DIOCESE OF BRISTOL

TRANSFORMING CHURCH. TOGETHER.

Diocese of Bristol Parish Employer's Resource

2026

humanresources@bristoldiocese.org

Supporting employees and volunteers

The Human Resources team is part of the Diocesan Support Services and is dedicated to supporting all aspects of people management. Whether you have questions about recruitment, employment contracts, or general HR matters, we're here to help.

This resource is designed to provide you with the key information you need to be a responsible and legally compliant employer. Our goal is to make your HR journey smoother and more confident, every step of the way.

Please note that this resource should only be used as guidance, and whilst we will do our upmost to keep updated, some information may change. We will review this information six monthly.

Further employment advice
If you cannot find what you need in this resource, please call the Diocese of Bristol office on 0117 906 0100. In addition, you could call the ACAS free employment helpline on 0300 123 1100 or go to www.acas.org.uk.

If you still require further advice for any particularly complicated or contentious matters, you are advised to contact the Human Resources team via 0117 906 0100 and then option 6 or contact them via humanresources@bristoldiocese.org.

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Recruitment

If you are looking to recruit into a paid or voluntary post, please follow the steps outlined below.

Job description and Person specification
You will need to develop and draft a job description and person specification, outlining the job duties and the key knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to do the role effectively. You will also need to decide on the salary, ensuring you are meeting the legal national living wage requirements (more on that in Pay and Pensions), whilst also considering whether it is affordable, fair and competitive against other roles within your organisation or wider.

You will also need to consider, role dependant, as to whether the individual you are recruiting for should attend services e.g., a Youth Worker might be expected to attend a service. It will be important to state this with the job description, to as to manage expectations.

Advertisement
An advert will be need drafted and prepared before being externally advertised, some place to consider are:

- Your social media platforms (if you have any)
- Together4Bristol (donation of £25 per role, or £10 per volunteering role)
- Voscur

- Indeed (free postings)
- Jobs Centre
- Diocese of Bristol Website (speak with the Diocese of Bristol Comms team)

You will also need to ensure there is a copy of the applicant privacy notice available at the point of recruitment. This states how as an employer, you comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. For further help and support on this, please visit Employment practices and data protection: recruitment and selection | ICO

Shortlisting

Once you have received applications, you will need to decide who to invite to interview – this process is called shortlisting. This is a structured approach whereby candidates are scored based on who most closely meets the requirements of the person specification. Please ensure you keep a record of any decision-making processes and keep all records for at least 3 months after the recruitment process.

If no candidate meets the essential requirements for the role, then you are not obliged to interview them – this can be an opportunity to review the role or look to advertise elsewhere. You will need to write to the unsuccessful candidates informing them of your decision.

A letter should also be sent to the successful candidate(s) informing them of time, location and anything else that is required of them at interview e.g., presentation, in-tray exercise.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

This is an opportunity to ask questions based on the person specification and the job description.

Conditional Offer

Having completed interviews, you then need to phone and speak with the interviewees informing them whether they have been successful or not. You can then write to the successful candidate to formally offer the job, but state that the job is conditional upon satisfactory references and the right to work in the UK.

- References

Always seek minimum two references from previous employment and/or school, college or alternative reference who might be able to give you a character reference.
Please note that many employers now only give references with key details e.g., dates and job description.

- Check Right to Work in the UK

It is an offence to employ someone how does not have the right to work in the UK. Even if you think someone does have the right, you must check their documents. It is best practice to see the individual with the original documents prior to them starting, ensuring that you take a scanned (signed and dated by the employer) copy for their employment records.

More information can be found via Prove your right to work to an employer: Overview - GOV.UK

- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

In some circumstances, a criminal record check is required – Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This will be necessary if the work you are employing involves regular contact with children and/or vulnerable groups of adults. Please seek support from our Diocesan Safeguarding team via safeguarding@bristoldiocese.org or alternatively, Eligibility guidance for standard DBS checks - GOV.UK to find out whether you are permitted to seek a DBS check for your employee.

- Health Questionnaire

It is advisable that you seek all employees to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire, to ensure you are supporting the health and wellbeing of all employees. Whilst this is not a requirement, it is best practice to, should affordability allow.

On occasion you may be asked by the employee to have a health questionnaire, please speak with the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources team who will be able to support you through such a process.

You will also need to collect information such as bank details, HMRC New Stater Checklist, a P45 if available, and emergency contact details.

Contract of Employment

Once you are happy all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed, you will need to confirm the appointment and issue a contract of employment. This document is a legal requirement and should be issued from day one of employment or earlier. You should also issue the new employee your privacy notice, this will explain how you will comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

For further information and support please speak with the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources Team via humanresources@bristoldiocese.org.

Some templates which might be of use:

- Job description and Person specification
- Advert
- Application Form
- Shortlisting Form
- Offer letter
- Bank Details Form
- Emergency Contact Form
- HMRC New Starter Form
- Contract of employment
- Contract of employment Term Time Only (TTO)

Pay and Pensions

You will need to ensure you pay your employee the agreed salary and on the agreed basis e.g., monthly on a set date each month for example the 28th of every month.

Payslips

All employees and workers have a right to an itemised payslip. You will need to issue a payslip to each employee, either the day they are paid or shortly before. These could be computer generated or handwritten but must include

- the 'gross amount' – this is the total pay before deductions
- the 'net amount' – this is the total pay after deductions
- any variable deductions – this is where the amounts depend on the amount of pay, for example tax, National Insurance, student loan repayments and pension contributions
- a breakdown of how the wages will be paid if more than one payment method is used – for example bank transfer and cash
- the amounts of any fixed deductions – for example trade union subscriptions

It is important that you keep a copy of each payslip issues. For further guidance on payslips, please use Payslips - Acas

Tax and National Insurance

As an employer it is your duty to notify HMRC that you are employing staff. If you need to pay employer's National Insurance, you may be able to reclaim this, up to a maximum threshold, from the Government. More information can be found here Employment Allowance: What you'll get - GOV.UK

If your employees are below the threshold for tax and national insurance, you may need to send HMRC an annual return and you will not need to deduct tax and national insurance.

HMRC will also provide information and support on your legal requirements please see Employers: general enquiries - GOV.UK

The National Minimum Wage/ National Living Wage/ Real Living Wage

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) and the National Living Wage (NLW) are set by the Government and are the minimum wage employees should receive.

Definitions:

- The National Living Wage (NLW) applies to all employees aged 21 and over £12.71
- The National Minimum Wage (NMW) rates apply to employees under 21 and above school leaving age
    - £12.71 (aged and over)
    - £10.85 (aged 18 to 20)
    - £8 (aged under 18)
    - £8 (apprentice rate)

Rates are typically reviewed and changed on 1 April every year.

The NLW and NMW are statutory rights that cannot be waived, those who have retired and in receipt of a pension are entitled to receive statutory rights.

The Real Living Wage

The Living Wage Foundation recommends hourly rates of pay based on the cost of living. These rates are higher than the NLW and NMW stated above and are revised annually at the start of November and consider changes in the cost of basic items.

The Diocese of Bristol strongly encourage you to pay the Real Living Wage to your employees and to become accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as a Real Living Wage Employer. By paying the Real Living Wage, you will be supporting employees with a decent standard of living and driving up standards to tackle in-work poverty.

Keeping Records
There should be a record that shows you pay at least the NLW or NMW to anyone who works for you and is entitled to it. You are advised to keep payroll related records for a minimum of 6 years.

Pensions
Under the Pensions Act 2008, every employer in the UK must put employees into a workplace pension and contribute towards it. Employees will be 'automatically enrolled' into a pension scheme, if aged between 22 and state pension age (check state pension age here) and earn at least £10,000 per year.

Auto-enrolment is your legal duty as an employer, and if you do not meet this duty, you could be fined.

Pension contribution levels

By law you and your employee must pay a percentage of their earnings into their workplace pension scheme. Pension contributions are made based on total earnings between £6,240 and £50,270 a year before tax. Total earnings include:

- Salary or wages
- Bonuses and commission
- Overtime
- Statutory sick pay
- Statutory maternity, paternity or adoption pay

By law, the minimum pension contributions under auto-enrolment is 8% (including 5% employee contribution and 3% employer).

There are several pension providers, which can support you to set up a scheme. The most well-know and used on is NEST – for further information please use Workplace Pension Scheme | Nest Pensions

Support and Supervision

Being a supportive employer

It is advisable that each employee has a clearly designated line manager e.g., Ops Manager, or the Incumbent. The line manager, as the representative of the employer, should also ensure that the following aspects of being a supportive employer are followed:

- Communicating regularly
- Helping employees to achieve
- Demonstrating trust
- Listen and consider the employee's views
- Provide support
- Treating employees fairly and valuing them for their differences
- Organising work
- Recognising food performance and work
- Being honest and open encouraging
- Provide a safe and healthy workplace environment

Being a supportive line manager will create a workplace where employees feel valued, respected, and empowered to do their best work.

One to one supervision meetings

It is good practice for the line manager to meet regularly with each employee. The frequency of meeting will depend on the job and the individual. For instance, this could be weekly, fortnightly or quarterly, you will need to arrange this between yourself and the employee.

You might have a good relationship with your employee, speak with the regularly on an informal basis and perhaps know them personally, however such interaction does not remove the need for 1-1 meetings. During a 1-1 meeting, you can use this time to talk about work related matters in a more structured and in-depth way than is possible through informal interactions. This time can also be used to raise any concerns you have about the employees work or concerns they have about work, making it easier to address them quickly when an already established system of regular confidential meetings happen.

Annual Appraisal

It is best practice to hold annual appraisal, or an annual review, with each employee.

This annual appraisal is a round-up of the year just gone – with an opportunity to recognise what have been achieved and an opportunity to plan for the coming year. It is not a 'one-off' meeting, but part of a cycle to support and manage employees.

If you have been meeting with your employee throughout the year, any matters raised at the annual appraisal should not be a surprise to either of you.

It is important that you document the process, including any notes taken on what was discussed and they are agreed and signed by both.

For some guidance and templates forms please see the below

- 1-1 meeting template
- Appraisal template
- Guidance for line managers on running an appraisal meeting

Equality

The Equality Act 2010

Equality legislation requires employers to ensure all job applicants and employees are judged on their ability to do a job and not on any other irrelevant factors. The Equality Act 2010 makes discrimination unlawful on the grounds of the following nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnic or national origin)
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The nine protected characteristics should not be considered when making recruitment or employment decisions, unless exceptions for disability. This means you cannot

- Decide that you prefer a woman (or a man) for your post
- Decide not to appoint an applicant because they are pregnant
- Treat a person less favourably in any way because of their sexual orientation
- Fail to appoint the best person for the job, because of their age (young or old)

It is unlawful to harass someone based on one of the above protected characteristics, or to treat them less favourable because they have complained about harassment and discrimination.

You should have a policy on harassment and bullying and to ensure the policy is adopted and known in your Parish. You should note that as an employer, you have a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of your employees or workers.

Recruiting

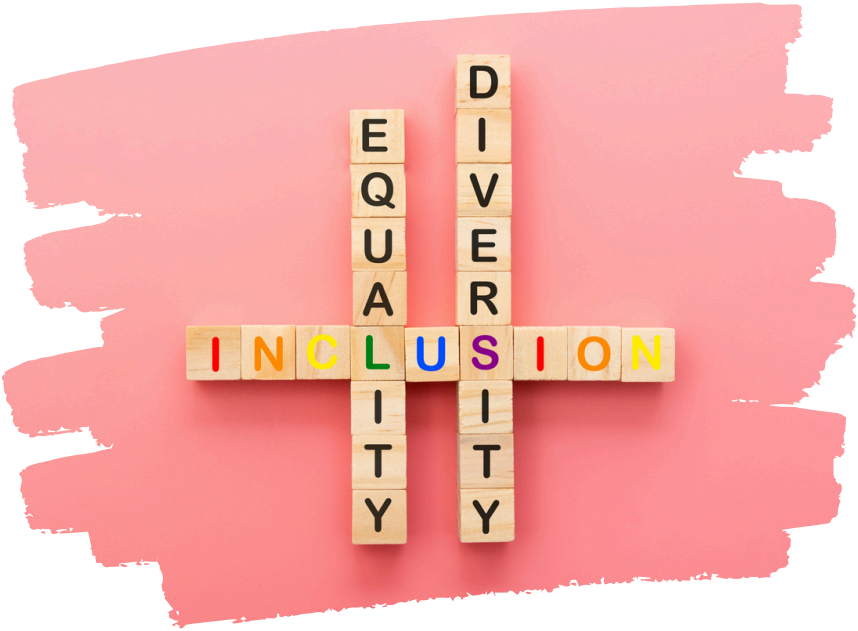
It is unlawful to discriminate against a job applicant or employee based on the ground of their religion or belief. This means that unless in very limited circumstances, you cannot reject someone for a job if they are otherwise the best candidate, on the ground that they are not a Christian.

There is very limited circumstance, where the law allows you to restrict a post to Christians only. If this is the case, you must be able to show that being a Christian is a genuine occupational requirement (GOR) of the job.

This means that the duties of the job are genuinely such that employing a Christian is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

In this case, you will need to state in your advertisement that an essential requirement for the job is that the person is a Christian and that ‘this post is advertised in accordance with the occupational requirements provision of schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010’.

In other circumstances, the duties of the job may not require the individual to be a Christian, but you are seeking someone who can show a ‘*willingness to work within the Christian values*’. It is acceptable to state this because it is a genuine requirement and does not limit applications to just Christians. This can be stated with your advertisement and person specification criteria.



Disabled applicants and employees

Under the Equality Act, a person has a disability (and is therefore protected by the Act) if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment; and
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everything like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

Individuals who have cancer, MS or HIV/AIDS are automatically protected under the Act.

Applicants for employment

Reasonable adjustment should be made as needed, to ensure disabled applicants for employment to access the selection process.

Do not ask direct questions about disability at interview stage, but you should ask all candidates questions which relate to the essential requirements of the job.

Reasonable Adjustments →

The selection decision should be based on the ability of the individual to do the role, with reasonable adjustments as needed. Your decision should not be based on whether the employee is disabled, but on the essential requirements of the job.

Employees

As an employer, you have certain legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 towards an employee who has a disability or who acquires a disability during your employment.

If your employee is disabled under the Equality Act, you have a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', for example to the workplace or working arrangements, to avoid the employee being substantially disadvantaged compared to non-disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Providing practical aids and technical equipment
- Allocating to another employee or volunteer, some tasks that cannot be easily done by the disabled employee
- A phased return to work after absence due to disability e.g., flexible hours or part-time.

The law recognises that what may be 'reasonable' as an adjustment for a large employer, may not be possible for a smaller employer.

Nevertheless, it is important that you implement any adjustments that are reasonable, in consultation with the employee.

Not all employees who require reasonable adjustments, will fall under the legal category of 'disabled', however would benefit from having some adjustments. Please ensure you consult with the employee about what adjustment may assist them to do the role effectively.

Please consult the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources team for further advice and support.

Access to work

The Government have a scheme called 'Access to Work', which provides funds for practical aids and adaptions that may be needed in the workplace for employees. More information and guidance can be found via Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition: What Access to Work is - GOV.UK

Further adjustments

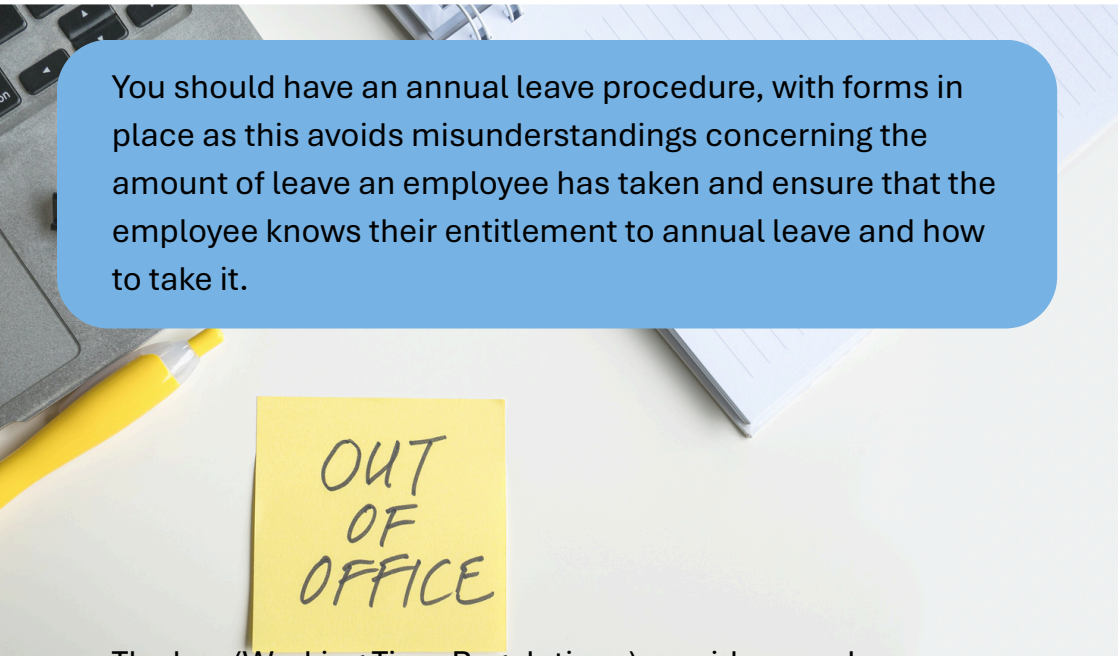
Reasonable adjustments in most cases will meet the needs of a disabled employee, to help them undertake their role effectively. However, if an employee cannot undertake the job after all reasonable adjustments are implemented, you will need to treat the matter as a capability matter and follow your disciplinary procedure in a sensitive way.

Flexible working

All employees, regardless of their length of service, have a right to request flexible working, on up to two occasions in a 12-month period. If an employee makes a request, the employer must consider whether it can mee that request. You and the employee must follow the, What flexible working is - Statutory flexible working requests - Acas.

Annual Leave

You should have an annual leave procedure, with forms in place as this avoids misunderstandings concerning the amount of leave an employee has taken and ensure that the employee knows their entitlement to annual leave and how to take it.



The law (Working Time Regulations) provides employees with 28 days (5.6 weeks) paid annual leave per year (pro-rata for part time). This may include bank/public holidays. You cannot pay in lieu of this annual leave entitlement, except when someone leaves your employment.

The above is the minimum required annual leave you must provide, you may of course decide to give more than this. At least 20 of the 28 days must be taken in the leave year to which they relate. Up to 8 days may, with employer's agreement, be carried over to the following year, to be take within a time frame e.g., end of April.

These entitlements are calculated on a pro-rata basis for those who work part-time for example:

An employee who works 3 days a week will be entitled to a proportionate amount of leave. To calculate this, 3 days x 5.6 weeks = 16.8 days. Always round up to the nearest half day. So, in this case the employee would be entitled to 17 days.

Likewise, if an employee starts part way through the year, you will need to work out the number of weeks in which they are working. The GOV.UK website has a useful tool to help you calculate such Calculate holiday entitlement - GOV.UK

Annual leave and irregular hours worked

If an employee works their hours irregularly over the week, but has the same amount of hours each week, calculating a day's leave can seem complicated. The easiest approach would be to agree an average. For example, if an employee is contracted to work 20 hours a week, 5 days a week, but works more hours on some days than others, you simply agree that if the individual takes a day's leave, they will take and be paid for 4 hours e.g., 1/5 of 20 hours. Meaning that for the remainder of the week, they will need to work 16 hours e.g., 4/5 of their normal working week.

Annual leave and variable hour each week
Someone who works irregular hours e.g., works 'as and when', rather than having regular weekly hours will be entitled to an accrual (build up) of holiday, meaning they get 12.07% of the hours they work in a pay period.

A pay period is how often someone gets paid e.g., weekly or monthly. The 12.07% is based on the statutory minimum holiday entitlement of 5.6 weeks. For more information, please visit Building up holiday - Irregular hours and part-year workers - Acas

Further guidance
There is a possibility that you will need to arrange cover whilst an employee is on leave, typically another employee might cover, if you have someone, otherwise you will need to organise other employees to over. It is advisable that when an employee is on leave, they leave a full written briefing on what needs doing before they go.

Please also remember that annual leave is a legal entitlement and whilst some employees might make themselves available to support or work more than their contracted hours, they should feel that their time off it an entitlement and not a burden.

Annual leave template 37.5 hours

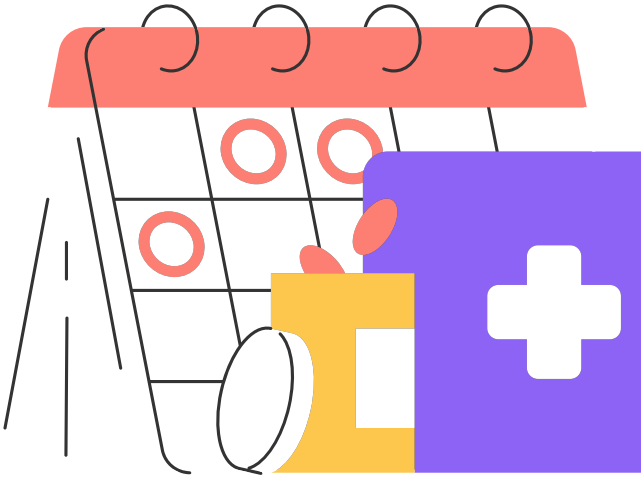
Sickness Absence and Management

Sick pay

If an employee is ill, you must pay them Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if they are eligible for SSP payments. To qualify for SSP you must

- Be classed as an employee and have done some work for your employer
- Have been ill for at least one full working day

SSP is payable when the employee is sick for at least one full working day. It is however only payable for up to 28 weeks, normally for a single period of illness.



Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) eligibility is no longer dependent on meeting a minimum earnings threshold. If an employee is not entitled to SSP for another qualifying reason, the employer must provide an SSP1 form within 7 days of the employee's first day off sick so that they can explore entitlement to other benefits

You may choose to have more favourable arrangements, however this must be stipulated within the written terms and conditions (contract of employment), which specify what an employee will get for example, they will be paid full pay for the first 4 weeks of any sickness in a rolling 12 month period; followed by half pay for another 4 weeks in any rolling 12 month period. You must specify that this payment would be inclusive of any SSP to which they may be entitled too.

Sickness absence procedure

You are advised to have a clear procedure for reporting and certifying sickness absence. After each absence, employees should complete a self-certificate form or should they be off for 7 calendar days or more, they should provide a certificate from their GP or other medical professional.

The line manager should then review the self-certificate and use it as an opportunity to meet with the employee to discuss their health and whether any support is needed.

Managing long-term or more frequent absence
You will need to follow your sickness absence policy in accordance, however, please consult with the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources team for advice and support.
If an employee is unable to take their full holiday entitlement during a leave year due to sickness, they can carry over up to 4 weeks' unused leave for 18 months after the leave year in which the leave was accrued. Any leave not taken within the 18-month period will be lost.

Taking holiday while off sick
An employee can use their paid holiday (annual leave) while off sick. For example, if they:

- Are not physically able to work, but physically able to take a holiday
- Have a mental health condition that might be helped by a holiday
- Are off sick long term and a holiday might help with their recovery

It's up to an employee to request holiday while off sick. You cannot force an employee to take holiday while off sick.

If you approve the employee's holiday request:

- Sick leave can be paused while the employee takes holiday
- The employee should get holiday pay while they are on holiday

After the employee has taken the holiday, sick leave can continue if they're still not well enough to return to work.

If an employee is sick on holiday

An employee must report their sickness to their line manager if they want to take any holiday as sick leave. If this is the case, the employee can:

- Get statutory sick pay for the time they were sick – as long as they are entitled to it
- Keep the time they were sick to use as holiday another time
- They must also provide you a medical certificate for the period in which they were unwell for.

Further guidance

It is unsatisfactory if an employee is unwell and yet feels they must continue to undertake their duties because no alternative arrangements have been made.

It is advisable that someone else is aware/ has knowledge of how to do the employee's job or elements of the job as and when needed. Having written processes will allow you to maintain day to day roles accordingly.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is responsible for the encouragement, regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare.

The HSE website Health and safety basics for your business – provides you some guidance and support to help you decide where you need to do more and ensure you plan, monitor and review your control measures.

Key areas to consider

Below is a summary of the key areas you will need to consider

- You must provide first aid arrangements and you must report and keep a record of certain injuries, incidents and cases of work-related disease
- You must display the health and safety law poster or provide each employee with an equivalent pocket card. This must be displayed where everyone can easily read it
- You will need to have employers' and/or public liability insurance
- You must ensure the safe use of Visual Display Screen Equipment (VDUs) – computer screens
- You must carry out risk assessment for the handling, storage and use of hazardous substances (e.g., cleaning materials)
- A risk assessment should also be undertaken if you have a pregnant employee/volunteer
- You should assess the risks related to sexual harassment at work

- If you have more than five employees, you must by law have a written health and safety policy. This should set out the general approach and objectives in relation to health and safety.
- You are required by law to consult with your employees regarding safety issues in the workplace and provide health and safety instruction, information and training for all employees.
- It will be important to think about lone working
- You should also consider risk assessments for volunteers too.

Further guidance

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website, has some useful guidance on all aspects of health and safety HSE: Information about health and safety at work.

The ACAS website also have useful information on health and wellbeing, see Health and wellbeing at work | Acas

Working Time and Time Off

Working Time Regulations

The Working Time Regulations 1998 set out the maximum time that workers should work per week. This is 48 hours per week (on average) and includes hours worked at all of the individual's employers. If you are in any doubt as to whether any of your employee may be exceeding 48 hours per week on average, you may need to agree with them an 'opt out' of the Working Time Regulations. More information can be found here Maximum weekly working hours: Overview - GOV.UK

By law employees should be given rest break and rest periods as follows:

- Each employee should be able to take a minimum of 20 minutes unpaid rest during the working day, if they work for a continuous period of more than 6 hours.
- Each employee should be able to take a rest between working days of at least 11 hours e.g., if an employee is locking up the building at 10.00pm they should not be required to work again until 9.00am the following morning.
- Each employee should work no more than 6 days out of 7, or alternatively 12 out of every 14.

What counts as work

A working week includes:

- Job-related training
- Time spent travelling if you travel as part of your job
- Working lunches, for example business lunches
- Time spent working abroad
- Paid overtime
- Unpaid overtime you're asked to do
- Time spent on call at the workplace
- Any time that is treated as 'working time' under a contract
- Travel between home and work at the start and end of the working day (if you do not have a fixed place of work)

What does not count as work

A working week does not include:

- Time you spend on call away from the workplace
- Breaks when no work is done, for example lunch breaks
- Travelling outside of normal working hours
- Unpaid overtime you've volunteered for, for example staying late to finish something off
- Paid or unpaid holiday
- Travel to and from work (if you have a fixed place of work)

There is also regulations for young workers (those under 18) – please see People under 18 - Pay and hours for young workers - Acas for more information.

Family Friendly Policies

All employees who are parents or carers have certain rights to time off. There are statutory rights as employers you must give, these are outlined below:

Maternity

Those who are pregnant have a right to up to a year's maternity leave, with the right to return to their job, there is no length service requirements, and could be taken from the first day of employment.

Statutory maternity leave is 52 weeks made up of Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML), the first 26 weeks and Additional Maternity Leave (AML), the last 26 weeks. A pregnant employee does not have to take the 52 weeks, but they must take 2 weeks leave after the birth of the baby.

Pregnant employees may qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) during their leave, which is paid for a maximum of 39 weeks. There is a higher rate for the first 6 weeks then a lower rate for the subsequent 33 weeks.

To qualify for SMP, they must have been:

- Employed by the same employer continuously for at least 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the week of birth (the qualifying week)
- Earning on average at least £129 a week
- They have given the correct notice and proof of pregnancy

SMP can mostly be reclaimed from the Government Get financial help with statutory pay: What you can reclaim - GOV.UK, as are many other statutory parental pay.

If an employee does not qualify for SMP, you must give them a SMP1 form, explaining why they cannot get SMP within 7 days of making your decision. They could be eligible for Maternity Allowance instead.

Women on maternity leave are also entitled to keep normal employment rights and benefits, this includes salary increases, pension contributions (if applicable), accrual of holiday entitlement.

It is important that you undertake a risk assessment with the pregnant employee as soon as you are possible, this is to protect them and their unborn child.

Pregnant women, women on maternity and those returning from maternity leave up to 18 months after the birth are protected in a favourable way if there is a redundancy situation. If this is situation in which you find yourself in, please seek advice from ACAS Redundancy | Acas.

It is also important to remember that maternity leave and pay apply if a child is stillborn after the start of their 24th week of pregnancy.

Paternity

Paternity leave is for a period of one or two weeks (either consecutive or separate) and must be taken with 52 weeks of the birth of the baby, or within 52 weeks of the date of placement for adoption.

Those on paternity leave are also entitled to any pay rises, build-up of holiday and return to work in the same or similar role.

To qualify for Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP):

- Be an employee
- Give the correct notice
- Have been continuously employed by your employer for at least 26 weeks up to any day in the 'qualifying week'

Paternity leave may be taken by women, for example in the case of a same-sex couple or when a man is the primary adopter and is taking the longer adoption leave.

Paternity pay and leave apply if a child is stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy.

Further information can be found via the GOV.UK website Paternity pay and leave: Overview - GOV.UK

Adoption Leave

Adoption leave is for up to a year and can be taken by the principal adopter in a couple. The entitlements mirror that of maternity leave, with is being made up of 26 weeks of Ordinary Adoption Leave (OAL) and 26 weeks of Additional Adoption Leave (AAL).

For further information on adoption leave, please visit the GOV.UK website Adoption pay and leave: Overview - GOV.UK

Shared Parental Leave →

Shared Parental Leave

Employees may be able to get Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) if they are:

· Having a baby
· Using a surrogate to have a baby
· Adopting a child
· Fostering a child who you're planning to adopt

Employees can share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay between themselves and their partner. This must be used in the first year after the child is born or placed.

SPL can be taken in blocks separated by periods of work or taken in one go. Employees could also choose to be off work at the same time as their partner or have them staggered.

The GOV.UK website provides further information regarding Shared Parental Leave Shared Parental Leave and Pay: How it works - GOV.UK

Neonatal Care Leave

Parents are entitled to up to 12 weeks of paid leave in addition to other parental leave entitlements, if their newborn child is receiving neonatal care. If an employee is already on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, Neonatal Care Leave must be taken at the end of that entitlement.

Employees can get one week's leave for every 7 full and continuous days their baby is in neonatal care. This applies to all regardless of their length of service but must be taken within 68 weeks of the birth.

For further information and support please visit the GOV.UK website Neonatal Care Pay and Leave: Overview - GOV.UK or the ACAS website What the law says - Neonatal care leave and pay - Acas

Parental Leave

Eligible employees can take unpaid parental leave to look after their child's welfare, for example to:

- Spend more time with their children
- Look at new schools
- Settle children into new childcare arrangements
- Spend more time with family

Employees are entitled to 18 weeks' leave for each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday. A maximum of 4 weeks leave can be taken in any given year per child. Parental leave must be taken as whole weeks rather than individual days, unless it is agreed otherwise or if their child is disabled.

More information can be found via the GOV.UK website Unpaid parental leave: Overview - GOV.UK

Right to time off for dependants →

Right to time off for dependants
The law states that anyone legally classed as an employee can take time off to help a dependant with an emergency. This does not need to be paid, however it could be paid at the discretion of the employer.

Whilst the law does not state how much time an employee can take off, or how many occasions, it does state that the amount should be 'reasonable'. You will need to be flexible depending on the circumstances of the employee.

More information can be found here Time off for dependants - Acas

Carers Leave
Employees also have a legal right to unpaid Carers leave, of up to one week per rolling 12-month period. The leave can be taken flexibly, in half or full days, or in a block, the leave is to provide or arrange care for a dependant with 'long term care needs'.

For further information and support on the above, please visit the ACAS website Time off for care and support | Acas or the GOV.UK website Financial help if you have children - GOV.UK.

Discipline and Grievance

It is important you have a written disciplinary and grievance procedure that employees can access easily or can see when requested.

It can be difficult to know how to proceed in cases of discipline and grievance, but in the first instance, contact the free ACAS helpline on 0300 123 1100 or visit the website. Should you still be unsure or have questions regarding a grievance or disciplinary, you are advised to consult a member of the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources team on humanresources@bristoldiocese.org.

Handling a grievance

If an employee is unhappy about an aspect of their employment, the key things to do are:

- **Treat any grievance seriously** – don't just hope it will go away because it probably won't!
- **Don't assume you know the answer before you have fully listened to the issues** – what appears to be minor matter to you may be an important and complicated issue for the employee.

Continued →

- **Act quickly** – where possible, handle the matter informally. Meet with the employee and listen to what they have to say. Let them explain the situation fully – try not to suggest a solution before the employee has had a chance to fully define the problem.
- **Follow your grievance procedure** – if the matter can't be resolved informally, or the employee wants to follow a formal procedure, you'll need to follow your grievance procedure.
- **If the grievance concerns a volunteer**- follow the procedure in the volunteer agreement and not the grievance procedure for employees.

Handling suspected misconduct

Exactly how you proceed will depend on the misconduct. Minor misconduct can be dealt with informally by discussing the problem and setting or re-setting standards. However, more serious misconduct needs to be treated in a formal manner. Some examples of such misconduct are dishonesty, fraud, repeated poor timekeeping etc.

If you receive an allegation concerning potential misconduct of an employee, or observe such potential misconduct yourself, you will need to follow your disciplinary procedure.

You are likely to need to:

- Interview the person or people who raised the allegation
- Interview any witnesses
- Review any documentary evidence
- Interview the employee against whom the allegation has been made
- Take note of all interviews and gain the agreement of the interviewees to the notes
- Take a view as to whether there is a case to answer
- If there is a case to answer, arrange a disciplinary hearing and write to the employee to request that they attend. The letter will need to state the reasons disciplinary action is completed. All information which is to be considered at the disciplinary hearing should be enclosed, the hearing should be held by individuals not involved in the investigation.

If necessary, you may also need to suspend the employee for a short period of time whilst you investigate.

The above step should be completed as quickly as possible, for the benefit of all concerned.

If you are contemplating dismissing an employee, you are advised to seek support from the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources Team humanresources@bristoldiocese.org.

Handling performance concerns

If you are concerned about the performance of an employee, then it is appropriate to raise your concerns with the employee at the earliest opportunity and try to resolve the concerns. It is neither fair to the employee, nor the Church, if you do not do so.

Problems with performance generally fall under the following categories:

- The employee didn't know what was expected

This is often the case, particularly with new employees. It may be that you have not been clear enough about what is expected. The approach in this circumstance is to clarify your expectations.

- The employee thought they were doing what was expected

Sometimes, an employee may think they understand the task, and are achieving it, but from your perspective they are not. The approach here is to give feedback on their work and explain again what you need done – you could use the 1-1 meeting format (found in Support and Supervision).

- The employee can't do what is expected

If the employee can't do what is expected, it may be that they don't have the skills or knowledge; or it may be that they don't have the resources e.g., the time or equipment.

More →

You will need to speak with the employee about why they can't do what is expected and discuss with them whether there is an issue of resources, such as lack of time (in which cases you will need to adjust your expectations) or whether additional training, support or coaching would assist.

- The employee won't do what is expected

On occasion, the employee knows what is expected and they know how to do it, but they don't want to do it. This could be because they are aggrieved about something, or because they believe that what they are being asked to do is not priority.

Talk with the employee, they may have a valid reason for choosing not to do what is expected. However, if an employee is refusing to comply with reasonable requests, this is a matter to be dealt with under your disciplinary procedure.

How do I know which of the above reasons for underperformance applies?

Ask the employee. Discuss the situation in a problem-solving, non-confrontational way, gaining the employee's views and coming to your own.

Once you have a view on which of the four reason is causing the gap between what you were expecting and what the employee is actually doing, you can start discussing with

the employee the best way of bridging the gap. You might want to arrange another meeting to do this, when the employee has had an opportunity to think about the situation.

Next steps
Monitor the situation and remember to recognise achievements when things go right!

What if problems persist?
The above approach should enable you to resolve most performance problems, however if problems persist, you will need to follow formal procedures.

Disclosures from Employees
Speaking out ('whistleblowing')

You are advised to have a procedure on whistleblowing, so that employees can disclose concerns about suspected wrongdoing in their workplace.

An example of a Speaking Out (whistleblowing) policy can be found here. The ACAS website has some useful information on whistleblowing at work The law - Whistleblowing at work - Acas

There is a duty on an employer to consider other options to try and reduce or avoid the need for redundancies, and you must consult employees as soon as possible where you are considering redundancy as an option.

Consultation Period

If you are considering redundancy as an option, there are a number of guidelines you must adhere to:

- When a consultation ss required
  - Fewer than 20 redundancies: Employers should conduct individual consultations. There's no statutory minimum duration, but the process must be meaningful
  - 20 or more redundancies within 90 days at one establishment: Employers must conduct collective consultations with either:
    - Recognised trade union representatives,
    - Elected employee representatives (if no union is recognised)
- What Consultation Should Cover
  - Reasons for the proposed redundancies
  - Ways to avoid or reduce redundancies
  - Selection criteria
  - Support available (e.g., time off to look for work or training)
  - Alternatives such as redeployment or voluntary redundancy

Redundancy

Redundancy

Under employment legislation a redundancy occurs when:

- The employer has ceased or intends to cease
- To carry on the business for the purposes of which the employee was employer or
- To carry on that business in the place where the employee was so employed or
- The need for employees to carry out work of a particular kind or
- To carry out that work in a particular place has ceased or diminished.

Sometimes it can be tempting to make someone 'redundant' when perhaps their performance in the role is not meeting the expectations. Whilst this is often kindly meant unless one of the definitions above is met there is a risk that the former employee may claim 'unfair dismissal' – especially if the post is recruited to following the end of their employment.

There are examples of how the above definitions may be relevant to parish-based employees in 'Redundancy - Appendix 1'.

- Legal Timelines for Collective Consultation
  - 20–99 redundancies: Consultation must begin at least 30 days before any dismissals.
  - 100 or more redundancies: Consultation must begin at least 45 days before dismissals
- Employee Rights and Representation
  - Employees can stand for election as representatives or vote for others.
  - Representatives are entitled to paid time off to carry out their duties and attend training
  - Employees may bring a companion to individual consultation meetings, though this is not a legal right

Employees will have the right to statutory redundancy pay if they

- Are selected for redundancy
- Have the legal status of employee
- Have continuously worked for your employer for 2 years or more (this also applies if the employee was transferred under TUPE)

Where statutory redundancy is being paid it is possible to calculate entitlement through the government website.

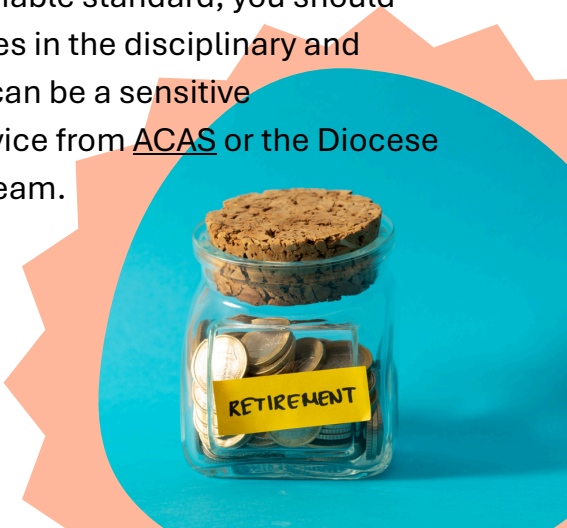
Managing a redundancy process can be complicated, and emotionally difficult for employees and for the Trustees or Managers who are running the process. You are advised to seek information from ACAS When redundancy can happen - Your rights during redundancy - Acas or speak with the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources team for support and guidance.

An effective redundancy handling can be complicated, you are advised to seek information from ACAS When redundancy can happen - Your rights during redundancy - Acas or speak with the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources team for support and guidance.

Retirement

Retirement
Previously, under law, age 65 was the ‘default retirement age’, which was the earliest date which employers could retire an employee. However, this is no longer possible, and employees can choose when to retire. This applies, even where a job is no longer needed, in which case, it would potentially be a redundancy situation rather than a retirement.

Increasing age should not be considered to equate to a diminished ability to do the job. Further, you cannot ‘retire’ someone or suggest they retire because you are concerned about their performance. If the employee is not capable of undertaking the work, there may be adjustment to the job you could make, to support the employee to do the job well. If there are no adjustments that you could make and if performance is not at a reasonable standard, you should sensitively follow the processes in the disciplinary and capability procedure. As this can be a sensitive conversation, please seek advice from ACAS or the Diocese of Bristol Human Resources team.



Miscellaneous

Providing equipment

The equipment you provide for your employees will depend on their job. For example, you may provide

- Cleaning materials for the cleaner
- Gardening tools for the gardener
- Phone and computer/laptop for an administrator

You must ensure that the work equipment you provide meets the requirements of Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER), meaning the equipment is:

- Suitable for use, and for the purpose and conditions in which it is to be used
- Maintained in a safe condition for use so that people's health and safety is not at risk
- Inspected, in certain circumstances, to ensure that it is and continues to be safe for use. Any inspection should be carried out by a competent person (this could be an employee if they have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to perform the task) and a record kept until the next inspection

Providing and using work equipment safely - HSE

Please note that you would normally expect self-employed people to provide their own equipment – unless arranged otherwise.

You will also need to ensure that the relevant and necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided. It is vital that you provide sufficient information, instruction and training on the use of PPE – more information can be found here.

Probation

It is usual for a new employee to have an initial probationary period, usually lasting between 3 and 6 months. This gives time for both employer and employee to be satisfied that the employment should continue. It is important that a proper review is undertaken before the probationary period expires, and the person concerned notified in writing before the expiry of the period, whether the employment is to continue or the probationary period is to be extended, or the employment is to end.

Please note that employment will not automatically terminate at the end of a probation period – you will still need to give the appropriate notice. Where there is a probationary period, this should be made clear in the letter of appointment and in the statement of terms and conditions. Usually, an employee's notice period will be shorter during probation, although this is not essential.

Notice Periods

This is a matter which must be carefully considered. Too short a notice period gives no time to recruit and carry out handover work; too long a notice period can become cumbersome for employer and employee alike.

The minimum periods stipulated by law for notice given by an employer are:

- One week's notice if continuous employment is less than two years
- One week's notice for each year of continuous employment if continuous employment is two years or more but less than twelve years
- Twelve weeks' notice if the period of continuous employment is twelve years or more.

In practice, however, the church may wish to specify a longer period of notice as it will depend on what is reasonable. For example, it is considered reasonable for an employee paid monthly to be given a month's notice, but three-to-six-month notice periods are often used for more senior appointments.

If you need to give notice to an employee at any point, you need to give the greater of the minimum period stipulated by law and the notice period shown in the employment contract. The minimum notice to be given by an employee who has been in post for at least a month is one week.

Normally the notice period will be the same for both employer and employee. Where the employment is terminated by an employer on short or no notice for a valid reason or by mutual agreement, the salary due during the notice period can be paid instead as 'payment in lieu of notice'. Money paid in lieu of notice is subject to tax and NI deductions.

Fixed term and Limited contracts

There may be situations where you wish to offer employment for a fixed period of time, e.g. a 12-month contract. This could be, for example, because of uncertainty about long term funding or because you want to try a new role or new team structure, or because the work relates to a project or set of tasks.

An employee on a fixed-term contract should normally receive the same benefits as any comparable employee on a permanent contract. For example, if a church employs a youth worker on a fixed-term contract and another on a permanent contract they should receive the same benefits.

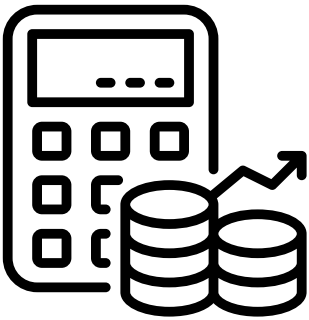
It is important to know that when the contract terminates at the end of the contract period or when a project or set of tasks is complete, this still equates to a dismissal under employment law. If the employee has at least 2 complete years of service at the end of contract, they could claim unfair dismissal and it would be for the church to show that the dismissal was fair.

It is no longer possible for a church to include a waiver of the right to claim unfair dismissal or of the right to claim a redundancy payment in a new fixed term contract.

If you employ an individual on a series of fixed term contracts and the period of continuous employment reaches 4 years, then the individual must be treated as if they were a permanent member of staff.

Part-time workers

A part-time worker should normally receive the same benefits as any comparable full-time worker on a pro-rata basis. If, for example, a church employs a part-time administrator and a full-time administrator, the part-time administrator should receive the same benefits, pro-rata, as the full-time administrator unless any difference in treatment can be justified by a factor other than the difference in hours worked.



Expenses

Employees should provide you with a receipt of any out-of-pocket expenses. You should avoid giving a 'flat rate' amount to cover expenses, e.g., paying £10 per day to cover incidental expenses. This is because if the expense cannot be clearly related back to the expenditure, anything additional to the expenditure may be considered to be taxable.

The process for claiming expenses needs to be simple, clear and consistent for all volunteers. Payments should be regular, and sometimes in advance for people on low incomes.

In addition, a 'flat rate' amount of expenses could be seen to be payment, and you inadvertently create a contract of employment, that could create tax, benefit or national insurance problems.

Policies

You can make amendments, to meet the specific needs of your policies, where indicated in yellow. Please take advice if you are not sure. Free advice is available from ACAS, on 0300 123 1100.

In most cases, you are not legally required to have these policies, but we recommend having them because they will help you comply with the law and your employees to understand what they can and cannot do.

Mandatory Policies:

- Health and Safety Policy (if you employ 5 or more people)
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy

Policy not required but best practice

- Diversity, equity and inclusion Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety (if you employ fewer than 5 people)
- Dignity at Work Policy

- Adoption Policy
- Annual Leave Policy
- Appeal Policy
- Apprenticeship Policy
- Bereavement Leave Policy
- Carers Leave Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work (Bullying and Harassment) Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Expenses Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Maternity Policy
- Menopause Policy
- Neonatal Care Leave Policy
- Parental Leave Policy
- Paternity Policy
- Performance Improvement Policy
- Probation Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Right to time off for dependants Policy
- Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy
- Shared Parental Leave (Adoption/Surrogacy)
- Shared Parental Leave Policy (Birth)
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Engaging Volunteers

Define their role
Think about why you need a volunteer. This will make sure you don't create extra work or complications for yourself if the role doesn't work.

Think about:

- What days of the week?
- Start and end times?
- How long (length of commitment)?
- How often? Weekly monthly, more often?

Write down a clear description of the required task and what it might involve. Then people will know what they are volunteering for, and you know how to assess the suitability of potential volunteers, to the basic level required or if you have more than one suitable candidate to choose from.

What support might you need to offer anyone volunteering in that role? Both to get them started and as they continue in their role

Risks (for new roles)
It's usually best to walk through the role in the environment it will take place. Are there any additional risks or concerns you need to make them aware of or to address in your role description.

If you write a risk assessment down, you can then give them a copy to ensure safety when they start. You might also want to think about accessibility, what to do in an emergency.

- Will they be lone working, if so, do they need a contact to text / call before and after to make sure they are OK?
- Do they need any special equipment to keep them safe (such as gloves, eye protection or an apron)?

You might also want to think about what information you need from them to make sure they are safe such as:

- Dietary requirements
- Health conditions
- Next of Kins
- Medications

This information could also affect your risk assessment and require extra controls or support be put in place.

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) advise that is it best to call it a 'role description' rather than a 'job description', so that it is distinguished from an employment relationship. It's important to be clear about this all the way through the process. They will be a volunteer not an employee.

Insurance, health and safety

You are legally liable for your volunteers and clients, which means taking out suitable insurance (public liability, employee liability, personal accident and professional indemnity) and being aware of the relevant legislation. Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, you must have a health and safety policy. A new role will need to be included in this and respect the policy.

It should include reference to volunteers, and they should have a copy. Your local authority or diocesan volunteering adviser may have a template policy that you can adapt. This should be in place before volunteers start.

Recruiting a volunteer

You are advised to seek two references for your volunteers also. Usually this is one from a professional relationship and one that is more personal. These can come from within or without the Parish / congregation.

Protection of children and vulnerable adults

If volunteers are undertaking 'regulated activity' involving contact with children and vulnerable adults, you should see a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

To determine whether you should seek a DBS check and, if so, at what level check here:

Find out which DBS check is right for your employee - GOV.UK.

Our Diocesan Safeguarding team can also support you. *Your diocesan safeguarding officer can help you identify particular restrictions and the screening necessary (e.g. Disclosure and Barring Service checks), in relation to working with children and vulnerable adults.*

Other Checks

If a volunteer is driving you will need a copy of their driving license, if using their own car to transport others on your behalf, a copy of their insurance, MOT and TAX etc. Insurance should include carrying passengers for a volunteer role (if this is required in the role).

Useful Documents

Completing a volunteer agreement explains that this is an informal arrangement which may be terminated by either party at any time. The Volunteer agreement also sets out how any concerns would be dealt with. You might want to set out any expectations you have of them as well. Sometimes a code of conduct is useful setting out expected behaviour. This can then be referred back to if a volunteer's behaviour causes concern.

It will also be important to have a workforce privacy notice, that states how you will use the volunteer's data to ensure you are complying with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Recruitment

Think about:

Where you will advertise for volunteers? It may depend on what you are recruiting for and, for example, whether it is to meet a short-term emergency or provide a long-term service. You might want to think about who might get something out of the role (such as Ex-accountants and think about how you might reach those people)

Consider social media, posters, leaflet drops, local magazine/newspaper ads. Some job-search websites have volunteer sections too (see Recruitment for further guidance).

Hours

There is no limit on the hours volunteers should be allowed to work, however you need to remember not to overburden your volunteers and ensure the role is sustainable. If they have a bad experience they might leave, and you would have to recruit for their role all over again. They might also not be complementary about the experience which could make it harder to recruit for the role in the future. Safety is also important, people can become tired, irritable and unfocussed if over committing, this could cause problems for everyone.

Duration

You should indicate in the volunteer agreement the anticipated duration of the volunteering. Up to one year is suggested. Remember this is not a legal agreement. If you set a length of time that is too long, it might seem too daunting a commitment and you may struggle to recruit for the role.

The better the volunteer experience is, the longer they are likely to stay in their role.

Budget

Include the costs of using volunteers in your budget, to cover the possible outlay. There may be set-up costs, such as the provision of a desk, computer or phone line, any safety equipment and there will be running costs such as transport, reimbursing expenses, insurance, training and support, and management time.

Expenses

The process for claiming expenses needs to be simple, clear and consistent for all volunteers. Payments should be regular, and sometimes in advance for people on low incomes.

Volunteers should provide you with a receipt of any out-of-pocket expenses. You should avoid giving a 'flat rate' amount to cover expenses, e.g., paying £10 per day to cover incidental expenses. This is because any unaccounted income may be taxable, and you could be seen as setting up an employed role.

Training

You may provide relevant training to the volunteer, but you should not pay for training that is irrelevant to the volunteer's work.

It might focus on imparting skills, such as active listening or IT skills and, for some, there may be the possibility of volunteers getting NVQs or other qualifications. What is appropriate will depend on the nature of the volunteers, what they are doing and how long term they are likely to be.

Some training may be part of a risk assessment such as:

- Health and hygiene for cooking food
- Safer driving for those driving other people around as a volunteer
- Safe use of power tools

You can show or read through the role risk assessment with them and email to them, so they are aware of any dangers and have something to refer to if ever unsure. This way you would also be able to show these were explained to them.

Management, support and supervision

Support of volunteers requires consideration of their needs, including:

- Adequate induction arrangements

To include; talking through the role, enabling them to air any questions or fears, explain how long the induction process will take. It's also important to go through the boundaries or 'do's and don'ts'

- Someone they can turn to for immediate help or advice.
- Wider information about the project and other parts of it they may interact with.
- Being thanked and valued. If they feel appreciated, they are more likely to stay around.
- Being involved in wider aspects of the project, in policymaking and reflection both on past performance and future direction. This may give them a greater sense of belonging and ownership which may motivate them to stay longer in the role
- You might want to think about volunteer celebration events. You could provide some food. This also allows volunteers to meet others in the Parish which might be their primary reason for taking part.

The level of supervision will depend upon what they do, how long they have been doing it, how experienced they are. The effectiveness of both support and supervision will be linked with wider policies, internal communications and working practices, including relationships between volunteers and between them and staff and trustees. For lone working volunteers supervision is important to ensure their safety and compliance with guidelines and policies and to pick up any problems that might otherwise be unknown.

Provision

As well as providing expenses, in some projects you may need to provide guidelines. This might include confidentiality guidelines (GDPR how they deal with information they might earn as part of their role), or information about protection issues. Conversely, volunteers have a right to information, as well as safeguards, if their own safety might be at risk.

Inclusion

Volunteers need to feel that they are part of the wider team, that they are trusted and their role is appreciated. Demonstrating this may entail more than treating individuals respectfully, for example, having places for volunteers on the management committee and involving them collectively when there are major decisions to be made.

Calculating their contribution

It is helpful to have evidence for funders of the in-kind or cash value of volunteers. This might be calculated on the basis of the minimum wage hourly rate, or the rate for the job of roles such as lawyers, counsellors or drivers, or volunteer time could be computed in terms of full-time equivalent staff.

Alongside this quantitative information, there can be a commentary on the roles of volunteers (including trustees) and what they bring to the project (enabling greater reach, work with specific client groups, more activities, etc).

Ending the volunteering

Volunteers are free to come and go as they wish so they may end the agreement at any time. To avoid confusion, if they decide to leave this should be recorded somewhere.

At the same time, you can withdrawal your offer of volunteering. It is important to show you are being fair in any decision and consider equalities best practice if a simple adjustment could make it work for everyone. If someone's behaviour is inappropriate or a cause for concern, then it's important that those responsible for activities know they cannot attend. You should consider the safety of everyone when making such a decision. You should follow your own policies around this.

The Church of England website has useful information on managing and engaging volunteers Managing volunteers | The Church of England. Alternatively, you can speak with our Volunteering Adviser for further support and guidance.

Templates and resources | The Church of England

Working with Volunteers - Parish ResourcesParish Resources

Engaging Casual Workers

As well as employees and volunteers, there is a third category, which is casual workers. Casual workers have a 'contract for services' to do work or provide services. They are engaged to do the work personally. There is no right to receive work or obligation to do work – work occurs on an 'as and when' basis. Casual workers should be on the payroll, with tax and national insurance deducted.

When might you engage a casual worker

You might have need for a casual worker in your Church in one or more of the following circumstances:

- To cover for the absence of a cleaner on holiday or on short-term leave
- If you receive a booking that requires some extra cover
- To cover on an 'ad hoc' basis for absences or peaks in work

If however, the requirement is regular and recurring, the appropriate contact is an employment contact not a casual contract.

Properly conducted, casual work can be beneficial both to you as the employer and to the individual:

- The arrangement enables you to have flexible cover on an ‘as and when’ basis
- The arrangement may suit certain individuals who do not wish to commit to regular work or want to work around study or home responsibilities

How to engage a casual worker

You can use a casual worker agreement. It is a legal requirement to issue this agreement on or before the first day of work.

Please note that the following should occur in the same way as permanent employees:

- Interviews
- References
- Right to work in the UK
- Induction

Rights and responsibilities

It is important that a casual work arrangement is fair to the person undertaking the casual work. The individuals must not be obliged to accept work. They should also be free to take on other work if they wish. It is unlawful to restrict casual workers from taking on other contracts (‘exclusivity’)

Casual workers have a number of rights, including:

- National minimum wage
- Paid holiday
- Payslips
- Rest breaks
- Protection against unlawful discrimination
- Protection for 'whistleblowing'
- Not being treated less favourably for working part time
- Pension and sick pay, if their earning are at a certain level

The government is considering introducing compensation when a casual worker shift is cancelled at short notice. The government is also considering implementing the eight for casual workers to request regular working hours. If this change is implemented, it is unlikely to be before 2026.

Casual Worker Agreement

DIOCESE OF BRISTOL

TRANSFORMING CHURCH. TOGETHER.

2026

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