

Information for Potential Volunteers

Why Volunteer?

Circles volunteers make a vital contribution to the prevention of sexual abuse by helping support the rehabilitation and management of those who commit such offences. As well as contributing to building safer local communities, you will have the opportunity to develop skills, and work with a wide range of people. Have a read of the following sections to see if this if this opportunity could be for you.

What will the role involve?

Circle Volunteers meet with the Core Member (convicted person) on a weekly basis for around 1.5 hours. During these sessions, you will work with the Core Member to help them reintegrate into their local community. This might involve building their social skills, helping them to find work or accommodation, or developing pro-social hobbies and interests. After each meeting, a member of the circle will be expected to write brief minutes of the meeting and forward these to the Circles Coordinator with 24 hours of the meeting taking place.

Volunteers will need to alert the Circles Coordinator immediately to any emerging risk issues noted by the Circle.

The Circle will meet with professionals at several points during the life of the Circle to provide a review of how the Core Member is progressing.

Circles Volunteers work with the Core Member to:

- Reduce emotional loneliness and isolation
- Listen and be someone to talk with
- Model appropriate relationships and behaviour
- Encourage the Core Member to identify and engage in appropriate activities
- Complement (not replace) the interventions of professionals working with the Core Member
- Observe and explore the Core Member's thoughts, behaviour and activities and pass on any concerns
- Keep the Core Member on track with their goals
- Encourage independence
- Show empathy but not sympathy
- Help with problem solving and development and practice of social skills
- Assist the Core Member in developing appropriate support networks outside of the Circle
- Help the Core Member recognise when they are thinking or behaving in ways that may make them more likely to offend
- Encourage and reinforce positive ways of behaving
- Be alert to manipulation, avoid collusion and seek support to manage such behaviour
- Work individually and as part of a team

Volunteer Responsibilities

- Demonstrate commitment and reliability to the Circle including your own training and development
- Preserve the confidentiality of the Core Member and the Circle
- Model appropriate behaviour including showing respect, punctuality and a non-discriminatory attitude
- Provide accurate and timely minutes of Circle meetings
- Respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute including having any non-agreed contact with the media
- Communicate any concerns or risk issues you are aware of to the Coordinator or other relevant professionals
- Carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation and work within agreed guidelines
- Comply with the organisation's policies

How will I be supported?

Volunteers will receive comprehensive training before commencing their volunteer role. Volunteers will also be expected to attend supervision with the Circles Coordinator regularly throughout the life of the circle to receive support, and additional training will be provided as needed.

Volunteers will be provided with an email address for communicating with professionals, as well as a mobile telephone for Circle use. Volunteers can also claim reasonable travel expenses associated with their volunteer role.

As a Volunteer, you can expect to:

- Know what is (and what is not) expected of you
- Receive appropriate training
- Be offered development opportunities
- Receive support in your volunteering including supervision (both group and one-to-one)
- Be free from discrimination and to be dealt with in accordance with our [Equal Opportunities] Policy
- Receive out-of-pocket expenses
- Have safe working conditions including knowledge of the Core Member's past behaviour, restrictions and risk factors
- Be insured

The Volunteer Recruitment Process

The first step towards becoming a Circle Volunteer is to complete the [Volunteer Application Form](#). Upon receipt, the Circles Coordinator will review your application, and if you look like a good fit for the role, will invite you to attend an informal interview to discuss the role further. Following this,

you will be invited to attend volunteer training. During this time, we will support you to apply for an Enhanced DBS check, and we will take up references on you.

Upon successful completion of the volunteer training programme, you will have an opportunity to discuss the role again with the Circles Coordinator, before joining the pool of volunteers waiting to be matched with a core member.

Core member referrals come from across the Midlands region; will endeavour to match you with a Core Member as quickly as possible. However, please be aware that there can sometimes be a wait to be match with a Core Member, particularly in more rural areas.

What if I'm not a good match for the role?

Sometimes, there may be reasons why the Circle Coordinator feels that the Circle Volunteer role might not be the best match for you and your skills, and volunteers can be deselected from the role. When this happens, we will talk to volunteers about the reasons for deselection, and signpost you to other potential volunteering opportunities.

Still got questions?

You can contact our Circles Coordinator (circles@lucyfaithfull.org.uk) with any questions you may have.