

Managing Allegations Against Volunteers

Statement of Intent

This is the Managing Allegations Against Volunteers Policy Statement of the:

Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam (Registered Charity no. NIC107983)

The Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam Trustee Board is committed to maintaining a safe and trusted environment for all attendees, particularly children and young people. It recognises that allegations against volunteers must be taken seriously and managed fairly, confidentially, and in line with safeguarding best practices and legal obligations.

All concerns or allegations will be assessed promptly by the Designated Safeguarding Officer, or by the Trustee Board if the allegation involves the DSO. The safety and welfare of participants will always be the primary concern. Volunteers have the right to be treated fairly and supported throughout any investigation process.

Where necessary, allegations will be referred to statutory authorities, and volunteers may be suspended from duties while investigations take place. If allegations are substantiated, appropriate action will be taken, including removal from volunteering duties and the charity's membership body in line with the constitution.

This policy applies to all volunteers and trustees involved in the Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam's activities.

Signature of Chair:



Name: James Dougan
Email: james.dougan@niraspberryjam.com
Date of Signature: 04/04/2025

Signature of DSO:



Name: Adam Cunningham
Email: adam.cunningham@niraspberryjam.com
Date of Signature: 04/04/2025

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam is committed to ensuring a safe environment for all participants of its events. This policy sets out the procedure for managing allegations against volunteers to protect both attendees and volunteers.

Principles

- Allegations will be taken seriously and handled promptly, fairly and confidentiality.
- The welfare of children and young people is the primary concern.
- Volunteers have the right to be treated fairly and supported throughout the process.

Reporting an Allegation

- Any concerns or allegations should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).
- If the allegation involves the DSO, it should be reported to the board of trustees.

Initial Response

- The DSO will assess the allegation and determine the next steps.
- If necessary, the matter will be referred to the statutory authorities for example: social services or the police.
- The accused volunteer(s) may be temporarily suspended from duties pending an investigation.
- The Board of Trustees may ask any accused trustee(s) not to attend meetings relating to this pending an investigation. The trustees shall endeavour to bring a constitutional amendment to permit the board to temporarily suspend trustee(s) pending an investigation.

Investigation Process

- Investigations will be carried out in line with safeguarding guidelines and relevant laws.
- The accused will be given the opportunity to respond to allegations in an appropriate setting.
- A record of all proceedings will be maintained in a professional manner.

Outcomes and Actions

- If the allegation is substantiated, appropriate action will be taken, including, but not limited to the termination of volunteering duties and referral to the relevant authorities if applicable. The Trustees shall also remove the said person(s) from the Membership body of the charity under section 6.3 of the constitution. (This will also lead to them to cease holding office as a Trustee if they're a trustee)
- If the allegation is unsubstantiated, support will be offered to the volunteer(s) to return to their role if appropriate.
- False allegations made in bad faith may be addressed through appropriate procedures.

Support and Confidentiality

- Support will be provided to both the alleged victim(s) and the accused volunteer(s).
- Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process, with information shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to any significant changes in the safeguarding legislation.

For further guidance, contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).