

IHA Volunteer Policy

ORGANISATION

Irish Hockey Association Constitution (Mission)

To encourage, promote, develop and manage hockey in Ireland.

Why volunteers are so important to the IHA

Hockey in Ireland could not function without the ongoing support of volunteers at all levels; national, provincial, club and school. For this reason, volunteers are recognized as an integral part of the Association and as being vital to the sport of hockey and the IHA. In recent years the IHA has increased its number of paid staff who brings a vast array of experience and knowledge to their work. The work has become more focused and specialized in response to needs identified by the hockey community at large. However, the IHA continues to encourage the involvement of volunteers at all levels and within all appropriate activities.

Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer contributes time and service, but is not paid, to assist the IHA in achieving its goals. Their role is beneficial to others as well as being satisfying to themselves. In return they are encouraged and supported in the volunteer activity they have chosen.

Who this policy applies to

Unless specifically stated, standards in this policy apply to all volunteers involved in any activity on the behalf of the IHA.

Equal Opportunities

The IHA is committed to being an equal opportunities organisation. All volunteers should be free from discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, race, sexuality, religion, disability & membership of the Traveller Community.

Paid versus unpaid

Volunteer involvement will never be seen as a substitution for paid employment. Volunteers will enhance the work of paid staff, never replace it and vice versa.

Volunteer / paid staff relations

Volunteers and paid staff are considered partners in implementing the IHA's mission. It is essential that each partner understands and respects the abilities of the other in working to fulfill the IHA's mission. Volunteers undertake the role agreed between themselves and IHA outlined in the role description. When a volunteer undertakes additional duties, other than those agreed, the volunteer undertakes these duties independently of the IHA.

Confidentiality

Volunteers follow the same procedures as staff in areas of confidentiality. Volunteers are expected to keep information related to IHA work confidential. Volunteers are considered to be authorised representatives of the IHA & therefore have access to information relevant to and necessary for the successful completion of their role. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in the termination of the volunteer's relationship with the IHA.

Speaking on behalf of the IHA

Volunteers must in all cases seek approval from the IHA prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate the IHA. These actions include public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organisations or any agreements involving contractual or financial obligations.

Alcohol & drugs

Whilst volunteering for the IHA, volunteers are prohibited from:

- Being under the influence, using, possessing, selling or otherwise being involved with illegal drugs.
- Abusing alcohol.

PROCEDURES

Volunteer Activities

Volunteers are involved in activities which provide direct services to the IHA and the wider hockey community.

Services involve contact with the IHA and include:

- Membership of the Board of Management and/or Working Groups
- Filling high performance roles with national squads
- Providing office support
- Project Managers
- Placement students, transition year students and/or internees
- Assisting the IHA at events

The list is not exhaustive and volunteer activities are based on the expressed needs of the IHA. They are designed and carried out in accordance with the organisation's mission to promote the sport of hockey.

Role descriptions

The IHA will define the roles and functions of volunteers. Every time a volunteer is involved, an IHA staff member will agree the tasks that the volunteer will undertake. Volunteers will be adequately prepared for such tasks prior to commencing the voluntary work.

Each volunteer should be familiar with his/her role description and feel comfortable in offering suggestions for change and improvement.

Recruitment

The IHA recruits volunteers for specific tasks and this is done through formal (website, direct email) and informal (notice boards, word of mouth) channels.

The following will be sent to those responding to IHA recruitment campaigns:

- Job Description
- Information about the organisation
- IHA Volunteer Policy
- IHA's Code of Ethics for Young People (when dealing with U18s)
- Application form (if appropriate and/or if dealing with U18s)

All volunteers offering their services to the IHA will have their offers dealt with promptly and be given a warm welcome.

Interviewing

The interview is an informal chat with the IHA staff member who will be supporting the volunteer. This gives the prospective volunteer a chance to learn about the IHA, its mission and available volunteer roles. It will also help determine the suitability of the individual to perform voluntary work on behalf of the IHA. The interview will often take place over the telephone. For positions involving U18s and national team positions, a face to face meeting may take place. A date for induction will be set if both the volunteer and the IHA agree to the mutual benefits of a partnership.

Code of Ethics

Volunteers that have substantial access to young people will be subject to the procedures included in the IHA's Code of Ethics for Young People. This includes the following:

- Submission of application forms
- Provision and checking of two references
- Interview with two IHA representatives
- Signing of a Code of Conduct and Self-Declaration
- Vetting via An Garda Síochána and/or Access NI
- Induction
- Ongoing reviews

Volunteers with access to U18s will be asked to provide two references, neither of which should be from an immediate family member. These could be from an employer, school or college, a community representative etc. The IHA will contact the referees by telephone to ask a standard set of questions relating to the potential volunteers suitability for the position.

Placement

No volunteer will be placed in a position for which he/she is not qualified or for which IHA do not provide adequate training.

Induction Training

All volunteers will receive induction training where the volunteer has planned time with a member of the staff team. This induction will cover:

- IHA's mission, values and goals
- An overview of the IHA's services
- Volunteering for IHA and details of the specific volunteer role
- Introduction to the staff team

Training will be tailored to suit the individual volunteer role and available resources.

Support

All volunteers will receive regular support from a designated named member of paid staff. The level of support will be commensurate to the complexity of the task being carried out.

Volunteer performance standard

Volunteers are asked to give a commitment to ensuring that their involvement maintains and contributes to the standard of services being provided by IHA. Volunteers are expected to inform their supervisor of an impending absence as far in advance as possible so alternative arrangements can be made for the completion of work.

Volunteer involvement will be reviewed regularly and may in some instances be discontinued. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to, gross misconduct, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, theft, breaches of confidentiality, abuse of clients and co-workers, failure to abide by IHA's policies & procedures, and failure to complete duties to a satisfactory standard.

Volunteer Complaints

If a volunteer wishes to make a complaint they should initially discuss their grievance with the staff member responsible for volunteer supervision and support. If problems cannot be resolved they can put their complaint in writing to the Chief Executive Officer who will consult with the appropriate staff members and/or members of the board. They will jointly decide on further appropriate action. If the volunteer is dissatisfied with the reply she/he may then write, within 14 days to the Chief Executive who will convene an Appeal Commission as per section 32 of the Constitution.

Recognition

IHA will ensure that all voluntary input is recognised and appreciated.

Expenses

Volunteers will be reimbursed for any mileage and out of pocket expenses. To help the IHA budget for this expense, volunteers are asked to consider ways to keep expenses to a realistic level. All expense claims must be accompanied by receipts.

IHA will pay mileage of 20 cent per kilometre.

Insurance

Volunteers themselves are covered by IHA insurance when carrying out IHA approved activities.

Those using their own cars to volunteer transport must have their own fully comprehensive insurance. The IHA recommend that they ask their insurance company to sign a form to say they are aware of the volunteer doing volunteer driving. This typically does not attract an additional premium. In some instances volunteers may have to come to an arrangement with their insurer.

Volunteer Drivers

If a volunteer is willing to use their car for volunteering the IHA recommend that they:

1. Ask their insurance company to sign a form to say they are aware the volunteer is using their car for volunteering. Some insurance companies do up a letter themselves, some reissue the insurance certificate with specific mention of the volunteer organisation, but most use a form provided by the organisation as this is the easiest option. This should not attract any additional premium.
2. Send a photocopy of their insurance certificate (fully comprehensive) and the signed form from your insurance company to the IHA.

Volunteers Leaving

The nature of volunteering is that it is transitory as people's ability to volunteer and their other commitments often change over time. The IHA would like to conduct a short exit interview by telephone or in person to:

- Get feedback on the volunteering experience, both positive and negative elements
- Find out if they were satisfied in their role and reason for leaving
- Thank them for their contribution