

YMCA Ireland Wellbeing Charter

Rooted in our values of Wellbeing, Welcome, Opportunity, and Peace & Justice.

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Foreward

At YMCA Ireland, our people are at the heart of everything we do. Every day, staff and volunteers bring commitment, compassion, and professionalism to their work with young people and communities across the island of Ireland. That work can be deeply rewarding, but it can also be demanding, and it is vital that we take care of one another along the way.

This Wellbeing Charter reflects our shared commitment to creating a culture where wellbeing is genuinely valued and supported. Rooted in our core values of Wellbeing, Welcome, Opportunity, and Peace & Justice, it recognises that people do their best work when they feel safe, respected, included, and able to thrive.

This Wellbeing Charter is grounded in the YMCA tradition of nurturing the whole person - Body, Mind and Spirit — and translates that founding principle into how we support, lead, and care for our staff and volunteers across YMCA Ireland.

This Charter is not about adding pressure or expectation. It is about recognising the importance of everyday actions, supportive relationships, and fair, compassionate leadership. It builds on the structures already in place across YMCA Ireland, including access to wellbeing supports, training, chaplaincy, and local wellbeing leadership, and it reinforces our intention to continue listening, learning, and improving together.

We encourage everyone across the YMCA movement to engage with this Charter in a way that feels meaningful to them. Wellbeing is a shared responsibility, and by living our values in how we work with and support one another, we strengthen not only our organisation, but the communities we serve.

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What Wellbeing Means at YMCA Ireland

Wellbeing at YMCA Ireland is holistic and inclusive. It includes mental, emotional, physical, spiritual, and social wellbeing, and recognises that people experience wellbeing differently at different times.

We are committed to creating environments where people feel:



- **Safe and supported**
- **Welcomed and respected**
- **Given opportunities to grow and develop**
- **Treated fairly and with dignity**

Living Our Values As An Employer

Wellbeing

We actively support the wellbeing of our personnel through:

- A Wellbeing Strategy launched in 2024, embedding wellbeing into organisational culture and practice
- Delivery of wellbeing, mental health, and resilience training across the organisation
- Wellbeing-informed policies that promote safe, sustainable ways of working
- Supporting peer connection through Wellbeing Champions, established across the movement
- Providing chaplaincy support across the movement, offering pastoral care, reflection, and values-based support

Welcome

We create inclusive and welcoming environments by:

- Promoting psychologically safe work environments where open, stigma-free conversations about wellbeing and mental health are encouraged.
- Employing the principles of trauma-informed practice in responding to needs presented by staff and volunteers, recognising individual experiences and responding with consistency, respect, and care.
- Regularly surveying how well staff and volunteers feel listened to and supported.

Living Our Values As An Employer

Opportunity

We create opportunities for people to thrive by:

- Supporting leadership and development through training and reflective practice
- Empowering local teams to shape wellbeing activity in ways that reflect their context
- Establishing a Wellbeing Working Group to guide, coordinate, and review wellbeing activity across YMCA Ireland
- Ensuring the voice of our staff is heard through an annual Staff Survey
- Where eligible, providing access to confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) support, including counselling services where required

Peace & Justice

We act with fairness, compassion, and integrity by:

- Fostering trust and respect amongst team members through inclusive and collaborative working
- Being mindful in our everyday roles of power dynamics and how our actions impact others
- Ensuring equitable access to wellbeing support Disagreeing respectfully, engaging with difference in ways that are constructive and do not cause harm
- Approaching conflict with fairness, compassion, and integrity, addressing concerns in ways that are respectful, consistent, and seek to uphold the wellbeing of all involved.

Our Commitments as an Organisation

YMCA Ireland commits to:

- Embedding wellbeing into leadership, strategy, and organisational decision-making
- Providing clear support pathways for wellbeing and mental health
- Listening to feedback and responding to emerging needs
- Regularly reviewing wellbeing practice to ensure it remains relevant and effective

Our Commitments as Leaders and Managers

Leaders and managers commit to:

- Modelling behaviours that reflect our values
- Creating space for regular check-ins and supportive conversations
- Being mindful of workload, capacity, and wellbeing impacts
- Signposting staff and volunteers to available supports, including EAP, training, and chaplaincy
- Showing discretion and sensitivity in handling wellbeing issues, while being clear about the limits of confidentiality where safety, safeguarding, or legal obligations apply

Our Commitments as Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to:

- Take care of their own wellbeing and respect the wellbeing of others
- Speak up when support is needed
- Engage with wellbeing initiatives in ways that feel right for them
- Contribute to a culture rooted in welcome, opportunity, and justice

Our Pledge

At YMCA Ireland, we commit to living our values of Wellbeing, Welcome, Opportunity, and Peace & Justice, creating an environment where everyone feels supported, connected, and able to thrive.

This Charter will be reviewed regularly as part of our ongoing commitment to learning and improvement.