

Staying Safe

This induction video will be about staying safe. Your safety and well-being are our priority.

During the coronavirus pandemic, volunteering can take place as long as it adheres to the Government guidelines. You should only volunteer outside of your home if no one has symptoms of coronavirus or has tested positive for the virus. Should you have any symptoms of coronavirus or a positive test result, please follow the NHS guidelines on self-isolating and notify the organisation you are volunteering with as soon as possible.

Whilst undertaking your volunteering role, please follow social distancing advice and keep a safe distance from others. Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds before and after contact with people and follow the NHS 'catch it, kill it, bin it' advice when coughing or sneezing. 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 spread of any virus. Follow Government guidelines on face coverings, including when and where they are required.

Organisations have a duty of care towards their volunteers, and an obligation to protect them. All staff and volunteers should co-operate with supervisors and managers on health and safety matters, take reasonable care of their own health and safety, protect themselves and others from harm; and report all health and safety concerns to their point of contact.

The organization you are volunteering with will have carried out risk assessments for any tasks you are expected to undertake to identify potential hazards. Hazards is anything which has the potential to cause harm. If a hazard is identified, the required precautions will be put in place. Risk assessments will be regularly reviewed based on changes in legislation, circumstances or feedback received. If you identify a hazard whilst undertaking your volunteering role, please report this to your point of contact.

Should your role involve volunteering alone, your organisation will have a lone worker policy in place which you need to adhere to. Always tell someone where you are going, who you are meeting and when you anticipate returning. Do not enter a house unless you are instructed to. Regularly check in with your point of contact. Ensure you have an appropriate means of communication that is fully charged and that you have all the emergency numbers you might need. Try to volunteer in daylight hours. Carry a torch with you if you need to volunteer in the dark. If travelling by car, park in well-lit areas facing the exit where possible. Make sure you lock your vehicle and do not leave any belongings on show.

Some volunteer tasks may require you to use your own vehicle, such as acting in the capacity as a volunteer driver, running errands etc. You must ensure that you are fit to drive at all times. Always stay within speed limits and follow road signs and directions from traffic police. Clean frequently touched sites, for example, car door handles, steering wheel, seat belts and buckles. Ensure your vehicle is safe, road worthy, taxed and has a current MOT. If lifting heavy items into the vehicle, please make sure you lift by bending your knees not your back. Try and plan your journey in advance to adhere to Government guidance regarding local driving and to also ensure you are prepared regarding any potential road closures, diversions etc. Avoid driving in poor conditions. You must wear a seatbelt and not use a handheld telephone whilst driving

If you use your own vehicle for volunteer driving, contact your insurer to find out if you are covered by your regular motor insurance policy, include your volunteer driving miles when declaring your annual mileage to your insurer. If you use a voluntary organisation's vehicle for volunteer driving you should be covered by their insurance, but always check with each organisation to be sure.

Whatever task you are undertaking, the most important thing is to trust your instincts. If something does not feel right, it might not be right. If your safety is at risk, please contact someone immediately. In an emergency call the relevant emergency service by dialling 999. You should also notify your point of contact within the organisation as soon as possible.

Be aware of your own wellbeing and ask for help and support if you need it. It is ok not to be ok. If something outside your volunteering is affecting you or if you have witnessed something challenging during your volunteering hours do what you need to do to look after yourself and discuss any concerns you might have with your point of contact.

We all have the right to go home safe and healthy every day.

Thank you for listening to the staying safe section of your induction. Please ensure to watch all the other videos and do get in contact should you have any questions.

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