

Land of Joy Volunteer Policy 2025

This document sets out guidelines of expectations and conditions for offering service to ensure that all volunteers are treated fairly and that the experience of volunteering at Land of Joy is meaningful and rewarding for everyone involved.

Welcoming Our Volunteers

At Land of Joy, everything is made possible through generosity – from our volunteers to our retreatants and supporters. We deeply appreciate every form of contribution, and we strive to ensure that every team member feels valued, supported, and cared for.

Volunteers are at the heart of our community, helping us maintain and develop Land of Joy as a place of retreat, reflection, and service. This policy outlines our shared commitments, rights, and responsibilities to ensure a fulfilling and harmonious experience.

Volunteer Conditions & Expectations

Residential Volunteers

- Typically offer **6–8 hours of service per day**, five days per week, with flexibility based on the Centre's needs.
- People who commit to service for a fixed term of at least a 1 month period.

Local Non-Residential Volunteers

- Provide service in a structured role for an extended period.
- May offer regular support on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Some volunteers assist occasionally as needed.
- Hours will be defined with the director and/or manager and may be on a regular or project based framework.

Remote Volunteers(full time/ part time/ fixed term)

- Offer structured service in specific roles over a short term, extended period or project based.
- May contribute on a weekly, monthly, or occasional basis.
- Hours will be defined with the director and/or manager and may be on a regular or project based framework.

Occasional Residential Volunteers

- Offer structured service in specific roles over flexible periods of time.
- May contribute on an ad hoc basis and are invited to stay on site during periods of service.
- Hours will be defined with the director and/or manager and may be on a regular or project based framework.
- Some volunteers may provide periodic full-time service for specific needs (e.g., covering breaks, supporting retreats, or contributing to projects such as Woodlanders).

Definition of term 'residential' - Land of Joy classifies 'residential' as a volunteer offering service and staying onsite for a period of 1 month or more.

Volunteer Induction & Training

All volunteers will receive an induction within their first week, covering:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Setting volunteers up for success in their role with relevant training, learning & development.
- Supervision, support, and pastoral care
- Understanding the values and the purpose of Land of Joy
- Safeguarding Policy and requirements
- Confidentiality and data protection
- Caring for self and others
- Working with challenges, conflict transformation and complaints procedure
- Health & Safety requirements

Volunteer Support

Land of Joy provides residential (full time) volunteers with:

- **Accommodation, meals, and basic toiletries** (as outlined in the Residential Licence Agreement).
- Costs covered for **NHS prescriptions**.
- A **dedicated line manager or coordinator** to oversee tasks and provide support.
- **Training opportunities** related to volunteer responsibilities.
- **Regular check-ins** to ensure a positive experience and discuss any concerns.
- Access to **onsite courses, the library and retreats** when possible.
- **Insurance coverage** for public liability, personal accident, and loss of personal items (phone, computer) while volunteering at the Centre.

Land of Joy provides full time (30+ hours per week) remote volunteers with:

- Provision for **food expenditure**, in line with budgets and basic toiletries
- Costs covered for **NHS prescriptions**
- Provision of **digital services** that enable volunteer service
- A **dedicated line manager or coordinator** to oversee tasks and provide support.
- **Training opportunities** related to volunteer responsibilities.
- **Regular check-ins** to ensure a positive experience and discuss any concerns.
- Provision for **IT hardware** and role supplies

Land of Joy provides part time (up to 25 hours per week) remote volunteers with:

- A **dedicated line manager or coordinator** to oversee tasks and provide support.
- **Training opportunities** related to volunteer responsibilities.
- **Regular check-ins** to ensure a positive experience and discuss any concerns.
- Provision of **digital services** that enable volunteer service
- A provision of other benefits as deemed reasonable and appropriate by the organisation.

Reimbursement of Expenses

- Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in line with the role will be reimbursed, in accordance with Land of Joy finance policies. Any expenses should be agreed beforehand with the appropriate line manager/ coordinator.
- Additional expenses or travel costs must be agreed upon in advance and in writing.
- All expenses must be submitted with receipts within one month of being incurred.

Financial Support

- Any specialist project work outside usual hours and role / responsibilities, agreed upon in advance, may be invoiced at the discretion of the director and relevant board members.

Volunteers are responsible for managing their own financial needs beyond these provisions.

Time Off & Breaks

- Short- and long-term residential volunteers are encouraged to take regular breaks.
 - A rota system ensures two days off per week.
 - Longer breaks for holidays or retreats should be arranged in advance, in writing, with the relevant line manager/ coordinator.
 - If a significant break is required, Land of Joy may need to recruit a replacement.
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Guidelines for a Supportive Volunteering Experience

- Residential volunteers should be comfortable living and serving in a rural, Buddhist retreat setting.
- Volunteers should mindfully practice **respectfulness, kindness, generosity, patience, and empathy** when interacting with others.
- Cooperation in maintaining a **harmonious and clean living space** is essential for community well-being.
- Volunteers are required to follow the **five Mahayana precepts** while at the Centre:
 1. **To protect life** – refrain from killing, including insects.
 2. **To respect property** – refrain from stealing.
 3. **To speak the truth** – refrain from dishonesty and divisive speech.
 4. **To embrace health** – refrain from intoxicants (alcohol, drugs) anywhere on the premises.
 5. **To respect others** – refrain from sexual activity while at Land of Joy.

Additionally:

- The Centre follows a **vegetarian diet**.
- Volunteers should not accept individual donations from retreatants—any **Dana** received is shared equally among full time volunteers.
- The centre regularly supports monastics in a variety of ways; lay volunteers should make every effort to support the vows and respect the lineage of ordination and monasticism.

Communication & Conflict Transformation

- Volunteers are encouraged to share feedback and have open dialogue with fellow volunteers and their line manager/ coordinator.
- If any concerns arise, volunteers should discuss them with their line manager/ coordinator.
- Land of Joy has a **structured problem-transformation procedure**, which volunteers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with and utilise when needed.

Policies & Compliance

Volunteers are required to:

- Read, sign, and comply with the **FPMT Ethical Policy**.
- Follow all **Land of Joy governance policies**, including **Data Protection, Health & Safety, Safeguarding, and the Spiritual Policy** (available on our website).
- Participate in **ongoing safeguarding training**.
- Maintain **confidentiality** regarding organisational matters, volunteers, centre users, and suppliers.
- More details and operational specifics are available in the **volunteer agreement**.

Additionally, residential volunteers must sign a **Residential Licence Agreement** and, as required, review the **FPMT Inc. online safeguarding training programme, “Protection from Abuse.”**

Ending the Volunteer Agreement

- The Volunteer Agreement will specify an end date, which can be reviewed at request by either party with **one month’s notice** where possible.
 - Volunteers needing to leave suddenly due to personal circumstances should inform their line manager/coordinator at the earliest opportunity to ensure a smooth transition.
 - Volunteers should follow guidance regarding their exit from Land of Joy and offboarding as guided by their line manager/ coordinator.
 - All onboarding and offboarding processes are outlined in the relevant volunteer agreement.
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We hope your time at Land of Joy brings **skies of benefit**, fostering a lasting, meaningful connection. Thank you for your generosity and dedication!