

Introduction

Due to their presence in the community and the nature of their service in the meetings, volunteers will come into contact with people of different ages, countries, and backgrounds. In order to ensure safety and wellbeing for everyone that comes to Taizé, it is important that volunteers know which guidelines to follow. The intention of this document is not to impose a sense of control or observation, but to outline volunteers' responsibilities. They are often leaders of groups, and therefore have an influence, both positive and negative, on whomever they are in contact with. It is important to be aware that even when acting with good intentions, some behaviour can still be harmful. In addition to this code of conduct, volunteers are required to be aware of safeguarding reporting procedures.

General Behaviour Guidelines

Volunteers are seen as representatives of the Community of Taizé. They must contribute towards an atmosphere in which all, regardless of their background, culture, or age, are treated with respect. Some behaviours, while not illegal, are inappropriate for this setting.

- It is important to ensure that everyone's emotional safety is respected.
- Create a healthy working environment in which tasks are not imposed. Be ready to explain the tasks and give participants the ability to perform tasks they are comfortable with.
- Take seriously others' opinions and treat them with respect and empathy. Do not initiate, allow, or ignore instances of bullying, peer pressure, or humiliation.
- Over time, a joke can be hurtful if it's directed repeatedly to the same person. Be attentive that no bullying takes place in any group.
- Try to always be in view of others, avoid being alone with someone in closed spaces.
- Use appropriate language for the ages with which you are in contact.
- Sexist, racist, and violent words or actions are not tolerated in any way.
- Do not use sexually suggestive language or be sexually suggestive towards or about anyone. Do not tolerate any behaviour of this kind.
- Avoid practices such as smoking or drinking alcohol during the times of sharing and service. Illegal substances have no place in Taizé at any time.
- Definitions of appropriate physical contact can vary between different cultures. Always ensure that everyone is comfortable in the way you interact physically, being mindful of others' boundaries and consent.
- The use of violence or physical punishment is never acceptable.
- Social media should be used responsibly, making sure that nobody feels pressured to share their contact information. Ensure all the persons present in a picture, video, or recording are aware and have given their consent, even if it is not intended to be shared online.
- If there are situations or conflicts that cannot be resolved yourself, don't hesitate to bring up the issue to a group leader or the brother/sister/employee responsible.

Minors (people under the age of 18)

Volunteers may come into contact with minors who are also taking part in meetings in Taizé. Therefore, additional guidelines apply:

- It is especially important to try to always be in view of others when interacting with minors.
- Touch should not be initiated by the volunteer, unless someone is at risk. If possible, ask permission before.
- Never seek or initiate a romantic or sexual relationship with minors.
- Do not take pictures or videos of minors with your personal devices. Do not upload photos or videos of minors to social media.
- Do not ask for or accept any e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, social media/instant messaging usernames, numbers, handles etc. belonging to a minor. Do not make or accept invitations on social media.

Brothers, Sisters, Employees

The General Behaviour Guidelines above apply to interactions with brothers, sisters, employees and those working in Taizé in a professional capacity.

- Volunteers recognise and respect that the brothers of Taizé and the sisters who live there have committed themselves to celibacy in religious life.
- Recognise that younger brothers and sisters are not volunteers but have a different place and role in the meetings.
- Brothers, sisters, and employees also have a responsibility to the volunteers. It is important that a relationship of mutual respect is maintained. Volunteers have the responsibility to report any concern, whether it has to do with them personally or with anyone else.

Volunteers and Community Life

The General Behaviour Guidelines above also apply to interactions between volunteers. Volunteers share daily life with one another and will form deeper friendships and community. In this context, it is important to deal with personal issues with other volunteers in a respectful way. Rumours, public shaming or gossiping can lead to unhealthy group dynamics. For more information, see also the Charter for volunteers, section B: "Common life in the groups and life in Taizé in general".

- Volunteers can keep in touch, if they wish, through group chats or social media, but Taizé does not request so when becoming a volunteer. Make sure nobody feels expected or obliged to join any group chats in order to receive information that concerns common life or the service. Make sure that information is communicated also in other ways so that no one feels excluded.
- After departure from Taizé, volunteers should quit group chats that are used to communicate information which only concerns volunteers who are still in Taizé.



I have read and understood the Code of Conduct for volunteers. I have shown to the brothers/sisters in charge of the volunteers a Police Records Check OR a Recommendation letter OR the completed Confidential Declaration Form. I wish to share in the responsibility for keeping Taizé as safe a place as possible for all who live, work and visit. I agree to live and behave in this way during my time as a volunteer for the Taizé Community.

Place, date :

Name:

Signature: