

- Support and supervision
- Information about the organisation – its background, purpose, mission statement, services, client groups etc
- Are there any social events that you can go to as a volunteer?
- Arrangements for paying expenses, such as travel, childcare, meals. It is important to remember that only actual out-of-pocket expenses can be claimed to avoid any impact on benefits

### ***Make sure you've got...***

Also, make sure that you've got copies of:

- The organisation's Volunteer Handbook, which should contain copies of relevant policies such as health and safety, confidentiality etc.
- The organisation's Volunteer Policy
- Your Volunteer Agreement

### ***For further information***

The Volunteer Centres can also provide you with information about:

- Looking for voluntary work
- Volunteering whilst receiving benefits
- CRB checks and disclosures

## ***Contact us***

Poole Volunteer Centre  
The Advice Centre  
54 Lagland Street  
Poole  
Dorset  
BH15 1QG

Telephone: 01202 675100  
Email: [vc@poolecvcs.co.uk](mailto:vc@poolecvcs.co.uk)  
Website: [www.poolevolunteercentre.org.uk](http://www.poolevolunteercentre.org.uk)

Bournemouth Volunteer Centre  
Boscombe Link  
3-5 Palmerston Road  
Boscombe  
BH1 4HN

Telephone: 01202 466130  
Email: [contactus@bournemouthcvcs.org.uk](mailto:contactus@bournemouthcvcs.org.uk)  
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***A guide to things to think about once you have found an organisation you would like to volunteer for***

*Funded by GoldStar to share good practice*



## ***You've found an organisation***

This leaflet is designed to tell you what to expect when starting your voluntary role and some of the things you might like to think about or ask if you are not told.

## **Making contact**

Once you have the contact details for the organisation, contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator by email and or telephone to let them know that you are interested in volunteering.

As well as speaking on the telephone, it's also good to arrange to go and visit them for an informal chat. This gives you a chance to find out if the organisation is how you imagined it to be and if you would still like to get involved.

### **You might want to ask the Volunteer Co-ordinator about:**

- The organisation's background – what are its aims and activities? Is it a local or national organisation?
- The structure of the organisation and how do volunteers fit in?
- What is the application process? This can vary from an informal meeting to an interview and asking for references.
- Will a CRB check be required? You will be asked to undergo Criminal Records Bureau check if your volunteering involves working

with children or vulnerable adults.

- Will there be a trial period? This gives both you and the organisation time to decide whether you are right for each other.
- How much time would the organisation like you to commit and how often?
- Where is the opportunity based?
- Will you be volunteering alone or as part of a group?
- What support is on offer – will you have regular access to a supervisor to discuss any issues that arise?
- Is training required or is there any available for volunteers? You may not need training to become a volunteer but consider your reasons and motivations for volunteering. If it is to help gain employment, structured training opportunities may be important.
- Is there an induction process? How are volunteers welcomed into the organisation?
- Can you speak to other volunteers about their experience?
- The level and frequency of commitment
- The location of your volunteering
- Do they reimburse expenses? Travel, meals etc?
- Are there social events for volunteers?

## ***When you start***

Once you start volunteering, you should expect an induction. This serves as your introduction to

the organisation and should cover practical things including:

- A tour of the building
- Location of fire escapes, extinguishers and fire alarm procedure
- Location of the First Aid kit and accident book
- Where the toilets and kitchen are
- Car parking/cycle storage
- Where to store personal belongings such as coats and bags
- Location of equipment necessary to complete your work
- Signing in/out

## ***Other things you might like to ask if you are not told***

When starting at the organisation you should also be told other things such as:

- Your main contact
- Description of the role and its purpose
- Description of the main activities tasks to be carried out
- Policies – e.g. health and safety, confidentiality, equal opportunities, disciplinary and grievance procedures, insurance
- Who to tell when you have holidays, need time-off or are unwell
- Times, breaks