

## Resolving Differences Policy

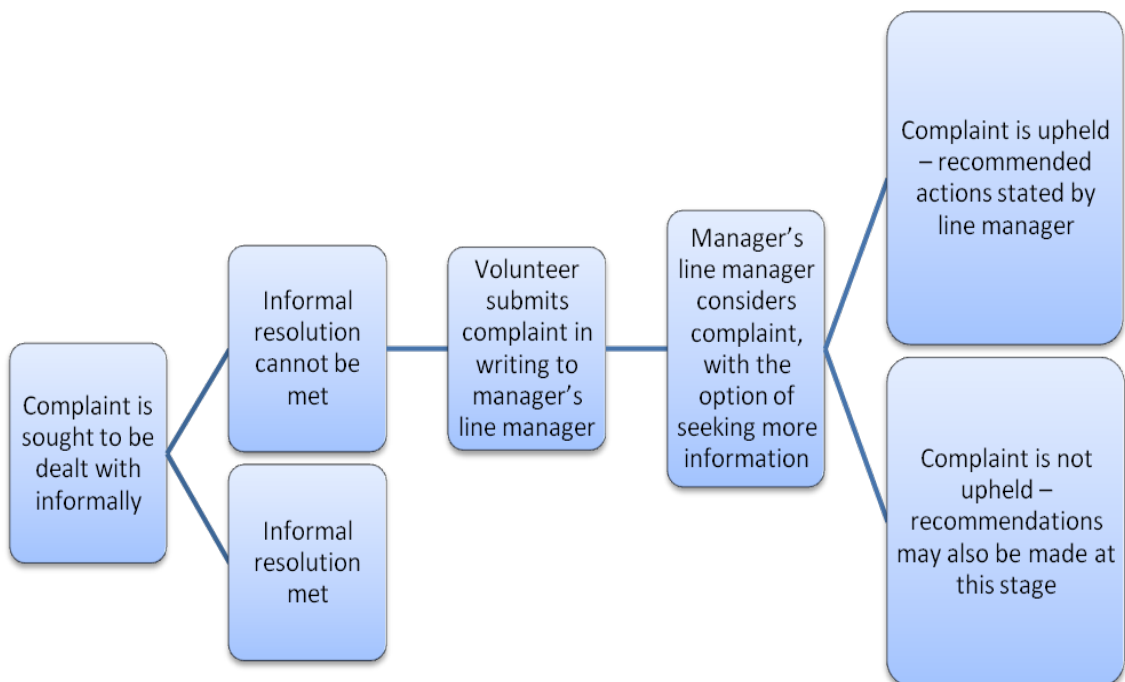
### 1. Complaints from volunteers

If the tenets of Oxfam's Volunteer Policy are not being met during a volunteer's time with Oxfam, then the volunteer can make a complaint. Volunteers can also complain about wider issues that impact their volunteering or are connected with the wider organisation. Volunteers' complaints will only be considered if the volunteer is still actively volunteering with Oxfam.

#### **Volunteers' complaints about their manager**

If a volunteer has a complaint about their manager, they should firstly seek to resolve this informally. This may take the form of a private conversation/s in which concerns are discussed, and resolutions are explored and agreed to. If this is not possible, or is tried and is unsuccessful, then the following process should be adhered to:

- i) The volunteer should submit their complaint, in writing, to their manager's manager
- ii) The line manager will consider the complaint and may request further information from any parties involved in order to do this
- iii) The line manager will make a decision about whether or not to uphold the complaint, and may make recommendations about changes to process or behaviour to any party involved, regardless of the outcome
- iv) The line manager will write to the volunteer to let them know the outcome of their complaint, where possible, within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint.



**Volunteers' complaints about other team members**

If a volunteer has a complaint about a member of the team, other than their manager, then they should discuss this with the team manager. The team manager should try to resolve the issue informally. If it is not possible to resolve the issue informally, the manager may use the process detailed below in the section 'Management Issues with Volunteers'.

**Other complaints from volunteers**

If a volunteer has a complaint about an Oxfam policy, or a any other team in Oxfam, then they should submit their complaint to the Shop Support Team in the Trading Division, who will process it according to their complaints policy.

**Anonymous complaints and complaints on behalf of others**

Anonymous complaints and complaints made on the behalf of others will not usually be considered, unless they concern a situation which presents a serious risk to the health or wellbeing of an individual or individuals. Concerns can also be raised through Oxfam's Disclosure of Malpractice Policy, however, this policy also cannot guarantee that anonymous complaints will be considered.

## 2. Management issues with volunteers

As stated in Oxfam's Volunteer Policy, volunteers are expected to carry out their volunteering within the terms agreed, within the law and the organisation's policies and procedures, and to act within Oxfam's standards of behaviour. Oxfam can withdraw the offer to volunteer if the relationship has broken down.

### Informal resolution

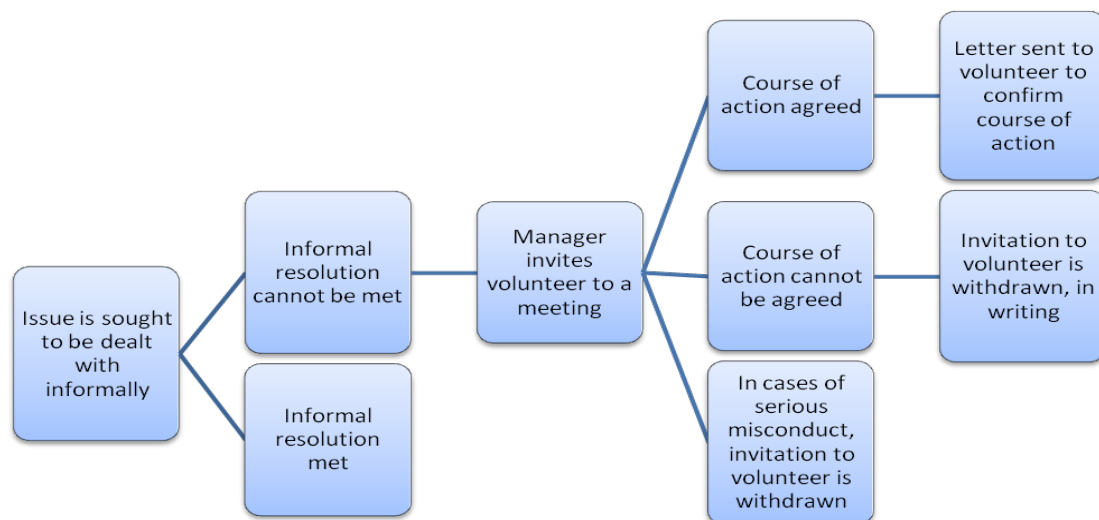
Oxfam encourages all management issues with volunteers to be resolved informally wherever possible. Informal resolution can take the form of a private conversation/s, where the manager and volunteer agree to actions, behaviours or standards that will resolve the situation.

There are some very few instances where initial recourse to informal resolution is not appropriate. These would typically involve serious cases of gross misconduct, including cases where a volunteer poses a threat to the health and wellbeing of Oxfam's employees or volunteers or where there is an incidence of theft, although these examples are not intended to be exhaustive.

### Formal process – timescales and actions

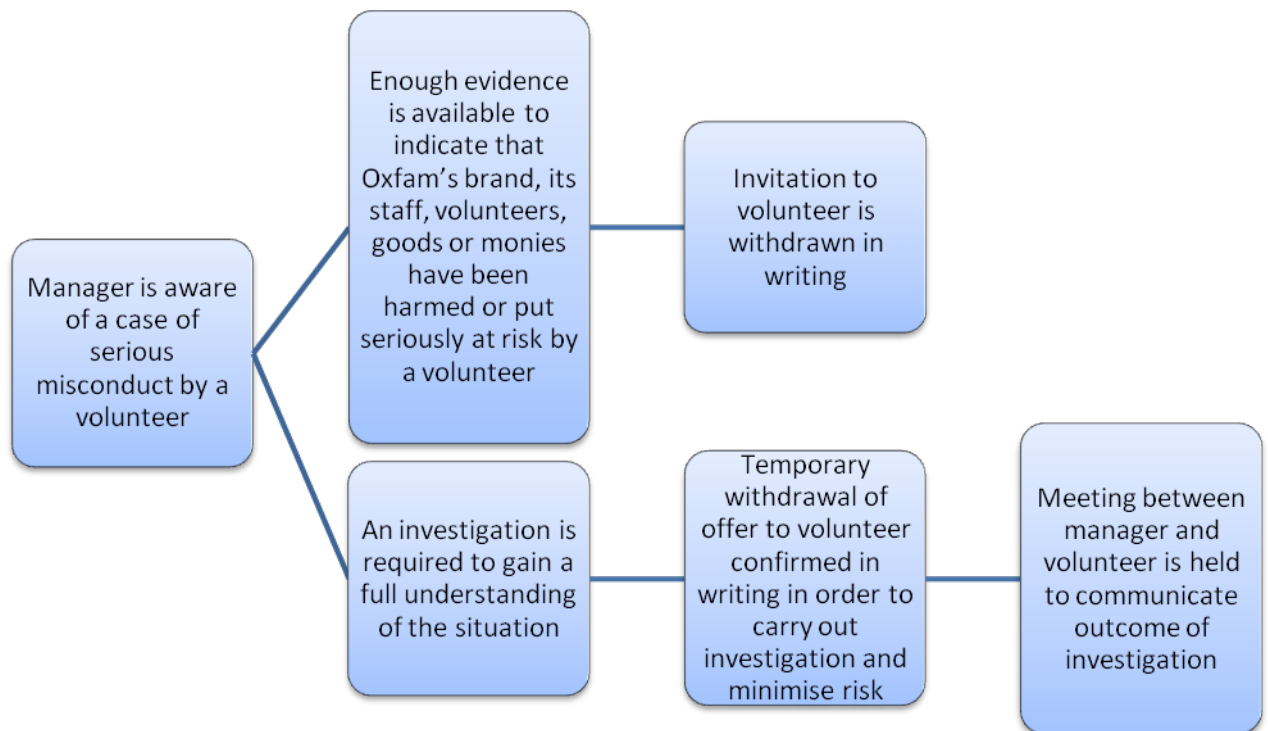
If informal conversations have taken place between the manager and the volunteer and no resolution has been found, the volunteer's manager may choose to follow this formal process:

- i) Write to the volunteer giving at least 5 working days' notice, outlining the issue and arranging for a meeting to discuss the issue, at which the volunteer should be given the option of bringing someone to accompany them
- ii) The manager may ask for someone to join them for the meeting, either another manager, or HR advisor, and this person should take notes
- iii) The aim of the meeting should be to agree a course of action that will resolve the issue, except for in cases of gross misconduct, where the meeting can be used to withdraw the invitation to volunteer where sufficient proof of misconduct is available
- iv) If agreeing a course of action to address the issue is not possible, the invitation to volunteer may be withdrawn
- v) If the invitation to volunteer is being withdrawn, then this should be put in writing and sent to the volunteer, where possible, no more than 10 working days after the meeting
- vi) If a course of action has been agreed, then the agreed actions should be sent, in writing, to the volunteer, within no more than 10 working days of the meeting



### Serious misconduct and temporary withdrawal of the invitation to volunteer

In some instances, such as those involving suspected serious misconduct, including harassment, assault, discrimination or theft, it may be necessary for a manager to request that one or more volunteers refrain from volunteering with immediate effect, in order for the manager to carry out an investigation. The manager will write to the volunteer to notify them of the temporary withdrawal of the invitation to volunteer, the reasons for it, and detailing next steps in the process.



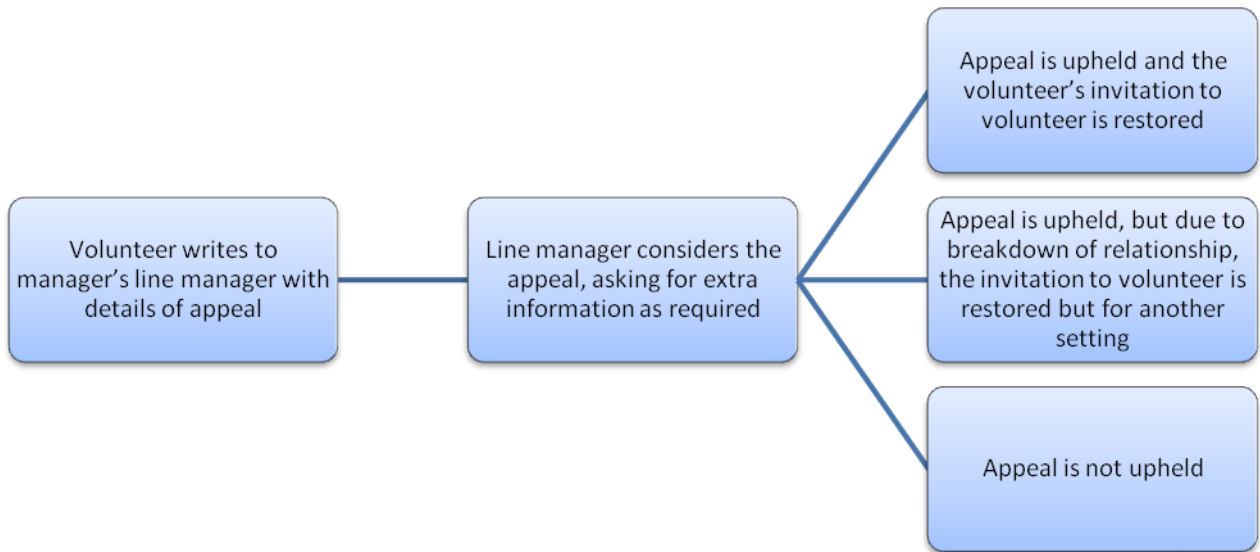
### Appeal process

If the invitation to volunteer has been withdrawn for any reason, and the volunteer is unhappy with this decision, then they can appeal to their manager's line manager, following this process:

- i) The grounds for appeal must be put in writing by the volunteer and sent to their manager's line manager, within 10 working days of the decision they are appealing against being received.
- ii) The manager's line manager may request further information from any parties involved in order to consider the appeal
- iii) The manager will make a decision about whether or not to uphold the appeal, and may make recommendations about changes to process or behaviour to any party involved as part of this process
- iv) The manager will write to the volunteer to let them know the outcome of the appeal, where possible, within 10 working days of receiving the appeal.
- v) The appeal manager's decision is final.

In some rare instances, the manager's line manager may have become materially involved in the situation before the appeal stage is reached. In these instances, someone of the same or equivalent role, should be selected to consider the appeal.

In some instances, if the appeal is upheld but the relationship between the manager and volunteer is deemed to have broken down, the appeal manager may recommend that the volunteer be invited to volunteer in an alternative setting.



### **Formal process – roles and responsibilities**

#### **Accompaniment at meetings**

If a volunteer brings someone to accompany them to a meeting, the role of this individual will be to provide support to the volunteer, but not to answer questions for them or determine the route of proceedings.

#### **HR Advisor**

Oxfam's HR advisors are neutral and impartial and work in strict confidentiality. Their role is to ensure that there is a fair and transparent process which is adhered to by all volunteers and employees.