



Liverpool Archdiocesan
Lourdes Pilgrimage
Association

Volunteer Policy

*(Aligned with UK Charity Law and Charity
Commission Guidance)*

Name of originator/author:	Policy Review Group & Pilgrimage Executive
Date issued:	June 2026
Date Reviewed:	-
Date next review due:	June 2028

Introduction

Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community: the environment of individuals outside one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice without concern for financial gain.

This policy sets out how the Liverpool Archdiocesan Pilgrimage Association (LAPA) recruits, manages, supports, and, where necessary, removes volunteers.

LAPA recognises the vital role volunteers play in supporting pilgrims and delivering its charitable mission. This policy ensures volunteers are treated fairly, consistently, and in accordance with UK law and Charity Commission guidance.

Legal Status of Volunteers

Volunteers:

- Are not employees
- Do not have a contract of employment
- Do not receive wages or salary

Nothing in this policy creates a legally binding employment relationship. However, LAPA is committed to:

- Treating volunteers fairly and with respect
- Following good practice and relevant legal obligations, including safeguarding, equality, and health & safety

Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers, including:

- Pilgrimage helpers
- Healthcare volunteers
- Administrative and support volunteers
- Any individual acting on behalf of LAPA in an unpaid capacity

Principles

LAPA is committed to:

- Promoting dignity, respect, and inclusion
- Providing a safe environment for volunteers and pilgrims
- Ensuring proper stewardship of charitable resources
- Acting in accordance with Christian values and Charity Commission expectations

Recruitment and Selection

LAPA will:

- Select volunteers based on suitability for the role
- Provide clear role descriptions
- Carry out appropriate checks where required (e.g. DBS checks, references), particularly where volunteers work with vulnerable individuals
- Ensure recruitment is fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory

Induction and Training

Volunteers will:

- Receive appropriate induction and guidance
- Be made aware of key policies (e.g. safeguarding, health & safety, anti-fraud)
- Be given training relevant to their role, particularly in safeguarding and duty of care

Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of LAPA and its pilgrims
- Follow LAPA policies and procedures
- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Maintain confidentiality
- Use LAPA resources responsibly
- Raise concerns where appropriate

LAPA Responsibilities to Volunteers

LAPA will:

- Provide a safe working environment
- Offer support and supervision
- Reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (where agreed)
- Provide appropriate insurance cover (e.g. public liability)

Safeguarding and Conduct

Volunteers must:

- Comply with safeguarding requirements
- Not abuse their position of trust
- Avoid any conduct that could harm pilgrims, other volunteers, or LAPA's reputation

Any safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately in line with LAPA safeguarding procedures.

Equality and Diversity

LAPA is committed to equality and inclusion in line with the **Equality Act 2010**. Volunteers will be treated fairly regardless of:

- Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership
- Pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation

Health and Safety

LAPA will:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure volunteer safety
- Provide guidance on safe working practices

Volunteers must:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others
- Follow health and safety instructions

Problem Resolution

If issues arise:

- Concerns should be raised informally in the first instance
- Where necessary, matters may be reviewed by a designated Trustee or coordinator
- LAPA will aim to resolve concerns fairly and promptly

Removal of Volunteers from Roles

General Principle

While volunteers do not have employment rights, LAPA will act **fairly, proportionately, and in line with Charity Commission expectations** when deciding to remove a volunteer.

LAPA retains the right to withdraw a volunteer role at any time.

Grounds for Removal

A volunteer may be removed from their role where there is:

- Misconduct or inappropriate behaviour
- Breach of LAPA policies (e.g. safeguarding, anti-fraud, conduct)
- Failure to perform duties adequately
- Actions that bring LAPA into disrepute
- Safeguarding concerns
- Loss of trust and confidence
- Health or capability concerns affecting safe participation

Safeguarding-Related Removal

Where safeguarding concerns arise:

- Immediate suspension from duties may occur
- Relevant authorities may be informed (e.g. safeguarding bodies, DBS where applicable)
- The safety of pilgrims and vulnerable persons will always take priority

Process

Where appropriate (and depending on seriousness), LAPA will:

1. Inform the volunteer of the concern
2. Provide an opportunity to respond
3. Consider the facts and act proportionately
4. Decide on appropriate action

For serious matters, immediate removal may occur without prior notice.

Documentation

Records will be kept of:

- Concerns raised
- Actions taken
- Outcomes

Appeals

As volunteers do not have employment status, there is no formal right of appeal. However, LAPA may, at its discretion, review decisions if new information is presented.

Legal Compliance

This approach ensures:

- Compliance with charity trustees' duties to act in the charity's best interests (Charity Commission CC3)
- Protection of beneficiaries
- Reduction of legal and reputational risk

Insurance

LAPA will ensure appropriate insurance is in place to cover volunteers while acting on its behalf.

Data Protection

Volunteer information will be:

- Processed in accordance with UK GDPR
- Used only for legitimate organisational purposes
- Stored securely

Review of Policy

This policy will be:

- Reviewed periodically by Trustees
- Updated to reflect changes in law or Charity Commission guidance