

Coronavirus Volunteers - What should be in a Volunteer Induction? 3/4/2020

An effective volunteer induction will include some basic guidance that applies to all volunteer roles and some introductions specific to the particular role being started.

By the end of the induction volunteers should know what they are expected to do and when, who to contact and how, how they will be supported and what to do if there is a problem.

All the guidance and template documents mentioned below are available to [download from our website](#) to help your group/organisation to comply with the law and support your volunteers.

Decide how you will communicate this induction to new volunteers. If you are predominantly on Facebook or WhatsApp you can upload documents on your page/group, or you can use a shared cloud app like GoogleDocs, Sharepoint or Dropbox. You could email people and work through the documents in an introductory phone/video call. You could make short videos for each area of information and upload them on Facebook or WhatsApp.

Information you'll need for any volunteer role:

- **Volunteer Agreement:** this sets out the rights and responsibilities of the volunteer to make sure they know what should happen on both sides of the relationship between the group/organisation and the individual. It also covers legal requirements and constraints. You should ensure that your volunteer signs a volunteer agreement. This shows their commitment, that they have understood all the information in the induction and are ready to abide by their responsibilities. It is not a legal contract – rather it is a way to confirm commitments, expectations and a code of conduct.
- **Expenses:** it is good practice to reimburse travel costs and, where relevant, meals while volunteering. Receipts to evidence expenditure should be recorded against money repaid.
- **Equalities and inclusion:** how the group and individual volunteers ensure that no-one is discriminated against and the behaviour you expect from volunteers to challenge discrimination.
- **Volunteer Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure:** what will happen if there is any complaint about what you volunteers are doing.
- **Health & Safety:** this should include Coronavirus Social Distancing and procedures for how people should keep themselves and others safe in each of the roles they are doing.
- **Safeguarding:** this includes how to protect people from harm, ensure people understand their responsibilities and can raise safeguarding concerns, how to handle allegations or incidents and how to report to the relevant authorities.
- **Confidentiality and data protection (GDPR):** how you expect volunteers to deal with information they have about the people they are helping and how the group has decided to make sure that information about volunteers and members of the community is kept confidential and secure.
- **Support and Supervision:** you should outline how your volunteers are supported and what they should do if they need to get hold of someone for support. This should include named contacts.

Information that will be specific to the role you're inducting:

- **About your Group/Organisation:** a short paragraph describing what you do, how and when you were set up, how the group works and key contacts.
- **Volunteer Role Description:** this should explain what you expect from your volunteer and define what they should and shouldn't be doing as part of their work with you.
- **Insurance:** for roles that involve driving, for example, relevant insurance should be checked and procedures to claim made clear.

Voscur is here to support VCSE organisations. For support, advice and guidance, please contact us:
info@voscur.org 0117 909 9949