

- **Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC)**

# **VOLUNTEER MANUAL**

Version 2.0

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### About BCDC

The **Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC)** is a registered Australian non-profit organization committed to improving the wellbeing of Myanmar communities and displaced, marginalized, or vulnerable individuals—both within Australia and abroad. Our mission extends to supporting refugees, seniors, youth, and community members from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

BCDC operates in diverse areas such as education, aged care, humanitarian assistance, settlement support, and advocacy. At the heart of all our work is the belief in dignity, inclusion, community empowerment, and culturally responsive service delivery.

### The Role of Volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of BCDC's mission. By generously offering their time, skills, and compassion, volunteers contribute to sustainable development and positive social impact. Whether involved in program delivery, community events, communications, aged care support, or administration, BCDC volunteers help us reach more people and amplify our values.

We recognize that volunteers:

- Bring unique skills and lived experience
- Strengthen community engagement and inclusion
- Support continuity and innovation in service delivery
- Act as ambassadors of social justice and solidarity

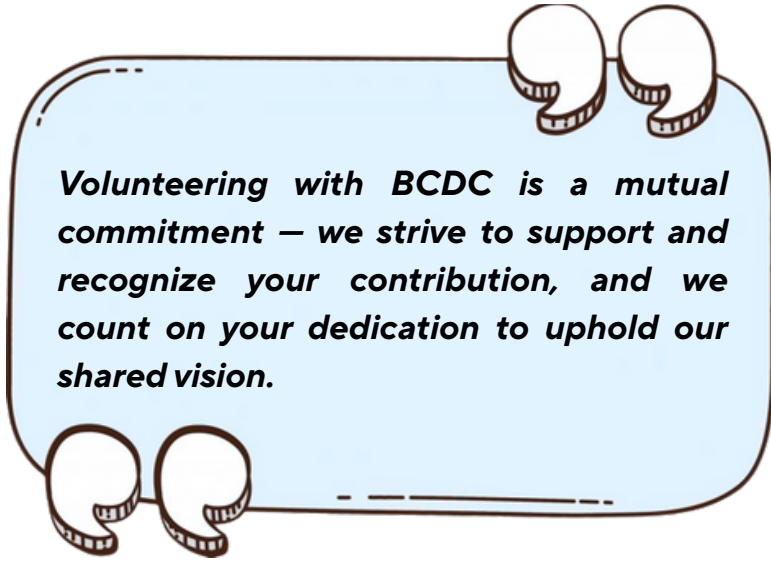
## Purpose of This Manual

This Volunteer Manual is designed to support your journey with BCDC. It explains:

- What you can expect as a volunteer
- The values and responsibilities we ask you to uphold
- Key policies and safeguards in place for your safety and the safety of those we serve
- Operational guidance for a successful, respectful, and rewarding experience

All volunteers are expected to:

- Understand and uphold BCDC's Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policies
- Comply with the laws, standards, and principles outlined in this manual
- Reflect our organizational values of respect, inclusion, accountability, and community-led action



***Volunteering with BCDC is a mutual commitment – we strive to support and recognize your contribution, and we count on your dedication to uphold our shared vision.***

## 2. ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

### Who We Are

The **Burmese Community Development Collaboration (BCDC)** is a community-based, not-for-profit organization founded to support the needs of Burmese diaspora and culturally diverse communities in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. We are registered in Australia and operate in alignment with national legal obligations, the ACFID Code of Conduct, and the principles of inclusive community development.

### Our Vision

A thriving, inclusive society where individuals and communities from diverse and displaced backgrounds are empowered to live with dignity, security, and opportunity.

### Our Mission

To deliver community-led programs that strengthen the wellbeing, capacity, and rights of marginalized people—especially those affected by displacement, inequality, and crisis.

### Our Core Values

- **Respect** – for human dignity, cultural identity, and lived experience
- **Inclusion** – of all people regardless of background, gender, religion, or ability
- **Accountability** – to the communities we serve, our supporters, and one another
- **Solidarity** – with those experiencing injustice, oppression, or exclusion
- **Integrity** – in everything we do: transparent, ethical, and mission-focused
- **Community-led Development** – listening to and working with people, not for them

*Volunteers are integrated into this structure as active contributors to our programs, operations, and community engagement.*

## Our Areas of Work

BCDC works across several key sectors:

- **Humanitarian Response** – Supporting refugees and displaced persons from Myanmar and elsewhere
- **Settlement Services** – Assisting newly arrived migrants and refugees with integration and access to services
- **Aged Care and Home Support** – Providing culturally safe care and support for older people in the community
- **Youth and Family Support** – Engaging youth in education, mentoring, and community connection
- **Education and Training** – Offering language support, skill-building, and leadership development
- **Community Advocacy and Events** – Promoting cultural exchange, reconciliation, and social justice

## Our Governance

BCDC is governed by a Board of Directors and supported by staff, advisors, and volunteers.

We are accountable to:

- Our community members and program participants
- Australian legal and regulatory bodies (e.g. ACNC, ASIC)
- Partner organizations and donors
- ACFID's Code of Conduct (for ethical and effective development)

## 3. VOLUNTEER ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS

### 3.1 Role of Volunteers at BCDC

Volunteers are central to BCDC's work. They bring skills, energy, and cultural insight that expand our reach and strengthen our impact. Whether supporting aged care visits, helping at events, translating for newcomers, mentoring youth, or contributing to administration and communication, volunteers help BCDC stay grounded in community needs.

We recognize that volunteers are **not unpaid staff**, but unique contributors whose time and effort deserve clear guidance, respect, and recognition.

### 3.2 Types of Volunteer Roles

Depending on your skills, availability, and interests, BCDC offers opportunities across the following areas:

- **Aged Care and Home Support** – assisting with home visits, transport, and social support
- **Community Events** – helping set up, host, and coordinate multicultural celebrations, workshops, or forums
- **Youth and Education Programs** – tutoring, mentoring, or supervising learning activities
- **Administration and Office Support** – helping with data entry, reception, printing, and filing
- **Translation and Interpretation** – supporting communication for Burmese and other CALD communities
- **Fundraising and Outreach** – promoting events or campaigns, distributing materials
- **Emergency and Crisis Response** – supporting food and care deliveries (especially during emergencies)
- **Community Development Projects** – supporting long-term initiatives or advocacy campaigns

### 3.3 What BCDC Expects from Volunteers

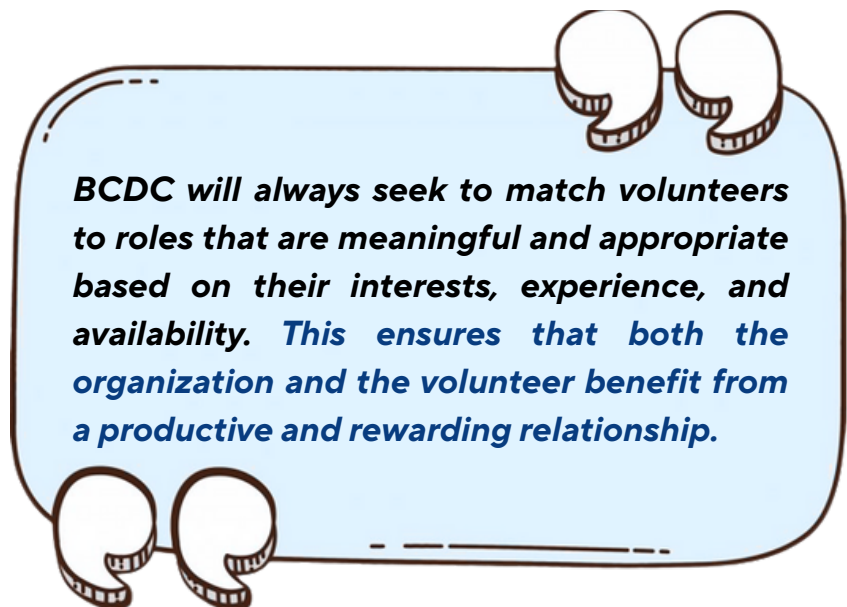
All BCDC volunteers are expected to:

- Support and uphold BCDC’s mission, values, and Code of Conduct
- Treat all staff, community members, and fellow volunteers with dignity and respect
- Commit to your agreed volunteer schedule and notify your supervisor of changes or absences
- Maintain confidentiality regarding any personal or sensitive information you encounter
- Report any risks, incidents, or safeguarding concerns promptly to your coordinator
- Follow BCDC’s policies and procedures, including health and safety protocols
- Avoid any behavior that may bring the organization or its work into disrepute

### 3.4 What Volunteers Can Expect from BCDC

As a volunteer, you can expect:

- A respectful, inclusive, and safe environment
- A clear role description and orientation
- A point of contact for supervision and support
- Reasonable access to training relevant to your role
- Recognition of your contribution and opportunities to provide feedback
- Protection under BCDC’s insurance, safeguarding, and complaints handling policies



## 4. VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

BCDC is committed to recruiting volunteers in a fair, inclusive, and safeguarding-compliant manner. Our recruitment process ensures that volunteers are appropriately matched, supported, and integrated into roles that are meaningful and aligned with both organizational and community needs.

### 4.1 Recruitment Principles

Volunteer recruitment at BCDC is guided by the following principles:

- **Equal Opportunity** – All individuals are encouraged to apply, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, language, sexual orientation, or disability.
- **Transparency** – Roles will be clearly described, and expectations shared in advance.
- **Safeguarding and Safety** – Volunteers must undergo screening appropriate to the level of risk and responsibility involved.
- **Community-Led Focus** – Where possible, volunteers with lived experience or connections to the communities we serve are prioritized.

### 4.2 Application Process

Volunteers may be recruited through public advertisements, community referrals, events, or organizational networks. The general steps include:

1. **Application Submission** – via form, email, or in person
2. **Initial Interview or Meeting** – to understand interests, availability, and suitability
3. **Reference Check** – for some roles, personal or professional referees may be contacted
4. **Risk Assessment** – based on the nature of the volunteer role
5. **Safeguarding and Police Checks** – as required (see 4.4)
6. **Acceptance and Role Matching** – if mutually agreed, the volunteer will be onboarded

BCDC reserves the right to decline or defer a volunteer placement where it is not suitable or safe to proceed.

### 4.3 Working with Children and Vulnerable People

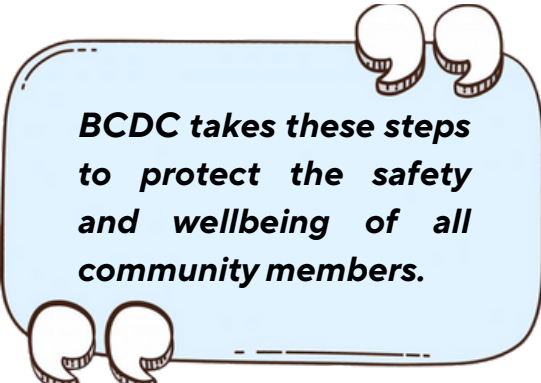
If your role involves direct contact with children, elderly persons, or individuals at risk, you may be required to:

- Provide a current **Working With Children Check (WWCC)**
- Undergo a **National Police Check**
- Declare any prior offences or disciplinary findings related to abuse, harassment, or misconduct
- Sign and commit to BCDC's **Code of Conduct** and **Safeguarding Policy**

### 4.4 Role Agreement

Once accepted, volunteers will:

- Be provided with a clear Role Description
- Sign a Volunteer Agreement outlining responsibilities, rights, and expectations
- Complete the required Policy Sign-Off Form to acknowledge receipt of key policies
- Be assigned a supervisor or coordinator for ongoing support



***BCDC takes these steps  
to protect the safety  
and wellbeing of all  
community members.***

## 5. ORIENTATION, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT

BCDC is committed to equipping volunteers with the knowledge, resources, and guidance they need to contribute safely, effectively, and confidently. We believe that strong orientation and ongoing support are essential for a positive volunteer experience.

### 5.1 Orientation

All new volunteers will receive a structured orientation to:

- Introduce BCDC’s history, mission, and areas of work
- Explain the role of volunteers within the organization
- Review BCDC’s key policies, including:
  - Code of Conduct
  - Child Safeguarding and PSEAH (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment)
  - Complaints Handling
  - Workplace Health and Safety
- Clarify expectations, working arrangements, and supervision
- Familiarize the volunteer with their assigned role and location

Volunteers will also be provided with:

- A copy of the **Volunteer Manual**
- Their **Role Description**
- A **point of contact** for questions and support

### 5.2 Required Policy Sign-Off

All volunteers must complete a **Policy Sign-Off Form**, confirming that they have:

- Read and understood the Volunteer Manual and key organizational policies
- Committed to upholding BCDC’s Code of Conduct and Safeguarding responsibilities
- Declared any relevant criminal history (where required)

This form will be kept in the volunteer’s personnel file for accountability and compliance.

## 5.3 Training

Depending on your role, you may be invited or required to attend additional training in areas such as:

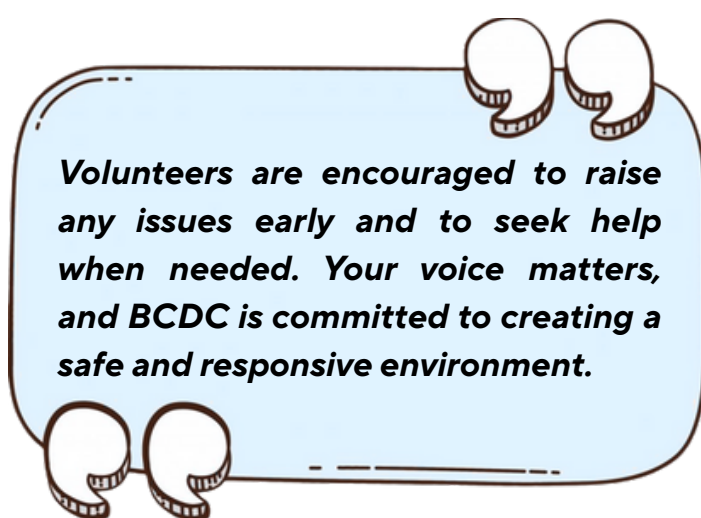
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Working with elderly or vulnerable persons
- Cultural competence and inclusion
- Effective communication and community engagement
- Event coordination or logistics
- Emergency procedures and first aid (if relevant)

Training may be delivered in person or online and is free of charge to volunteers.

## 5.4 Ongoing Supervision and Support

All volunteers will be assigned a **supervisor or coordinator** who is responsible for:

- Providing day-to-day guidance and support
- Answering questions or concerns
- Monitoring wellbeing and satisfaction
- Offering feedback and recognition



***Volunteers are encouraged to raise any issues early and to seek help when needed. Your voice matters, and BCDC is committed to creating a safe and responsive environment.***

## 6. VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BCDC recognizes and values the important contributions of its volunteers. We are committed to ensuring a respectful, safe, and supportive environment where volunteers feel empowered and appreciated. In return, volunteers are expected to uphold the values and standards that guide BCDC's work.

### 6.1 Volunteer Rights

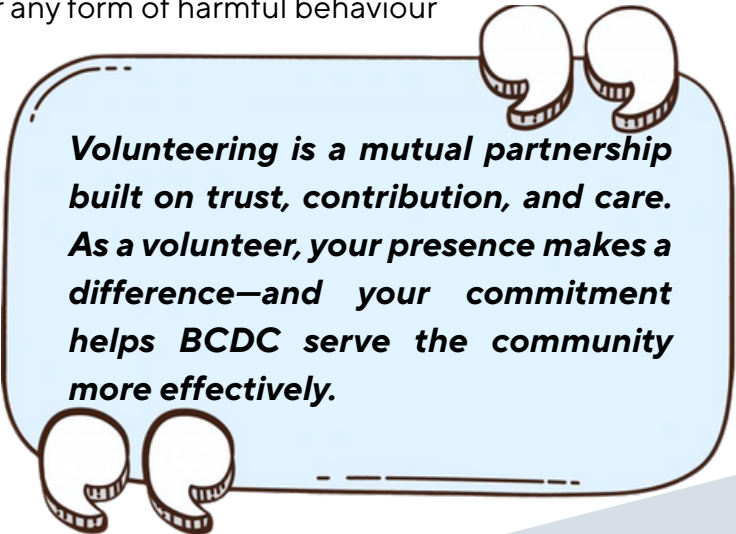
As a BCDC volunteer, you have the right to:

- Be treated with respect, dignity, and fairness
- Work in a safe, inclusive, and culturally sensitive environment
- Receive a clear role description and adequate training for your duties
- Be supervised and supported in your volunteer role
- Raise concerns or lodge complaints without fear of discrimination or reprisal
- Be protected under BCDC's Code of Conduct, safeguarding, and insurance policies
- Say "no" to tasks you are not comfortable with or trained for
- Receive recognition and thanks for your contribution
- Request feedback and participate in volunteer evaluations
- End your volunteer engagement at any time (with notice if possible)

### 6.2 Volunteer Responsibilities

As a BCDC volunteer, you are expected to:

- Support BCDC's mission, values, and organisational goals
- Perform your assigned role to the best of your ability
- Comply with BCDC's Code of Conduct and all relevant policies
- Maintain confidentiality and protect sensitive information
- Be punctual and reliable, or inform your supervisor of any changes in availability
- Treat clients, staff, and fellow volunteers with kindness and respect
- Avoid discrimination, harassment, or any form of harmful behaviour
- Follow safety instructions and report any risks or incidents
- Act in a way that upholds BCDC's reputation in the community
- Seek guidance when unsure and contribute positively to the team



***Volunteering is a mutual partnership built on trust, contribution, and care. As a volunteer, your presence makes a difference—and your commitment helps BCDC serve the community more effectively.***

## 7. CODE OF CONDUCT AND SAFEGUARDING

As a volunteer with BCDC, you represent not only the organization, but also the values and trust we hold with our communities. All volunteers must uphold the highest standards of behavior and commit to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for everyone—especially children, elderly persons, and vulnerable individuals.

### 7.1 Code of Conduct

All BCDC volunteers are required to read and sign the **BCDC Code of Conduct**, which outlines standards of ethical and professional behavior.

By agreeing to the Code of Conduct, you commit to:

- Acting honestly, respectfully, and with cultural sensitivity
- Avoiding any behavior that is discriminatory, exploitative, harassing, or abusive
- Maintaining professional boundaries at all times
- Using BCDC resources and information appropriately
- Upholding the dignity and rights of every person you interact with
- Reporting any conduct that may breach the Code or put others at risk

Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including removal from your volunteer role.

### 7.2 Safeguarding Commitment

BCDC has a **zero tolerance policy** for all forms of abuse, exploitation, or harassment. We are especially committed to protecting:

- **Children and young people**
- **People with disability or limited decision-making capacity**
- **Elderly persons**
- **Refugees and individuals at risk of trauma or discrimination**

All volunteers must:

- Comply with BCDC's **Child Safeguarding Policy** and **PSEAH Policy** (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment)
- Immediately report any suspected abuse, risk, or boundary violation to their supervisor or safeguarding focal point
- Avoid taking or sharing photos of program participants without prior consent
- Never engage in romantic, sexual, or exploitative relationships with program participants

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Your awareness and action can protect lives.

*Raising a concern in good faith will never result in punishment or retaliation. BCDC values honesty, transparency, and protection above silence.*

### 7.3 Reporting Concerns

Volunteers must report any suspected misconduct, safeguarding breach, or unethical behavior through:

- Their **supervisor or program coordinator**
- BCDC's **Complaints Handling Procedure**
- The **Whistleblower Protection Mechanism** (if anonymity is needed)

## 8. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND INSURANCE

BCDC is committed to ensuring that all volunteers can carry out their duties in a safe, healthy, and secure environment. Your wellbeing is a priority, and we aim to minimise risks through proper planning, communication, and support.

### 8.1 Work Health and Safety (WHS)

BCDC complies with the **Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)** and relevant state legislation to provide a safe working environment.

As a volunteer, you have the right to:

- Work in an environment free from foreseeable risk
- Receive appropriate safety training and instructions
- Use equipment and resources that are maintained and safe
- Be informed of hazards or emergency procedures relevant to your role

You also have the responsibility to:

- Follow safety instructions and organizational procedures
- Immediately report any hazards, injuries, or unsafe situations to your supervisor
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) if required
- Not engage in behavior that could endanger yourself or others

### 8.2 Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

BCDC recognizes that volunteering can involve emotional or social challenges, especially when working with vulnerable people. We encourage all volunteers to:

- Look after their own wellbeing
- Set boundaries and ask for help when needed
- Speak with their supervisor if feeling overwhelmed, unsafe, or unsupported
- Access mental health or counselling support when necessary (referrals may be provided)

Your wellbeing matters. BCDC is here to support you—not just in your tasks, but in your health and safety.

### 8.3 Incident Reporting

All accidents, injuries, or near misses—no matter how minor—must be reported immediately to your supervisor. This ensures:

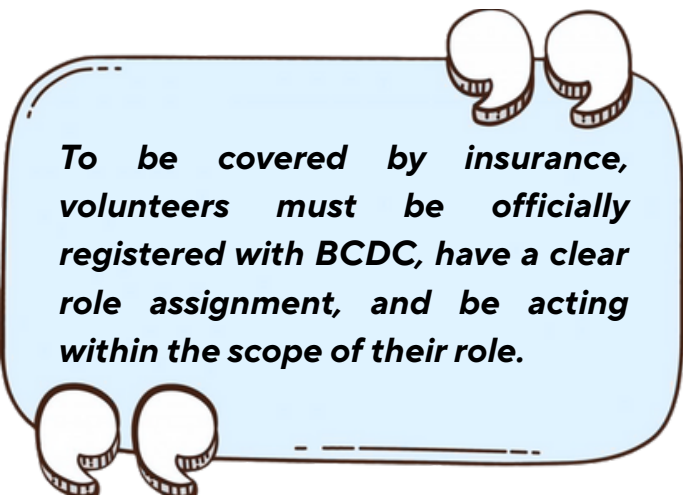
- Proper support or medical care is provided
- The incident is recorded and reviewed
- Preventive action is taken to reduce future risks

BCDC maintains an Incident Report Form and ensures incidents are handled confidentially and responsibly.

### 8.4 Volunteer Insurance

All registered volunteers are covered under BCDC's **Volunteer Insurance Policy**, which may include:

- **Personal accident cover** (limited to specific injuries sustained during volunteer work)
- **Public liability** and **professional indemnity** (where applicable)
- **Travel cover** for approved roles involving movement between sites or events



*To be covered by insurance, volunteers must be officially registered with BCDC, have a clear role assignment, and be acting within the scope of their role.*

## 9. GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION AND COMPLAINTS

At BCDC, we believe that a respectful, inclusive, and safe environment begins with open communication. Volunteers have the right to raise concerns, make complaints, or report unacceptable behavior without fear of retaliation. We are committed to addressing all grievances promptly, fairly, and confidentially.

### 9.1 What Is a Grievance?

A grievance is any concern, problem, or complaint that a volunteer wishes to raise about:

- The behavior or actions of another volunteer, staff member, or supervisor
- Unfair treatment or exclusion
- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying
- Safety concerns or unacceptable work conditions
- Breaches of BCDC's Code of Conduct or policies

Grievances can be raised formally or informally, and may relate to personal experiences or observed incidents.

### 9.2 How to Raise a Concern

If you have a concern, we encourage you to take the following steps:

#### 1. Informal Discussion

Where possible and appropriate, raise the concern directly with the person involved or your supervisor.

#### 2. Speak to a Supervisor or Coordinator

If the matter is unresolved or serious, report the issue to your program coordinator or designated volunteer supervisor.

#### 3. Formal Complaint

If the issue is sensitive or not resolved informally, you may submit a **formal written complaint** through BCDC's **Complaints Handling Process**.

#### 4. Whistleblower Protection

If you believe the concern involves serious misconduct, fraud, exploitation, or harm—and you fear reprisal—you can report anonymously through BCDC's **Whistleblower Protection mechanism**



***Raising concerns is not complaining—it's a responsible action that helps BCDC grow stronger and safer for everyone.***

### **9.3 What You Can Expect**

- Your concern will be taken seriously and handled promptly
- You will be treated with respect and kept informed of the process
- Your identity will be kept confidential, unless you consent otherwise or the law requires disclosure
- You will not be victimised or disadvantaged for making a complaint in good faith
- Support will be made available to help you navigate the process

### **9.4 If You Witness Misconduct**

If you observe misconduct or behavior that may harm another person or BCDC's integrity (e.g. abuse, fraud, bullying, discrimination, or breaches of safeguarding policies), you must report it immediately. BCDC relies on the vigilance and honesty of volunteers to protect its people and uphold community trust.

## 10. ENDING OR CHANGING YOUR VOLUNTEER ROLE

Volunteering is a flexible, mutual commitment. BCDC understands that circumstances, availability, or interests may change over time. Whether you decide to take a break, switch roles, or conclude your volunteer service, we are here to support a smooth and respectful transition.

### 10.1 Ending Your Volunteer Role

You may choose to end your volunteer involvement at any time. We ask that you:

- Notify your supervisor or coordinator as early as possible
- Provide at least one week's notice, where feasible
- Complete any final tasks or handovers if required
- Participate in a brief exit conversation or feedback session

Your feedback is important—it helps us improve volunteer experiences and strengthen our programs.

### 10.2 Changing Your Role

If your interests or skills evolve, or if your current role is no longer suitable, you are welcome to:

- Request a change in responsibilities
- Apply for a new volunteer role
- Temporarily pause your involvement and return at a later time

BCDC will do its best to accommodate your preferences and reassign you to a role that better fits your availability or aspirations.

### 10.3 Conclusion of Engagement by BCDC

In some cases, BCDC may decide to end a volunteer engagement. This could be due to:

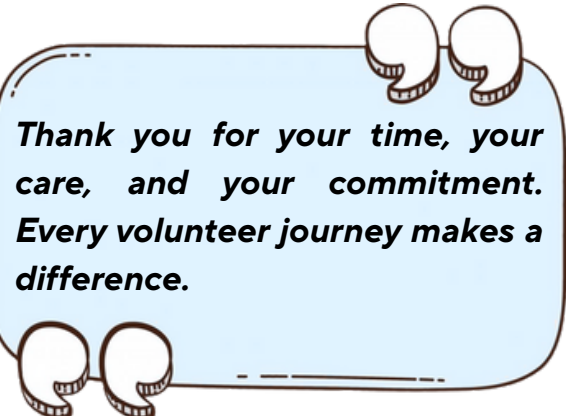
- Program or funding changes
- Misalignment with organizational needs or values
- Breach of policy, Code of Conduct, or safety procedures
- Concerns regarding safeguarding or behavior

In these cases, the volunteer will be informed clearly and respectfully, and given the opportunity to respond or provide feedback.

## 10.4 Ongoing Connection

Even after your role ends, we welcome you to stay connected with BCDC as:

- An event supporter or community advocate
- A future volunteer or mentor
- A valuable part of our extended family of contributors



***Thank you for your time, your care, and your commitment. Every volunteer journey makes a difference.***

## 11. CONCLUSION

Volunteering with BCDC is not just about giving time – it’s about joining a collective movement grounded in compassion, dignity, justice, and community empowerment. Whether you support an event, visit an elder, assist with admin tasks, or help advocate for the rights of displaced people, your contribution matters deeply.

This Volunteer Manual is intended to guide and support you as you engage with BCDC’s programs and people. It outlines your rights, responsibilities, and the standards we hold ourselves to as a values-driven organization.

We believe that volunteers thrive when:

- They are respected and supported
- Their time and talents are valued
- They feel connected to something greater than themselves

As you begin or continue your journey with us, we thank you for choosing to stand alongside BCDC and the communities we serve. We hope your experience will be meaningful, rewarding, and empowering – for both you and those whose lives you help change.



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