



We hope, above all, that you will be  
happy volunteering  
with your chosen organisation.

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Registered Charity No: 274029



# Guidelines for Volunteers



# Think carefully before you put your hand up!



## Carefully consider these points before taking up a voluntary position with an Organisation.

### **Length of Service:**

Think about the amount of time you can give. Long-term regular commitment is particularly important if the job involves building relationships with other people. As these people may come to rely on your help.

Inform the organisation of the amount of commitment you are prepared to give. It is always a good idea not to over-commit yourself to begin with, but to build up the time gradually.

### **Regular Attendance:**

Reliability is an important factor. If your attendance is irregular it may inconvenience others. It is important not to prejudice the organisation against using volunteers.

Inform the organisation which days you are available, the amount of time you are prepared to give, any holidays you have booked in case they need to organise cover, and always tell them if you have to give up volunteering.

### **Punctuality:**

Always endeavour to arrive on time, whether it be for an individual or organisation. Other people may be relying on you, particularly if you are part of a team.

### **Confidentiality:**

During the course of your volunteering you may hear things that are spoken in confidence and this should be respected. Some organisations may ask you to sign a confidentiality form. You may hear or become aware of something that is not right; it may be putting someone at risk. 'What to do?' Report it to a line manager, or someone in authority who you know will be able to deal with the situation.

### **Expenses:**

Volunteers should not be 'out of pocket' for the work they undertake. Each organisation should have a policy on 'if' and 'how' volunteers are paid expenses. Find out the organisation's position on this before you begin Volunteering.

### **The Organisation:**

You will generally be asked to attend an informal interview, you may even be asked to give references. At this interview do not be afraid to ask questions, these questions could be the deciding factor as to whether you volunteer with this particular organisation. You may also be asked to attend certain training sessions to prepare you. Find out to whom you are responsible. It may take some time for you to feel comfortable with your role and for the organisation to assess how best to use your skills.

### **Insurance:**

Check with the organisation regarding Insurance cover, especially if you are involved in driving for them.

### **Dress and personal belongings:**

Some voluntary opportunities may require you to wear particular clothing; they may even supply the clothing or equipment. It will be your responsibility to take care of anything you are given. You will be expected to take care of your own personal belongings. Most organisations will not be in a position to replace lost or damaged possessions.

### **Duties:**

Ensure you know exactly what tasks you are to undertake and how to approach them. Do not promise to obtain material help or services for any client, discuss any needs with your line-manager. Remember all work is undertaken by agreement. You may decline any suggested task if you wish to do so.

### **Problems:**

If these should arise, talk them over first with your line manager. If this is not possible or the problem is with an individual you are working with, then the Volunteer Centre is always willing to help. If you feel that you have been placed in the wrong situation you should contact the Volunteer Centre. We can review the situation and find a more suitable placement. All organisations should have a number of Policies and Procedures in place; you could start by asking to have a copy of the complaints procedure.