

SOME GOOD PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS FOR THOSE GROUPS INVOLVING VOLUNTEERS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

- Start with a clear value base of keeping everyone (volunteers and those they are helping) safe while responding to the need.
- Identify what roles volunteers can actually carry out to help and what you need from volunteers in terms of skills, time, practical issues such as transport etc.
- Identify the risks associated with the role and communicate the boundaries and expectations, including do's and don'ts, with the volunteers. If possible, volunteers should be asked to sign that they have seen the "do's and don'ts"/code of behaviour to encourage good conduct when volunteering.
- Register your volunteering opportunities on <https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/volunteer-management/> and Volunteer Now will promote them for you.
- Put a message out that you are looking for volunteers to carry out these tasks making sure you have thought through how you will manage the response to any calls, especially a large response. Remember your existing volunteers who have already been through your recruitment and training process may be willing to step in quickly to take on new roles!
- Have a conversation with people who come forward about their motivations, what they can do, time they can give, etc. Don't involve a volunteer if you have concerns or hear complaints about their behaviour.
- Get basic details including contact details, test out mobile numbers to check you can access the individuals and that they are who they say they are. You may need to ask them health related questions just to make sure they are not at risk themselves or could put someone else at risk.
- Some roles may require Access NI checks e.g. assistance with some household matters for older, ill or people with a disability, falls into regulated activity so enhanced disclosure checks with barred list check is a requirement.
- Think about how you are going to keep volunteers safe and communicate this to them: provision of protective equipment like gloves, access to sinks to wash hands etc.; guidelines around social distancing; recognising that volunteers may need extra support when dealing with difficult and stressful situations.
- Think about how you are going to keep the vulnerable people receiving help safe and communicate this to them: give volunteers ID; inform people of what to expect from volunteers who may be in contact with them; explain social distancing concept; forbid volunteers who may be unwell to help out.

- Provide clear guidelines to volunteers on e.g.:
 - ✓ Symptoms of COVID-19 and PHA guidelines
<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus>
 - ✓ Wearing ID – ideally with a photo and large readable text.
 - ✓ If delivering food, are they willing/able to go into the house or do they leave at the door and go?
 - ✓ What to do if money is being handled?
 - ✓ Confidentiality.
 - ✓ How to report and record concerns, incidents or accidents.
 - ✓ Clear contact details of person(s) in charge and contingency plans.

See [Good Practice Guidelines for Volunteers When Volunteering for a Covid-19 Opportunity](#) as examples of guidelines for volunteers that may be helpful.

For more information on Keeping Adults Safe, please go to:

<https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/app/uploads/2019/04/Keeping-Adults-Safe-A-Shared-Responsibility.pdf>

Disclaimer

Reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure information in this publication is accurate. However, it is not intended to be legally comprehensive; it is designed to provide guidance in good faith without accepting liability. If relevant, we therefore recommend you take appropriate professional advice before taking any action on the matters covered herein.

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