



VOLUNTEER TIME



Introduction and background

Many of our employees regularly volunteer their own time to support local charities and communities. In some cases the Company supports these efforts; but we'd like to do more to encourage staff to give their time to worthwhile causes within the community.

In 2008, we introduced a Volunteering Time policy, which allowed employees to apply for a limited amount of paid leave to assist these efforts.

The policy aimed to be flexible in its approach and was subsequently trialled for a 12 month period. Since then, the scheme has proved successful for many members of staff.

Guidelines and details of the process are explained below, but please feel free to contact **Laura Smith** on **01793 563753** or **laura.smith@connectgroupplc.com** with any queries.

1. To encourage support for charities and organisations that are important to our employees.

2. To position the Company as a responsible employer that recognises and supports the efforts of its staff.

3. To boost morale and team spirit within the Company.

Recommended approach

We recommend an approach that allows managers flexibility to offer Volunteer Time (VT) in their own location but has a set of guidelines that are fair to all employees and are easy to control.

- ✦ An approved application process should be followed
- ✦ Managers would be given discretion over the amount of paid time off offered to volunteer
- ✦ Each case should be viewed on its merits, but as a guide, the time allowable would typically be one event per year with a maximum of a 5-day duration

✦ Shorter periods of time could be applied for (for example regular two hour community involvement once per month) – alternatively specific 'oneoff' blocks could be applied for (for example, to participate in a community project)

Examples of organisations that could be considered for Volunteer Time are:

Charities: eg national groups such as MENCAP or Save The Children to more local and personal charities such as an alzheimer support group called 'Forget Me Not' or a group for severely disabled children called 'Koalas'.

Community groups: eg Brownies or Cubs; supporting local youth clubs; or providing support to homeless shelters.

Hospitals and Hospices: eg decorating play and social areas; running coffee shops; supporting a trust with fundraising; and help with schooling provisions on a children's ward.

Schools: eg building a school garden similar to Trade Marketing's achievements several years ago, offering training consultancy time or being a school governor. It would not include helping out in your own child's class.



Process for applications overleaf...

Any questions about the policy should be raised with **Laura Smith** on **01793 563753** or **laura.smith@connectgroupplc.com**.



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Process for applications

- 1.** The scheme is open to all employees.
- 2.** Any employee wishing to apply for **Volunteer Time** would apply in writing to their line manager. They would complete a request form, which asks the employees to outline the purpose of the support/project.
- 3.** Authorisation of **Volunteer Time** needs to be signed off by an MG level line manager.
- 4.** The approval of **Volunteer Time** is at the nominated manager's discretion and should only be approved if business requirements allow. An offer of Volunteer Time can be withdrawn if business needs change.
- 5.** Managers would be expected to record and send details of each application for **Volunteer Time** to Laura Smith at Rowan House. This information will be logged and possibly used as part of the CR review in the Annual Report or for PR purposes.

Questions?

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Laura Smith on **01793 563753** or laura.smith@connectgroupplc.com