



## STaSS Volunteer Policy    MAY 2015

STaSS works with people in the Milton Keynes area and beyond who are infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. Volunteers support STaSS in all areas of its work and are never used in the place of paid staff.

### 1. Vision

Our vision is to improve the health and social care of people infected with and closely affected by HIV/AIDS and other STIs, and to provide education to reduce the stigma and the spread of the virus.

### 2. Overview

2.1 This policy is intended to provide an overall guide and direction to staff and volunteers. Its purpose is for guidance only and does not constitute either implicitly or explicitly a binding contractual or personnel agreement.

2.2 For the purpose of this policy, a volunteer is anyone who gives time to STaSS of their own free will without pay or financial reward beyond reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred in the course of their duties.

2.3 STaSS views volunteers as a valuable resource. Volunteers have the right to:

- Be given meaningful assignments where possible
- Be integrated and treated equally as part of the team
- Receive effective support
- Be fully involved
- Receive due recognition for tasks undertaken

2.4. In return, volunteers will agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, to comply with the law relating to the organisation's activities and services and to remain loyal to the vision, policies and procedures of STaSS.

2.5. STaSS offers a range of volunteering opportunities and, in accordance with its equal opportunities and diversity policies, ensures that the opportunity to volunteer is widely promoted.

### 3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 STaSS is committed to social justice, equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination as a fundamental principle of its work. It seeks to prevent discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in the provision of services, in its employment practices and in its dealings with individuals, service users and volunteers.

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3.2 STaSS is committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued.

3.3 The sole criterion for volunteer recruitment will be suitability to perform a task for STaSS.

#### **4. Recruitment**

4.1 Volunteer recruitment will be undertaken using agreed procedures. The term "Recruitment" as used within this policy refers to enlisting the willing support of a volunteer. It does not constitute in anyway employment status.

4.2 Potential volunteers will be asked to complete an application form and where they will be working with vulnerable adults or children, they must be approved by the Criminal Records Bureau [CRB] before their role starts. Volunteers must provide the details of 2 referees and references will be taken up. Potential volunteers will be invited to an informal meeting with the volunteer co-ordinator before starting their role with STaSS.

#### **5. Volunteer Roles**

5.1 For each generic task performed by a volunteer with STaSS there will be a completed task profile.

5.2 Task profiles will form a guide to the duties required of the role. They are not restrictive and volunteers may be encouraged to carry out wider duties that may arise. The staff member responsible for the volunteer should liaise with the volunteer on a regular basis to discuss any additional tasks and responsibilities which may be added to the task profile.

5.3 All tasks should be subject to a written risk assessment.

5.4 Volunteers may be used at all levels of STaSS and in all activities and programmes. They will not be used to displace paid staff from their positions.

#### **6. Support and Development**

6.1 Support and development is an essential part of the reward for volunteering with STaSS.

6.2 One to one support will be provided during the induction period and at least annually thereafter.

6.3 Volunteers will be able to raise any concerns with the member of staff who is supporting them.

#### **7. Induction and Training**

7.1 Each volunteer will receive basic training about STaSS, its policies and its organisation.

7.2 All volunteers will receive information about health and safety and equal opportunities.

7.3 There will be a three month probationary period for each volunteer to ensure STaSS and the individual volunteer is happy with the role.

7.4 Volunteers will be provided with a task description providing an outline of their role and will be given a volunteer agreement to sign.

#### **8. Expenses**

8.1 All volunteers are entitled to be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of travelling, refreshment or training. Any costs must have:

- been genuinely incurred
- been authorised





- be wholly for STaSS' work and be necessary
- be documented, with receipts where possible

8.2 Volunteers may be reimbursed for travel expenses to and from the place of volunteering from home or from the place of volunteering to another place of voluntary work. STaSS will not reimburse any expenses that exceed the costs of a journey undertaken and that journey must be made in the cheapest possible way. Reimbursement of travel costs will be based on the production of the appropriate tickets and a claim form giving details of the journey purpose and mileage.

8.3 Reimbursement which meets the above criteria:

- Is not subject to tax or NI
- Should not affect volunteers on state benefits
- Does not contravene charity or company law

8.4 Special provisions may apply to asylum seekers who are volunteering.

## 9. Confidentiality

9.1 While working for STaSS volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff [please refer to confidentiality policy] A volunteer must not engage in any work or activity at STaSS until he or she has read, understood and signed the STaSS confidentiality policy.

9.2 Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all information about the organisation, its staff, its service users and other third parties. Volunteers must respect this confidentiality and failure to do so may result in the termination of a volunteer's relationship with STaSS.

9.3 Access to confidential information is allowed on a "need to know" basis only. This is defined as when access is required to enable work to be undertaken.

## 10. Health and Safety and Insurance

10.1 Volunteers are subject to and must conform to STaSS' Health and Safety Policy at all times. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions. Volunteers must not act outside their authorised area and if there is any lack of clarity they should seek guidance from a member of staff.

10.2 Volunteers must report all accidents to a member of staff as soon as possible after their occurrence.

10.3 STaSS has public liability insurance which covers it against claims arising from its negligence and that of its volunteers. The insurance does not cover claims arising from unauthorised activities or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

## 11. Dealing with problems

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11.1 Any problems encountered by volunteers should normally be reported to the STaSS manager who provides their supervision. The manager will try and resolve the problem on an informal basis but if this is not possible the formal Complaints and Grievance Procedure will come into operation. The volunteer should follow the information contained within the Complaints and Grievance Procedure which will be available shortly.

## 12. Reviewing Volunteer Opportunities

12.1 Long term volunteering opportunities will be reviewed when volunteers leave or are re-assigned. Task profiles can be reviewed during one to one support interviews.

12.2 In the normal course of events, when a volunteer resigns or no longer has a post, they will meet with a STaSS representative in order to give feedback on any changes or improvements they think might assist the organisation. If the volunteer is unable to attend a meeting they should be asked if they are willing to complete a “Sorry you are leaving us” questionnaire.

## 13. Support and Development

13.1 Support is an important part of the reward for volunteering with STaSS.

13.2 One to one meetings will be provided during the induction period for support workers and at least annually thereafter.

13.3 Volunteers will be able to discuss any concerns at these meetings and express their opinion of their volunteer role. Their staff support person will act as a communication channel within the STaSS organisation.

## 14. Personal Conduct

14.1 While working with STaSS, volunteers are expected to:

Perform their volunteer duties to the best of their ability

Adhere to STaSS’ policies and procedures, including record keeping requirements and confidentiality

- let STaSS know, apart from in exceptional circumstances if a time or duty commitment cannot be fulfilled so that other arrangements can be made.
- comply with STaSS’ Equal Opportunities policy at all times
- comply with STaSS’ Health and Safety policy at all times
- be an active member of the team
- comply with Data Protection and confidentiality principles
- not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- not to damage or steal property belonging to the organisation or misuse equipment or materials
- not to abuse or mistreat service users, employees of STaSS or other volunteers

## 14. Acceptance of Gifts

14.1 On occasions, volunteers may be offered a gift as a gesture of thanks. The gift may be accepted, with thanks, on behalf of STaSS. The gift, however small, must be declared to the volunteer co-ordinator and a decision will be made in conjunction with the director as to whether or not the gift can be kept by the volunteer or whether it should be passed to STaSS so that all can benefit.

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14.2 A register will be kept of all gifts received.

14.3 It should be noted that the giving of gifts by clients should not be encouraged.

This policy was explained to me and I have also read and understood its content. I promise to abide by it now and after my engagement with STaSS.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Policy Review

The Director and Board of Trustees are responsible for reviewing this policy annually and ensuring that it is compliant with current legislation and good practice.

**REVIEWED MAY 2015, NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW MAY 2016**

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