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**Staying Safe whilst volunteering**

Document created 31 March 2020

Last Updated: 6 April 2020 (updates to Safeguarding training in Section 2 role descriptions)

*Please note that this guidance will be updated regularly in line with government guidance on the Coronavirus pandemic. Please regularly check* <http://rva.org.uk/coronavirus-community-action/> *or contact* [*advice@rva.org.uk*](mailto:advice@rva.org.uk)

**Guidance for voluntary groups and charities on how to use this fact-sheet:**

This guidance has been prepared for established voluntary and community groups in the Reading area, who are engaging volunteers in services responding to the Coronavirus pandemic, such as arranging for food supplies to be delivered, for medication deliveries, telephone befriending or volunteer drivers to GP and hospital appointments.

After reading this guidance, the voluntary and community group should adapt it as necessary to fit their own services.

Contents of this fact-sheet:

1. General guidance for all volunteers:
   1. Public health guidance on Coronavirus Covid-19
   2. How to volunteer with us
   3. How you should protect yourself – NHS guidelines
   4. Protecting other people’s personal data including confidentiality
   5. How to keep others safe: Safeguarding duty
2. Specific guidance for individual volunteer roles:
   1. Shopping volunteer
   2. Prescription delivery volunteer
   3. Volunteer drivers to GP and hospital appointments
   4. Telephone befriending volunteer

Section 1 is applicable to all volunteers you engage. Section 2 should be adapted so it is relevant to the services you are providing. For example:

* Only include the services you are offering and for which you are insured to deliver
* Clarify what training will be required to be undertaken and how
* Consider whether volunteers have an existing DBS check
* Insert relevant contact details for the supervisor and how volunteers will be supported
* Confirm how any expenses can be claimed

Once it has been adapted, you can share this with your volunteers. Please ensure you keep this up to date as detailed above.

Staying Safe whilst Volunteering

[INSERT THE NAME OF YOUR ORGANISATION]

[INSERT YOUR CHARITY NUMBER IF YOOU HAVE ONE]

**Section 1: General guidance for all volunteers**

1. **Public health and government guidance:**

Current public health and government guidance is ‘**stay at home’**. Full details can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> (as at 31 March 2020). This means that you should remain at home except for limited circumstances. You may leave your home when you are volunteering with us to support vulnerable individuals.

1. **How to volunteer with us**

We are grateful to all those who wish to volunteer during this Coronavirus pandemic to help their local communities and hope you have an enjoyable volunteering experience with us. Please see our volunteer policy for further information on how we engage volunteers and what you can expect from us.

To ensure we provide a safe service to all our service users, all new volunteers are asked to complete the following process:

* Complete our application form and provide details of two referees, preferably one from a current employer or an organisation you already volunteer with.
* We will contact you following receipt of satisfactory application and references.
* Confirm whether you have an existing DBS check.
* Upon satisfactory receipt of the above, we will contact you via a video call to discuss the volunteer role and provide you with an induction. You will have the opportunity to ask questions. A video call also helps you to feel part of our team and put names to faces in the absence of being able to meet in person during the Coronavirus lockdown. We will need to see your ID and any DBS check you might have via video call.
* You will then complete online Safeguarding training relevant to your role. See your role description for details. This is to ensure you have up to date information on keeping our service users safe and feel confident in your role to do so.
* You will also complete a short online video that is specific to keeping you safe whilst volunteering during the Coronavirus.
* Then you can get started! We will let you know how and we will provide you with on-going support in line with your role.This is to support you with queries and to check in with you on how you are feeling.
* So long as you volunteer in line with your role description and these guidelines, you are covered by our Public Liability Insurance.
* Always follow public health guidance and never feel obligated to volunteer if you are feeling unwell. This is a marathon not a race, and there are many volunteers coming forward. Thank you for volunteering with us!

1. **How you should protect yourself: NHS guidelines**

First and foremost, we want to ensure that you are not putting yourself at risk when volunteering. To protect yourselves and others, please follow these guidelines:

* Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water at regular intervals throughout the day.
* If running water and soap is not available, then ensure you have alcohol-based hand wipes or sanitiser to kill viruses that may be on your hands.
* Avoid touching your face and keep hands away from eyes, mouth and nose to avoid the spread of any virus.
* If you cough, use a tissue and dispose of the tissue immediately.
* If no tissue is available, cough into your arm.
* If the cough becomes persistent, then you should follow government self-isolation precautions.
* Practice social distancing by maintaining at least 2 metres distance between yourself and others not in your immediate household. For example, when you are volunteering.
* If you start to feel unwell and have a fever, persistent cough or difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and follow NHS guidance whilst avoiding any contact with people. This means you should pause any volunteering that brings you in contact with others. You can find Public Health Guidance to identify how long you need to isolate for here https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public
* Always keep your supervisor up to date through the contact details below.

1. **Protecting others’ personal information and confidentiality**

Whilst volunteering with us, you will come across personal and sensitive information about the people we are supporting. This might be their name, address, telephone number and in some cases their medical information. Medical information is even more sensitive than personal data, so please be very careful with this. It is important that all information stays safe and confidential in line with the Data Protection 2018 and GDPR regulations. You can do this by:

* Treat other people’s personal information in the same way you would want yours to be treated
* Always keep personal details about others confidential and do not discuss any of this with anyone outside of [NAME OF YOUR CHARITY] or with anyone who does not need to know. If you are unsure, always check with your supervisor first.
* Only write down or record information that is absolutely necessary in order to do your volunteer role. This is described in each of the roles below.
* If you do have to write down or record any information, be sure to keep it secure and once you no longer need it, be sure to pass it to your supervisor or destroy it. Such as someone’s name and address in order to make a delivery.
* Never share this information with your friends and family or others.
* Never leave messages on answer machines with people’s personal details if you are unsure who will pick up the message.
* Do not misuse other’s information for your own purposes, such as using their details in order to arrange your own deliveries, misusing their financial information, or some other advantage for yourself. If we suspect you have done this, we will stop your volunteering in line with our volunteer policy and we may need to report the matter to the police if there is criminal activity.

We also recommend that you protect your own personal data too so if you need to call a service user when volunteering with us, please withhold your number first by dialling 141 before you dial the number.

1. **How to keep others safe, also known as ‘Safeguarding duties’**

Thank you for volunteering to support vulnerable individuals during this time of crisis. At [NAME OF CHARITY] we want to keep everyone safe from harm, whether this is our service users, volunteers or staff. Therefore, if you come across anyone who is at risk of harm, then you should follow our Safeguarding procedure. If you are unsure, always speak with your supervisor who will help you.

Types of harm can vary and may include financial abuse, physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and other forms. There is a full list on types of abuse and signs of abuse in our Safeguarding procedure.

As part of your volunteering with us, we will provide Safeguarding training and will let you know how you can access this easily. This is to ensure you have all the up to date information to keep others safe.

Top tips for keeping others safe:

* If someone is immediate risk of harm to life, phone 999 immediately.
* Be alert to signs of abuse. If you see, hear or suspect any abuse of another person, always report this by following our Safeguarding procedure. It is always better to let your supervisor know. It might not be anything, but if it is, the information you pass onto us is crucial.
* You will always be supported by us if you raise genuine concerns, even if this is suspected abuse, and we will take these seriously. There is no need for you to investigate.
* If anyone tells you about abuse they have been subjected to, remain calm, listen and reassure them that you will take it seriously. You don’t need to ask questions, simply pass this information to your supervisor as soon as possible afterwards.
* Don’t promise confidentiality. Let them know that you may need to pass this onto your supervisor. See our Safeguarding procedure for more details and the difference between keeping adults safe and keeping children safe.

**Volunteer agreement**

* I confirm that I have read and understood the requirements of the role(s) for which I have applied to volunteer. Which is/are [INSERT VOLUNTEER ROLE HERE]
* I understand the boundaries and responsibilities associated with this role as described in the general guidance and the specific role description and will volunteer in line with this.
* For roles involving handling of service users money, I confirm that I am not barred from working with adults and can provide a DBS check confirming this that I already have.
* I understand that this is a volunteer role and binding in honour only, no employment relationship is being created and I am at liberty to pause or cease my volunteering at any time and will let my supervisor know out of courtesy if this is the case.
* I also understand that the organisation may pause or suspend my volunteering in line with the Volunteer Policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PRINT YOUR FULL NAME \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**This section will be completed by your supervisor:**

* Application received
* Identification checked
* Contacted referees and received satisfactory responses
* Had sight of any DBS check they already have.
* Safeguarding Adults training completed by volunteer
* Staying Safe whilst volunteering video completed by volunteer
* Video induction completed and role explained
  + Overview of organisation
  + Explained role and provided clarifications
  + Explained Volunteer Policy
  + Explained Safeguarding Procedure and checked understanding
  + Explained level of support given to volunteer

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME OF SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Individual role descriptions are on the next page

**Section 2: Specific Guidance for Individual Volunteer Roles**

*This section should be adapted by the voluntary organisation for each role. Delete as appropriate depending on the service provided and the role of the individual volunteer.*

1. **Shopping Volunteer**

**Purpose of your role**: to shop for adult service users or deliver food parcels to adult service users who cannot shop for themselves at this time due to self-isolation or other vulnerability. This role does not involve volunteering with children and you are not permitted to have contact with children and young people (anyone under 18 years old).

**DBS check is not required, so long as safe practice is followed as described in this guide.** However, volunteers who have already have a current DBS check are preferred and you must confirm you are not barred from working with adults.

**Driving checks:** If you will be using a vehicle to drive whilst volunteering, then you are required to have the following and we will need to see these via video call:

* Valid full UK driving licence
* Full vehicle insurance cover – confirm with your insurance company that you will be volunteering using your car.
* Roadworthy vehicle with a valid MOT certificate and fully taxed for use on the roads

**Training for the role:**

* Safeguarding Adults Level 1 completed in the last three years – please provide evidence; or complete our online training module/ safeguarding information sheet.
* Video on how to stay safe whilst volunteering during the Coronavirus pandemic.

**Your supervisor:** [INSERT NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS]

**On-going support:** [INSERT FREQUENCY AND METHOD, e.g. contact the above supervisor if you have questions; and weekly support sessions with you via telephone/video call]

**How to carry out your role:**

1. Service User calls our central number to make a request for food supplies. If the individual is not able to pay for their food supplies, they are referred to Launchpad. If they have financial means to pay for their own shopping, the following steps are taken:
2. **Preferred method 1:** We will ask the service user if they have a family or trusted friend who can shop for them or help them to set up online shopping and call ends.

**Alternative method 2:** If they do not have a family member to help them and they are over 50 years old or have a learning disability, refer them to Age UK Reading or the One Reading Hub. Call ends.

**Alternative method 3:** This is the last resort and not the preferred method, as cash is used and could spread Covid 19. Be extra careful with cash and ensure you follow handwashing rules before and after handling cash.

* We will take full details of their shopping list and ask if there are any alternatives they would like if items are unavailable, including any items to avoid due to allergies.
* We will ask them when they would like it to be delivered: date and approximate time, and their address.
* We will let them know that the order amount is a maximum of £30 and limited to essential items only, and suggest they have the cash available.
* We will then contact you to see if you are available to volunteer. If yes, we will give you the full details we have collected.
* You go shopping and take a photo of the receipt, drop the shopping off at the service users home at the agreed approximate date and time.
* Put the shopping on the doorstep with the receipt, ring the doorbell or knock on the door, step back 2 metres.
* The service user will check the items and the receipt to see if they are correct. Then place the envelope with exact money if possible on the steps and close the door.
* Only then should you collect the envelope. If change was needed you can agree this and give change but only at a safe distance as above, keeping 2 metres distance.
* Always sanitise your hands thoroughly before and after, including the receipt and any change you have received.
* Contact our office to confirm the delivery has been made and the amount of the shopping and forward the photograph of the receipt to your supervisor.

Best practice:

* Follow hand-washing guidelines before and after.
* Never enter the service user’s home.
* If the service user asks you for more support, ask them to contact our offices or the One Reading Community Hub and someone will direct them to the best support for their situation.
* If they want to thank you, ensure you keep a safe distance of 2 metres and say it is your pleasure as a volunteer.
* Politely refuse any gifts or money and say that they should keep it for themselves and your expenses are covered by our organisation.
* If they ask you to do more shopping, let them know that our organisation would be delighted to help again, and ask them to call us directly so we can follow the same procedure. Let them know as a volunteer you have a specific role.
* You might be tempted to help them in other ways, but remember that you are volunteering for a specific role and our insurance only covers you for this.

1. **Prescription Delivery Volunteer**

**Purpose of the role:** to assist adult individuals who are self-isolating due to the Coronavirus pandemic or some other vulnerability, by delivering their pharmacy prescriptions. This role does not involve volunteering with children and you are not permitted to have contact with children and young people (anyone under 18 years old).

**DBS check is not required, so long as safe practice is followed as described in this guide.** However, volunteers who have already have a current DBS check are preferred and you must confirm you are not barred from working with adults.

**Driving checks:** If you will be using a vehicle to drive whilst volunteering, then you are required to have the following and we will need to see these via video call:

* Valid full UK driving licence
* Full vehicle insurance cover – confirm with your insurance company that you will be volunteering using your car.
* Roadworthy vehicle with a valid MOT certificate and fully taxed for use on the roads

**Training for the role:**

* Safeguarding Adults Level 1 completed in the last three years – please provide evidence; or complete our online training module/ safeguarding information sheet.
* Video on how to stay safe whilst volunteering during the Coronavirus pandemic.

**Your supervisor:** [INSERT NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS]

**On-going support:** [INSERT FREQUENCY AND METHOD, e.g. contact the above supervisor if you have questions; and weekly support sessions with you via telephone/video call]

**How to carry out your role:**

1. Service User calls our central number to make a request for a prescription collection from the pharmacy to their home.
2. **Preferred method 1:** We will ask the service user if they have a family or trusted friend who can collect the prescription for them. If so, we will ask them to use this method. Call ends.

**Alternative method 2:** We will ask the service user if the pharmacy is able to deliver to the service user. If so, and the service user can afford any delivery fees, we will ask them to use this method. Call ends.

**Alternative method 3:** We will refer them to the Health Watch Reading [INCLUDE DETAILS] as an established service providing this in Reading.

**Alternative method 4: Collection Only**

* We will ask them to phone the pharmacy direct and pay for the prescription (if payment is required) direct with the pharmacy over the phone, then call our offices to request a delivery volunteer, providing details of date and time of collection, pharmacy address, service users name and address.
* We will then contact you and ask if you are available to volunteer, and let you know the details. We will call the service user and confirm with them and they will contact the pharmacy to let the pharmacy know who is collecting.
* You will then collect the prescription from the service users home on the date and time arranged:
  + Ring the doorbell or knock.
  + Step back 2 metres.
  + Identify yourself and ask the individual to confirm their identity.
  + Ask them to leave the prescription on the doorstep and confirm that you will immediately now collect it from the pharmacy and they themselves should be present to collect it upon your return, that you cannot hand it to anyone else, nor post it through the letterbox
* Then collect from the doorstep. Go straight to the pharmacy and collect from the pharmacy confirming your name and address and that you volunteer for us and show your identification.
* Then deliver to the service user’s home:
  + Knock on their door or ring the doorbell, step back two metres and wait to identify who answers the door. If it is them, ask them to close the door again as you leave the items on the doorstep.
  + Again step back two metres and wait for the door to be answered by the service user.
  + The service user will then check the contents are correct.
* Ring our office and confirm that the collection and delivery has been completed. We will then confirm with the service user direct.

**Alternative Method 5: Collection and Payment**

* If the prescription needs to be paid for and the pharmacy cannot take payment over the phone, we will still ask them to phone the pharmacy and let them know that they have asked our organisation to collect the prescription and confirm what the cost will be. They will then call us to confirm and to request a volunteer to collect and deliver and to make payment with the pharmacy, providing details of date and time of collection, pharmacy address, their name and address.
* We will then contact you and ask if you are available to volunteer, and let you know the details, including the prescription payment amount.
* You will then collect the prescription and cash payment from the service users home on the date and time arranged:
  + Ring the doorbell or knock on the door
  + Step back 2 metres
  + Identify yourself and confirm the identity of the person answering the door. Let them know you will collect the prescription, collect from the pharmacy and be right back with the receipt and any change. Let them know you can only hand the prescribed medication to them and no-one else do they should be ready to receive it. You cannot post it through the letterbox or leave it anywhere.
  + Ask them to place the prescription and cash in an envelope on the doorstep and close the door. Then collect from the doorstep.
* Go straight to the pharmacy
  + Present the prescription and make the agreed payment. You will need to confirm your name and address and that you volunteer for us, and show identification.
  + Do not open the packaging or contents.
* Then deliver to the service user’s home straightaway.
  + Knock on their door or ring the doorbell, step back two metres and wait to identify who answers the door. If it is them, ask them to close the door again as you leave the items on the doorstep including the change.
  + Again step back two metres and wait for the door to be answered by the service user.
  + The service user will then check the contents are correct.
* Ring our office and confirm that the collection and delivery has been completed. We will then confirm with the service user direct.

Best practice:

* Follow hand-washing guidelines before and after, including when you handle cash, visit the pharmacy and drop items off.
* Never enter the service user’s home.
* Be very careful around personal data as this related to medical records so it is more sensitive. Ensure you practice data protection detailed in Section 1 and confidentiality.
* Never give prescribed medication to anyone other than the service user to whom it is prescribed. If you are unsure, contact the pharmacy to check the details.
* Never open any packaging containing the prescribed medication, not even the outer packaging containing the medication.
* If the service user asks you for more support, ask them to contact our offices or the One Reading Community Hub and someone will direct them to the best support for their situation.
* If they want to thank you, ensure you keep a safe distance of 2 metres and say it is your pleasure as a volunteer.
* Politely refuse any gifts or money and say that they should keep it for themselves and your expenses are covered by our organisation.
* If they ask you to do more collections, let them know that our organisation would be delighted to help again, and ask them to call us directly so we can follow the same procedure. Let them know as a volunteer you have a specific role.
* You might be tempted to help them in other ways, but remember that you are volunteering for a specific role and our insurance only covers you for this.

1. **Volunteer drivers to GP and Hospital appointments**

**Purpose of the role:** to drive adults who are self-isolating, or have some other vulnerability, to essential GP appointments or hospital visits. This role does not involve volunteering with children and you are not permitted to have contact with children and young people (anyone under 18 years old).

**DBS Check required:** Enhanced and Barring List Check for Adults. (Regulated Activity). You will therefore need to have a current DBS at this level.

**Driving checks:** If you will be using a vehicle to drive whilst volunteering, then you are required to have the following and we will need to see these via video call:

* Valid full UK driving licence
* Full vehicle insurance cover – confirm with your insurance company that you will be volunteering using your car.
* Roadworthy vehicle with a valid MOT certificate and fully taxed for use on the roads

**Training for the role:**

* Safeguarding Adults Level 1 completed in the last three years – please provide evidence; or complete our online training module/ safeguarding information sheet.
* Video on how to stay safe whilst volunteering during the Coronavirus pandemic.

**Your supervisor:** [INSERT NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS]

**On-going support:** [INSERT FREQUENCY AND METHOD, e.g. contact the above supervisor if you have questions; and weekly support sessions with you via telephone/video call]

**How to carry out your role:**

* The service user will contact our offices to make a request for a volunteer to drive them to a GP appointment or hospital appointment.
* **Preferred Method 1:** We will ask them if they have a family member or trusted friend who can drive them to the appointment, if yes, we will ask them to use this method.
* **Alternative Method 2:** We will ask them if they fit the category of most vulnerable individuals as identified by the NHS and if so, have they been offered or requested this service. If they are unsure, we will re-direct them to the One Reading Hub and ask them to notify the operator that they are in the at-risk group.
* **Alternative Method 3:** If the above methods are not available, we will offer our service:
  + We will take details from the service user, including name, address, any vulnerabilities, whether they need assistance and if so to bring a carer or family member with them, date, time and location of medical appointment, and expected duration of the appointment, and whether they require a return trip.
  + We may then contact you to see if you can volunteer, if so we will give you the details as above and check if you can offer a return trip.
  + You will then collect the service user in your vehicle (see best practice notes below). Ring the doorbell or knock on the door and then step back 2 metres. Ask the service user to confirm their identity and of anyone travelling with them to support them. Let them know you are the volunteer driver they have arranged with our organisation, confirm your name and show your identification from a suitable distance.
  + Drive the service user to the appointment (follow best practice notes below).
  + If it is agreed you are conducting the return trip, let the service user know you will wait in the car park and they should return here when the appointment is complete. Let them know to contact the office if the appointment is running very late and the office will contact you.
  + After the appointment, drive the service user back to their home address.
  + Phone the office afterwards to confirm the journey has been completed.

**Best practice:**

* Follow hand-washing guidelines before and after volunteering.
* Never enter the service user’s home.
* Ensure your vehicle is safe, road worthy, taxed, has a current MOT and your insurance provider is aware that you are driving on behalf of our charity as a volunteer.
* We recommend that you carry drinking water, hand sanitiser and a mobile phone in your vehicle at all times.
* Please make someone aware of where you are going and what time you are expected to return.
* You are not expected to carry out any manual handling and the service user should carry their own items where possible or arrange a carer or family member to travel with them.
* All drivers and passengers must wear a seatbelt and not use a hand held telephone
* Never drive whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or if you are feeling tired as this endangers life.
* If the service user asks you for more support, ask them to contact our offices or the One Reading Community Hub and someone will direct them to the best support for their situation.
* If they want to thank you, say it is your pleasure as a volunteer.
* Politely refuse any gifts or money and say that they should keep it for themselves and your expenses are covered by our organisation.
* Claim any expenses with us directly, such as mileage and/or parking tickets. See our expenses policy or ask your supervisor.
* You might be tempted to help them in other ways, but remember that you are volunteering for a specific role and our insurance only covers you for this.
* As this role is in close proximity to the service user and it is unlikely your vehicle will allow for a 2 metre distance from the service user, try and maintain as much of a distance as physically possible and if you are feeling unwell in any way, pause volunteering and contact your supervisor.

**Telephone befriending volunteer**

**Purpose of the role:** To provide regular telephone befriending support to an adult who is lonely and socially isolated. This role does not involve volunteering with children and you are not permitted to have contact with children and young people (anyone under 18 years old).

Please note that no driving of a vehicle is required to complete this volunteer role.

**DBS check is not required, so long as safe practice is followed as described in this guide.** However, volunteers who have already have a current DBS check are preferred and you must confirm you are not barred from working with adults

**Training for the role:**

* Safeguarding Adults Level 1 completed in the last three years – please provide evidence; or complete our online training module/ safeguarding information sheet.
* Video on how to stay safe whilst volunteering during the Coronavirus pandemic.
* See telephone befriending training resources on <http://rva.org.uk/ready-friends/>

**Your supervisor:** [INSERT NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS]

**How to carry out your role:**

* The service user will contact our offices to make a request for a telephone befriending volunteer.
* **Preferred Method 1:** We will ask them if they have a family member or trusted friend who can call them regularly, if yes, we will ask them to use this method.
* **Alternative Method 2:** We will ask them if they fit the category of most vulnerable individuals as identified by the NHS and if so, have they been offered or requested this service. If they are unsure, we will re-direct them to the One Reading Hub and ask them to notify the operator that they are in the at-risk group.
* **Alternative Method 3:** If the above methods are not available, we will offer our service:
  + We will take details from the service user, including name, telephone number and any vulnerabilities. If they have any vulnerabilities we will ensure they are signposted to other relevant services that can support them, such as Benefits advice through Communicare.
  + We may then contact you to see if you can volunteer.  If so, we will give you the details as above and check if you can offer a regular befriending phone call.  This maybe once or twice a week for around 30 minutes per call.
  + We will give you and the befriendee a unique code name or number, so they can identify you when you call them.
  + When you call, let them know you are the volunteer befriender they have arranged with our organisation, confirm your name and the code name or number.
  + Phone the office afterwards to confirm the first call and the frequency of calls you and your befriendee have agreed.

**On-going support:** [INSERT FREQUENCY AND METHOD, e.g. contact the above supervisor if you have questions; and weekly support sessions with you via telephone/video call]

**Best practice:**

* Ensure you are comfortable moving from face-to-face to telephone befriending for the time being.  Not everyone is comfortable using the phone. If you are not, please speak to your supervisor. There may be other roles that you can take on at the moment that could help the charity or community group that you volunteer for.
* Keep your phone number private. To hide a number from a landline dial 141 and then the number; from an Android device go to the ‘phone’, press the vertical 3 dots for a drop down menu and select ‘settings’, select ‘supplementary services’, select ‘showing caller ID’, click ‘hide my number’; from an Apple device go to ‘settings’, select ‘phone’, select ‘show my caller ID’, slide the circle to the left to hide number and back to right (green) to show number.
* Agree with your befriendee the length and frequency of phone calls.  Rather than a weekly hour-long visit, you may want to switch to two 30 minute calls.  Setting a 30 minute maximum call length is a reasonable suggestion and prevents overload on you.
* Agree the time you will call, so that you can set aside the time and space you need for a quality call that fits in with your other commitments.
* Never offer any advice around money, benefits, health or mental well-being. If the service user needs advice, signpost them to recognized agencies, such as Communicare for benefits advice. Refer to your supervisor for support.
* Do not give personal details to the befriendee, such as your telephone number, address or social media accounts.
* If they want to thank you, say it is your pleasure as a volunteer.
* Politely refuse any gifts or money and say that they should keep it for themselves and your expenses are covered by our organisation.
* If the service user asks you for more support, ask them to contact our offices or the One Reading Community Hub and someone will direct them to the best support for their situation.
* Claim any expenses with us directly, i.e. for any telephone calls made. See our expenses policy or ask your supervisor.
* You might be tempted to help them in other ways, but remember that you are volunteering for a specific role and our insurance only covers you for this.
* Keep in touch with your own friends and family - phone, WhatsApp, skype, emails, etc.