



# Final Straw Foundation CIO

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## Volunteer Policy

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# THE FINAL STRAW FOUNDATION VOLUNTEER POLICY

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### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

At the Final Straw Foundation, we want all our volunteers to feel valued and that they are making a positive contribution to the charity's objectives. We are incredibly grateful for their support and want to make sure all our volunteers have a safe, rewarding and enjoyable experience. The Volunteer Policy recognises the significant and valuable role volunteers play at the Charity and sets out a framework of procedures and best practice, which we will endeavour to follow when recruiting and working with our volunteers, to ensure that both volunteers' and the Final Straw Foundation's expectations are met. The policy is for volunteers recruited by the Charity and colleagues working with those volunteers. It will be provided to all volunteers at the time of their induction with The Final Straw Foundation.

### 2. FINAL STRAW FOUNDATION'S VOLUNTEERS – DEFINITION

A Final Straw Foundation volunteer is someone who, unpaid and of their own free will, chooses to give their time, energy, skills and expertise to support the Final Straw Foundation in achieving its aims. The arrangement is voluntary on both sides. The charity's relationship with volunteers is based on trust and is not intended to have the obligations associated with employment. No payment, other than the reimbursement of agreed out-of-pocket expenses, is made by the Final Straw Foundation to people who give their time as volunteers.

The Final Straw Foundation's volunteers support the charity in a number of ways, including:

- Assisting at beach cleans and events



- Partnering with colleagues, for example by providing administrative support in our day to day activities
- Championing the Charity by helping to spread the word and connecting us with communities and partners.
- Raising funds, for example by helping to run events, promoting the ways to give money and connecting us with their networks.
- Building the community, for example by helping to recruit, train or support other volunteers. We expect that both our volunteers and paid staff always aim to live the values of the Charity by being:
  - **Positive:** On an individual, community and population level, we can make an impact through positive behaviour change when it comes to our environment. That's where we focus.
  - **Approachable:** We want our volunteers to be approachable to the public at events, open minded and to value diversity.
  - **Community focussed:** We firmly believe that we are so much stronger by working together as a community. It's at the core of everything we do.
  - **Caring:** We care for our environment and our community.
  - **Enthusiastic:** Our passion for caring for our environment is evident and contagious. We want to inspire others to make positive choices for our environment too.

### 3. OUR VISION FOR VOLUNTEERING

We believe that by harnessing the passion and skills of our volunteer community, we can achieve more for our environment and are committed to engaging volunteers in this mission wherever possible. We aim to deliver a positive volunteering experience so that our volunteers enjoy supporting us and feel well equipped to support the work of the Final Straw Foundation.

To ensure that volunteers are at the forefront of everything we do, we aim to:

- Ensure that our volunteers understand what we expect from them, and what they can expect from us in return.
- Attract volunteers with the right skills to support young people and the Charity.
- Deliver a sector leading volunteering experience, through processes and ways of working, which makes it enjoyable and easy to support us.

### 4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Final Straw Foundation is committed to building a diverse organisation. The Final Straw Foundation is also committed to equal opportunities at all stages of recruitment, selection and volunteering. Short-listing, interviewing and selection of volunteers will always be carried out without regard to protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. This commitment is reflected throughout the charity's policies and procedures. The Final Straw Foundation will not condone, accept or ignore any forms of discrimination or unacceptable behaviour.

### 5. SAFEGUARDING

The Final Straw Foundation believes that all children and young people have the right to protection from harm, abuse and exploitation. The Safeguarding Policy will be shared with



all new volunteers to the Final Straw Foundation as part of the onboarding process. Where the Final Straw Foundation feels it is necessary, failure to meet the obligations of the Safeguarding Policy, may lead to a volunteer being asked to step back from volunteering temporarily or permanently, or other appropriate action.

Volunteers taking on roles that are eligible for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, or equivalent, will be required to undertake a relevant check. If required, this will be made clear on the volunteer role description and during the application process.

We welcome volunteers from a range of different backgrounds and having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from volunteering with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of their offence.

## 6. RECRUITMENT

The Final Straw Foundation will collect information on all prospective volunteers during the recruitment and selection process. Additionally, volunteers might be required to attend an informal interview to provide relevant information and explore their aspirations and the experience they can bring to the Final Straw Foundation.

It is important for all involved to appreciate that the interview is not a competitive process, and the sole selection criteria is suitability for the role. A personal reference might be required and taken up to help confirm suitability for volunteering and for specific roles.

In commencing their role, the volunteer commits to the aims, values and key policies of the Final Straw Foundation. They also commit to delivering the key tasks outlined in the relevant role description. This commitment does not and is not intended to create a contract of employment between the Final Straw Foundation and volunteers.

When appointed, an appropriate named contact for that role will lead on the relationship management of the volunteer. This may be a colleague or a volunteer. The named contact is responsible for guiding and supporting the volunteer in their role and should be available to discuss any aspect of the volunteer's role. A volunteer will be informed in writing (letter or email) if their Final Straw Foundation contact changes.

## 7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Volunteers will have a valuable set of skills, knowledge and attitudes gained from their education, work, previous volunteering, and life experiences. To help ensure that volunteers are appropriately equipped for their role, each volunteer must undergo appropriate training when commencing their role, alongside continuous training, where appropriate, whilst volunteering with the Final Straw Foundation. Each volunteer will be provided with relevant support. This might include regular, appropriate and mutually agreed contact.

## 8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Volunteers must take reasonable care of themselves and others while volunteering for the Final Straw Foundation, and follow any health and safety advice and instruction given for their role. Volunteers should cooperate with the Final Straw Foundation on health and



safety matters, and immediately report accidents/incidents (including near misses – accidents/incidents that may have led to injury). Volunteers should not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare. The Final Straw Foundation will ensure that all volunteers are provided with the appropriate information, supervision and training required to enable them to complete voluntary work safely. This includes providing suitable systems and procedures and guidance is outlined in The Health and Safety Policy.

## 9. EXPENSES

The work of The Final Straw Foundation is critically dependent on our extensive network of volunteers. We are very grateful to the vast number of volunteers who do not claim expenses; however, we will always look to reimburse reasonable expenses if there are financial barriers to volunteering. Please note that we will only reimburse expenses if previously agreed, based on their assessment of the Final Straw Foundation's requirements and the available budget. Where applicable, please enquire for further details on what expenses we cover and how to claim.

## 10. INSURANCE

The Final Straw Foundation provides Employers Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover for all volunteers whilst working on Final Straw Foundation activities. The Final Straw Foundation does not provide motor insurance cover. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement. All volunteers that hold Business Class motor insurance will be automatically covered for their work on behalf of The Final Straw Foundation. However, if their insurance is limited to social and domestic use then they will have to discuss their role as a Final Straw Foundation volunteer with their insurance company to ensure that they are fully covered. Volunteers will be asked to sign the relevant section on the Expenses form to confirm that they have agreed to drive on Final Straw Foundation business with their insurers before we can reimburse mileage costs.

## 11. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The Final Straw Foundation will protect volunteer information in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data will be held securely and confidentially and will only be accessed by authorised individuals. Please see our Privacy Policy on the website for further information about how we collect, manage and use the personal data of our volunteers. We expect all volunteers to comply with the Final Straw Foundation's Data Protection Policy and associated policies. When using Final Straw Foundation's devices or IT systems as part of their role, volunteers must read, understand and sign up to our Information Security Policy prior to starting their role. When volunteering with the Final Straw Foundation, volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the Final Straw Foundation, its staff, people supported by the charity and third parties. All volunteers are required to maintain confidentiality and should not disclose the organisation's information during their volunteering services and any time afterwards.



## 12. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

When signing our Volunteer Commitment, a volunteer assigns, by way of future assignment to The Final Straw Foundation, all Intellectual Property created by them as part of their role as a Final Straw Foundation volunteer or credited to them during the term of their volunteering, provided that the assignment shall not include intellectual property which is not connected in any way whatsoever whether directly or indirectly with their volunteering.

## 13. FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

Although The Final Straw Foundation makes every effort to ensure that any experience of volunteering with us is positive and rewarding, we recognise that volunteers at times may experience difficulty within their role or they may want to share feedback or raise an issue with a member of staff or another volunteer. In the first instance, volunteers should talk to their named contact to try to resolve the issue, get advice or share feedback.

We will make every reasonable effort to resolve difficulties at an early stage and we always review feedback and learn from it. However, where the areas of concern cannot be resolved by these means, please refer to our organisational Feedback and Complaints Policy, which can be found on our website. In line with this policy, feedback and complaints can be submitted to the Customer Service Team at The Final Straw Foundation in the following ways:

- Online: using our contact form <https://finalstrawfoundation.org/contact/>
- Email: [hello@finalstrawfoundation.org](mailto:hello@finalstrawfoundation.org)

There may be occasions where named contacts may have concerns around a volunteer's behaviour or approach. In this case, staff contacts will approach the volunteer directly to discuss any concerns they may have amicably and openly and resolve difficulties at an early stage.

## 14. LEAVING THE CHARITY

Volunteers are free to cease volunteering with the Final Straw Foundation at any time by speaking or writing to their named contact. When deciding to finish volunteering with us, we ask that volunteers give us as much notice as possible to help us organise alternative arrangements. Upon leaving a volunteer role, we may offer an exit interview to reflect on their experiences and improve our volunteer opportunities. We encourage, if appropriate, for volunteers to stay in touch and get involved in the future. There may also be times when the Final Straw Foundation will ask a volunteer to cease volunteering. This may be because the role no longer supports the needs of the organisation and its current work, or because the volunteer is no longer able to satisfactorily carry out a particular role. When this happens, we will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to the volunteer and try to find an acceptable alternative role. In all cases, the volunteer will be treated fairly, with dignity and respect.