UMAY PREVENTION CIC

Volunteer Policy

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1. Policy Statement

UMAY Prevention CIC values the time, skills, languages and lived experience that volunteers bring. Volunteers help us reach women who might not otherwise hear about our work, strengthen our resources, and bring professional, cultural and community perspectives into everything we do.

We are committed to good practice in how we recruit, support and manage volunteers. We want volunteering with UMAY to be safe, fair, well supported and rewarding — for volunteers and for the women and communities we work with.

We see volunteering as an offer, not a request for free labour. For many women, including those whose qualifications are not recognised in the UK, volunteering with UMAY can offer connection, confidence, UK experience and a chance to use their skills again.

We would rather have a small number of well supported, engaged volunteers than a long list of names.

2. Scope

This policy applies to everyone who volunteers with or on behalf of UMAY, in person or online, including placement students. It sets out how we involve volunteers and what volunteers and UMAY can expect from each other.

It does not apply to directors acting in their role as directors, or to paid staff, sessional workers or contractors, who are covered by separate arrangements.

3. Our Principles

Our work with volunteers follows the same principles as all of UMAY's work:

- Trauma-informed and survivor-centred: volunteers are never asked to do anything that could put women at risk or cause harm, and volunteers' own wellbeing matters.
- Safeguarding-led: every role is designed with safeguarding in mind, and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

- Culturally responsive and linguistically accessible: we value volunteers' languages, cultures and community knowledge.
- Inclusive: volunteering is open to people from all backgrounds, and we will make reasonable adjustments so people can take part.
- Complementary: volunteers add to UMAY's work. They do not replace paid roles or specialist VAWG services.

4. Volunteer Roles

Volunteers contribute to UMAY in four main areas:

- Communications and digital — for example social media, design, photography and video, and website content.
- Community outreach — connecting with Turkish-speaking and other migrant women, community groups and local networks.
- Research and resources — for example evidence summaries, bilingual resources, and mapping services and opportunities.
- Events and programme support — for example workshops, community events, registrations and practical organisation.

Every volunteer role has a written role description, agreed before recruitment begins. It sets out what the role involves, what it does not involve, the skills and qualities we hope for, the support and training on offer, the time involved, and any checks needed.

4.1 Role boundaries

UMAY is a prevention and learning-led organisation. We do not provide casework, counselling, risk assessment or crisis support, and neither do our volunteers. Volunteers do not:

- give advice or support about someone's personal situation;
- handle a disclosure of harm on their own;
- take or keep women's personal information, except on UMAY's own forms;
- visit people in their homes or arrange to meet people alone on UMAY's behalf.

Any role that involves direct contact with women, or with sensitive information, will only begin once clear boundaries, supervision, safeguarding arrangements and any role-specific checks are in place.

5. Recruitment and Selection

We recruit volunteers openly and fairly, in line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. People can express an interest through our website, our partners or our networks.

We usually begin with an informal conversation to talk through the role, what the person hopes to gain, and whether the role is a good fit. We select volunteers on their suitability for the role. Information that is not relevant to the role will not be used in our decisions.

We welcome lived experience and community knowledge. If a volunteer needs adjustments or support to take part, we will do our best to make this possible. If we cannot offer a role, we will explain why.

Personal information about volunteers is collected, stored and used in line with our Data Protection and Processing Policy. We only ask for what we need.

6. Checks and Safeguarding

The checks we carry out depend on the role. Before recruiting for a role, we carry out a short safeguarding risk assessment, looking at who the volunteer will be in contact with, how often, whether they may be alone with anyone, and whether they will handle personal information or money.

Depending on the role, checks may include:

- two references;
- a DBS check for any volunteer whose role involves contact with the women, children or families we work with: at least a basic check, and a standard or enhanced check where the role is eligible, assessed for each role. UMAY pays for it, and the volunteer will not begin that contact until it is complete. Volunteers who work only with UMAY's team, with no contact with service users, do not need a DBS check;
- safeguarding training before any contact with women, children or families.

UMAY's volunteers are aged 18 or over.

All volunteers must follow UMAY's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults Policy and the procedures that sit under it. If a volunteer is worried about anyone's safety, or someone tells them they or a child are unsafe, they must:

- listen, and not promise to keep it secret;
- not ask for detail or give advice;
- call 999 first if anyone is in immediate danger;
- tell UMAY's Designated Safeguarding Lead, or the Deputy, the same day;
- write down what they saw or were told, in the person's own words, with the date, time and place, and pass it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without keeping a copy.

7. Induction, Training and Support

Every volunteer receives an induction before they start. It covers UMAY's work and values, their role and its boundaries, safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection, health and safety, expenses, and who to contact for support.

Each volunteer has a named contact at UMAY. We agree how often we will check in, and offer regular check-ins and a debrief after events or difficult conversations. Volunteers can raise questions or concerns at any time.

Our work can involve hearing difficult experiences. We encourage volunteers to look after themselves, to talk to their named contact if something has affected them, and to step back whenever they need to.

8. Volunteer Agreement

Each volunteer is asked to sign a volunteer agreement. It sets out what UMAY offers the volunteer and what we hope for in return, including confidentiality and following our policies.

The agreement describes hopes and expectations. It is not a contract of employment, and it is not intended to create a legally binding relationship. Volunteers are not obliged to give a minimum amount of time, and either the volunteer or UMAY can end the arrangement at any time.

9. Expenses

We do not want cost to be a barrier to volunteering. UMAY reimburses reasonable out-of-pocket expenses that volunteers incur while volunteering, such as travel, where these have been agreed in advance.

Expenses are reimbursed in line with section 6 of our Financial Controls and Management Policy:

- claims must be supported by receipts;

- claims should be made within one month of the expense, and no later than three months;
- claims are approved by a director, never by the person making the claim;
- payments are made by bank transfer.

We only reimburse actual costs. We do not make flat-rate payments or give other rewards that could be seen as payment for volunteering.

10. Insurance

UMAY will make sure that volunteers and the activities they carry out are covered by appropriate insurance before they begin volunteering. UMAY's insurance does not cover volunteers' personal belongings. Volunteers who use their own car for volunteering should tell their insurer.

11. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Volunteers must keep confidential any personal or sensitive information they learn while volunteering. This includes information about the women and families we work with, other volunteers, partners and UMAY's own business. Volunteers must not share who attended a session or what anyone said.

Personal details should only be recorded on UMAY's own forms. Messages containing personal information, including on WhatsApp, should be passed to UMAY and then deleted.

Confidentiality has limits. Where someone may be at risk of harm, information must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as set out in section 6.

A serious or repeated breach of confidentiality may lead to a volunteer's role ending.

12. Health and Safety

UMAY will take reasonable steps to keep volunteers safe. Outreach takes place in public and community settings, not in people's homes. Volunteers should let their named contact know where they will be when volunteering on their own, follow the safety arrangements at each venue, and report any accident, incident or near miss to UMAY as soon as possible.

If a volunteer meets hostility or feels unsafe, they should not engage or argue. They should leave and tell their named contact.

13. Conduct

We ask volunteers to:

- treat everyone with respect, warmth and dignity;
- act in line with UMAY's values and the boundaries of their role;
- use respectful, non-stigmatising language, including speaking about "people who cause harm" rather than using fixed labels;
- not speak on UMAY's behalf in public, in the media or online unless this has been agreed;
- declare any conflict of interest, in line with our Conflict of Interest Policy;
- let their named contact know if they cannot attend something they have agreed to.

14. Recognition and Development

We will thank volunteers and recognise their contribution, for example through certificates, references, nominations for local volunteer recognition, and acknowledging their work where they are happy for us to do so.

We will listen to volunteers' ideas and feedback, and offer training and development that supports their role and their own goals.

15. Resolving Problems

We aim to treat volunteers fairly and consistently, and to resolve problems early and informally wherever possible.

If a volunteer is unhappy about anything to do with their volunteering, they should speak to their named contact. If the concern is about their named contact, they can speak to another director. We will listen, respond promptly, and try to find a fair solution together.

If UMAY has a concern about a volunteer, we will talk it through with them, offer support, and agree any changes, such as extra training or a different role. Where the concern is serious, or cannot be resolved, UMAY may end the volunteer's involvement and will explain why.

Any concern that a volunteer may have harmed, or may pose a risk to, a child or adult will be dealt with under the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults Policy.

16. Ending Volunteering

Volunteers can stop volunteering at any time, and we simply ask them to let us know. When a volunteer leaves, we will offer a short conversation to hear about their experience, ask them to return any UMAY materials and delete any UMAY information they hold, and, where appropriate, offer a reference.

17. Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers can expect UMAY to:

- give them a clear role description, so they know what is and is not expected of them;
- provide an induction, training and a named contact for support;
- keep them safe, and make sure they are covered by insurance;
- reimburse agreed out-of-pocket expenses;
- treat them fairly and free from discrimination;
- recognise their contribution and listen to their views;
- explain what will happen if something goes wrong.

UMAY asks volunteers to:

- be reliable and honest, and let us know if their plans change;
- keep information confidential;
- work within the boundaries of their role;
- follow UMAY's policies, especially on safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection;
- take part in the induction and training offered;
- act in a way that reflects UMAY's values and does not bring UMAY into disrepute.

18. Responsibilities within UMAY

Directors: approve this policy and make sure UMAY has the resources, insurance and safeguarding arrangements needed to involve volunteers safely.

Lead Director: is responsible for the day-to-day recruitment, induction, support and supervision of volunteers, and for keeping role descriptions and risk assessments up to date.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: receives and acts on safeguarding concerns raised by volunteers, and makes sure volunteers receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers: follow this policy and the policies it refers to.

19. Related Policies

This policy should be read with:

- Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection and Processing Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Financial Controls and Management Policy

20. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every year, or sooner if the law or good practice changes, if UMAY's volunteer roles change significantly, or if a serious incident shows it needs updating.