



Disciplinary Policy & Procedure
(Employees and Volunteers)

Approved by the Board of Trustees: April 2026

Review Date: April 2028

Chair Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a yellow background. The signature appears to be "Paul P. K." followed by a long horizontal stroke.

1. Purpose of this Policy

By adopting this policy, Wealden Volunteering aims to:

- Set clear standards of conduct expected from employees and volunteers
- Ensure that concerns are handled fairly, transparently, and consistently
- Protect the safety, wellbeing, and reputation of the charity
- Ensure compliance with the ACAS Code of Practice (statutory for employees)
- Meet Charity Commission expectations for good governance

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, interns, and workers engaged by Wealden Volunteering.

2. Principles

- Employees are protected by statutory employment law; volunteers are not employees, and this policy does not create a contractual relationship.
 - Concerns will be addressed proportionately and without unnecessary delay.
 - All individuals will have the opportunity to present their views and be supported.
 - Information will be treated sensitively and confidentially in line with data protection legislation.
 - Safeguarding concerns will follow the organisation's Safeguarding Policy first and foremost.
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3. Definitions

The following examples are illustrative and not exhaustive.

3.1. Capability / Poor Performance

More commonly applies to employees, but may also relate to volunteers:

- Consistent failure to perform duties to a reasonable standard
- Repeated lateness or poor timekeeping
- Failure to follow training or guidance despite support

3.2. Misconduct

- Failure to comply with reasonable instructions
- Breaches of organisational policies (e.g., confidentiality, boundaries, GDPR, conflict of interest)
- Inappropriate, rude, or disruptive behaviour
- Minor breaches of health & safety requirements
- Misuse of organisational equipment

3.3. Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct may result in summary dismissal (employees) or termination of the volunteering relationship (volunteers).

Examples include:

- Theft, fraud, or falsification of records
- Harassment, bullying, intimidation, or threatening behaviour
- Violence or threats of violence
- Serious breach of safeguarding or confidentiality
- Serious breach of health & safety rules
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during duties
- Actions likely to bring the charity into disrepute
- Unauthorised access to computer systems or distribution of offensive material

4. Suspension

Where necessary for safeguarding, safety, or investigative purposes:

- Employees or volunteers may be suspended on a neutral, non-punitive basis.
- Suspension is not a disciplinary action.
- For employees, suspension will be on full pay.
- Volunteers may be temporarily stood down from duties.

Suspension may be imposed by the CEO or the Board of Trustees.

5. Procedure

There are four possible stages.

They are not necessarily sequential; the charity will choose the appropriate response based on severity.

Stage 1: Informal Action

For minor concerns:

- A manager or the CEO will talk with the individual to explain the issue
- Support, guidance, or training will be offered
- A note of the discussion may be kept on file

This stage is not disciplinary in nature. Concerns should be raised informally in the first instance where appropriate—many issues are successfully and quickly resolved this way.

Where a concern relates to the CEO, responsibility will rest with the Chair or a nominated Trustee

Stage 2: Formal Investigation

If concerns are more serious or unchanged:

- The individual will be notified in writing
- An investigator (CEO or appointed Trustee/manager) will gather information
- Witnesses may be interviewed
- Evidence will be shared ahead of any meeting

Employees and volunteers may be accompanied by a colleague, another volunteer, or a friend (not acting in a professional legal capacity).

Stage 3: Formal Meeting and Written Outcomes

If there is a disciplinary case to answer:

- A formal meeting will be arranged

- The individual will have the opportunity to respond
- Outcomes may include:

For employees:

- First written warning
- Final written warning
- Required performance improvements
- Training or supervision plans

For volunteers:

- Formal warning
- Change or limitation of duties
- Additional training
- Agreement of behaviour expectations

Warnings (employees) or formal notes (volunteers) will remain active for 12 months unless stated otherwise.

Stage 4: Dismissal / Ending the Volunteering Relationship

This stage may apply where:

- Gross misconduct is confirmed, or
- There is no improvement following previous warnings, or
- There is an ongoing risk to the safety, welfare, or reputation of the charity

Employees:

May be dismissed with notice, or summarily (without notice) for gross misconduct.

Volunteers:

May be asked to step down or have their volunteering relationship ended immediately.

Failure to attend meetings without reasonable explanation may result in decisions being made in absence.

6. Appeals

Employees and volunteers have the right to appeal against any formal outcome.

- Appeals must be submitted in writing within 5 working days
- Appeals will be considered by a Trustee panel not previously involved
- The individual may be accompanied for support
- The decision following appeal will be confirmed in writing

For employees, the appeal decision is final under internal procedures.

For volunteers, the decision represents the final internal stage.

7. Record Keeping

- Records will be kept securely and only as long as necessary.
- All data will be processed in line with UK GDPR and the charity's Data Protection Policy.