**This template was kindly produced for us by Benefacto. We recommend you read the guidance under each heading for things you might like to consider and tweak as necessary for your own company.**

**EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING**

**POLICY TEMPLATE**

**<Company> employee volunteering policy**

***Guidance:*** *Align volunteering to your business values and outline your company’s support of volunteering. Make sure you set and use a consistent term for this time, such as ‘volunteer days’, ‘volunteer hours’ or ‘charity days’*

* <Company> is committed to making a meaningful contribution to the communities we work and live in.
* This policy outlines how as a <Company> employee you can volunteer your time and skills during ‘volunteer days’ which are paid time off from your day-to-day role. In addition to benefitting the community, volunteering is a valuable opportunity for you to develop your skills and broaden your perspectives. Contact <Responsible Business Manager name> for further information about this policy.

1. **Paid time off entitlement**

***Guidance:*** *Think about when people can use their volunteering time, whether they can take half days or shorter sessions, when the allowance runs from each year and whether there are any exclusions from the policy, such as contractors*

* All employees are entitled to <X> ‘volunteer days’ each year. These days will be paid and will not affect your holiday allowance. Your volunteer days should be used during normal working hours and you cannot take them in lieu of time volunteered outside of working hours.
* You can split your allowance of volunteer days into a greater number of shorter time periods (e.g. half days)
* The year runs from <dates>. It is not possible to accrue volunteer days and use them in a subsequent year. Contractors are not entitled to volunteer days.

1. **Causes**

***Guidance:*** *Think about what you define as a charity and whether you exclude certain causes such as religious groups*

* You can volunteer for any organisation that is registered as a charity in the United Kingdom which demonstrates positive social or environmental benefit. You are not able to use your volunteer days to support political groups or religious charities.
* <Company> work with <volunteer broker> to provide easy access to a wide range of meaningful volunteering opportunities for individuals and groups. They offer opportunities with a broad range of charities all of which are mandated by the company.

1. **Approval and time reporting**

***Guidance:*** *Make this as simple as possible to maximise the number of people volunteering*

* It is important that <Company> has a record of who is volunteering. Please use the following process to record your volunteering:
  + Step one: Agree time off with your line manager
  + Step two: Find an opportunity
  + Step three: Record your time to code <responsible business time code> or email <Responsible Business Manager name>

1. **Expenses**

* Expenses incurred when volunteering can be reclaimed using the same policy and process for expenses occurred during the normal part of your employment.
* You should use public transport for the purpose of volunteering wherever possible. Reimbursement over <£XX> needs to be pre-approved by <Responsible Business Manager name> on <Responsible Business Manager email>.

1. **Line managers’ responsibilities**

* All employees of <Company> should feel supported and able to take time off to participate in volunteering activities.
* Line managers should see volunteering as a chance to develop their team and work with employees to agree the most suitable opportunity based on their existing skills and personal development goals.

1. **DBS checks**

***Guidance*** *on DBS checks can be found* [*here*](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)

* For most volunteering, DBS checks will not be required. If the charity requires you to undergo a DBS check, then you will need to organise this directly with them. It is your responsibility to make sure you have the correct checks in place before volunteering.

1. **Risk assessments**

* If you are organising your own, non-office-based volunteering, you need to complete a risk assessment. If you are taking part in an activity with a volunteer brokerage, this will already have been completed.

1. **Insurance**

***Guidance:*** *This section has been designed to suit a company whose employees aren’t covered by their insurance policy when they’re volunteering. If your employees are covered, you should change this to reflect your level of coverage*

* Although you are volunteering during paid time off from your employment, you are doing so solely in your private and personal capacity and not as an employee of <Company>.
* <Company> assumes no responsibility or liability to you as a volunteer or the organisation you are volunteering with for any injury, loss or damage caused as a result of the activities.
* Before you volunteer you must ensure you have an up-to-date copy of the charity’s Public Liability Insurance certificate on file.

1. **Conduct**

***Guidance:*** *‘Drop out’ rates for volunteering at many companies is high and carries a considerable reputational risk. Employees should value their commitment as though it’s a client commitment*

* When volunteering you are an ambassador of <Company>. You should give volunteering the same priority as any other client or customer engagement.
* Please ensure you adhere to <Company> values when carrying out any volunteering. You should avoid cancelling your volunteering time and arrive on time for your volunteering shift.