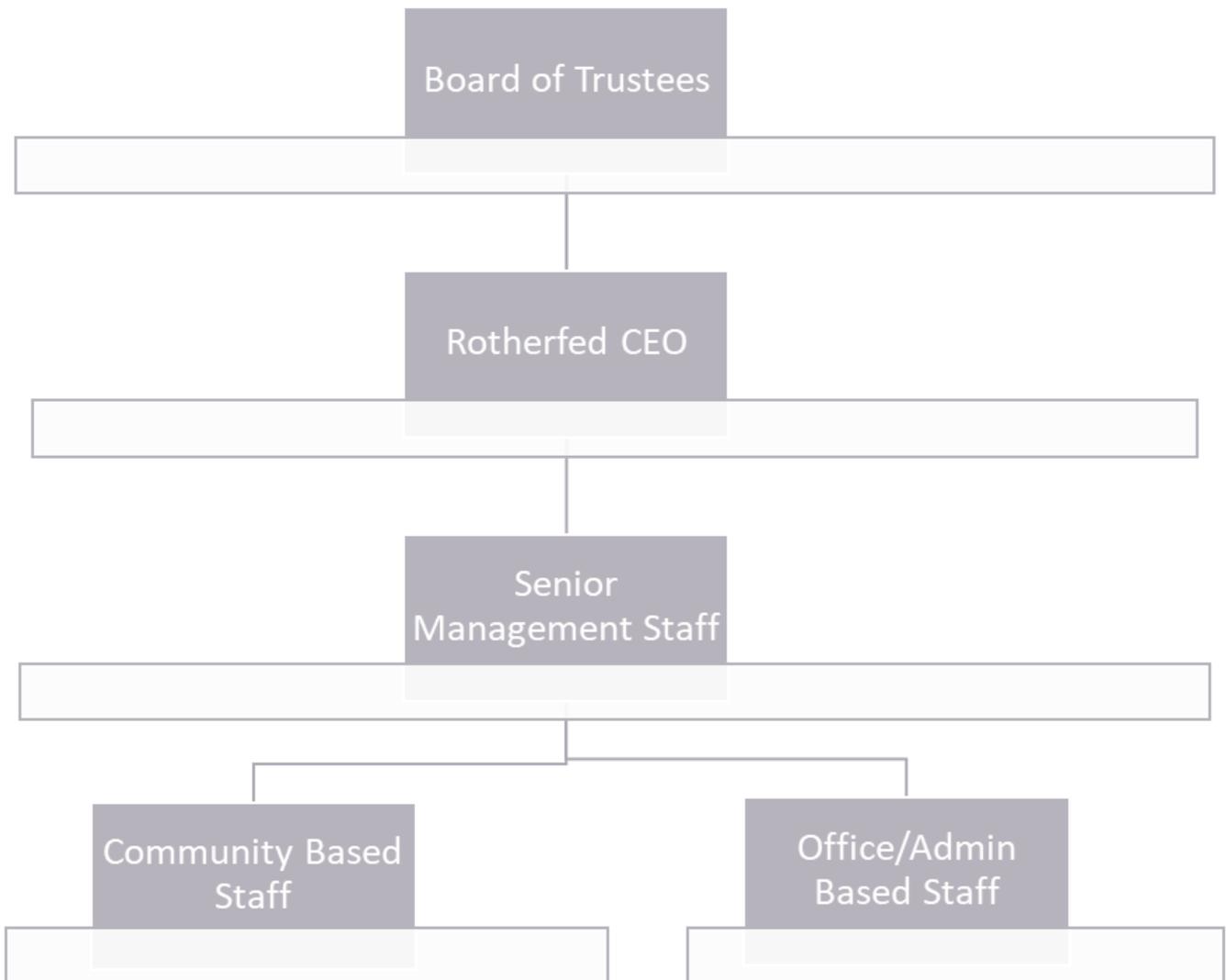
Induction Checklist

When you start to volunteer with us we will go through the checklist on these pages with you and ask you to initial each item as it's completed. There may be some things on the list that do not apply to you and the role you are doing and will stay blank so don't worry if this happens.

Checklist	Volunteer initials when achieved	Staff member initials when achieved
Before induction		
A copy of the volunteer role description is given to the volunteer.		
Induction paperwork		
A copy of the volunteer handbook is issued to the volunteer.		
Health and Safety Policy and Procedures, introduction to first aiders, fire drill, accident reporting are explained to the volunteer.		
Equal Opportunities Policy is explained to the volunteer.		
Confidentiality Policy explained—volunteer to sign a copy.		
Insurance—explained and if a volunteer is using their own car for volunteering, the documents are checked.		
Smoking Policy—smoking breaks and areas where people are allowed to smoke.		
Expenses Policy explained including how to fill out a claim form.		
DBS paperwork checked/completed where required.		
Induction practicalities		
Welcome, signing in book, toilets, kitchen, breaks and lunch explained.		
Tour of building and introduction to staff.		
Explanation of induction and name of main contacts you will be volunteering with.		
Dress code and social media policies explained.		
Role information		
Volunteer role—what it involves, training needed to do the role and paperwork related to it.		

RotherFed information		
Organisation's structure explained, brief overview of organisation, explanation of policies and where they can be found, and explanation of how volunteer role fits within RotherFed as a whole.		
Services provided explained		
Explanation of who are service users are.		
Where to find useful resource material for further reading explained.		
Telephone numbers for staff and other contacts provided.		
RotherFed processes		
How to report an absence explained.		
Complaints and compliments procedures explained.		
Further training and meetings		
Safeguarding policy and procedure explained.		
First Aid process/procedure explained.		
Specific training for role, and assessment of training and development needs.		
Support and supervision explained and dates of meetings.		
Keeping a training record explained.		
Office based training		
Office systems, reception, welcoming visitors, greeting people, notice boards, postal procedures, photocopier explained.		
Computer systems—log in, email, permissions granted to appropriate programs/drives explained.		
Phone—how to answer, transfer and hold calls, take a message explained.		
Post induction		
Issued ID —explain the importance of showing ID on all visits.		
Evaluation of induction process explained.		

Organisational Structure Explained



My named staff support is: _____

Contact details: _____

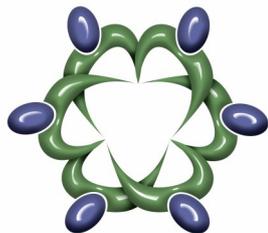
My senior management support is: _____

Contact details: _____

My safeguarding lead is: _____

Contact details: _____

**Rotherham
Federation**



Strengthening Communities

Rotherham Federation of Communities Ltd

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