

Guidance for Realise charity volunteers during Covid-19

Thank you for considering volunteering your time with us to support a volunteering opportunity in relation to COVID-19. Please be mindful that safeguarding people from abuse, harm and infection is paramount – and that includes you!

The information below details some safe methods and systems for your volunteering activity. These instructions have been designed to protect you and our clients.

Here are some things to think about.

Staying safe

- Your safety is our, and should be your, number one priority. Do not put yourself (or others) at risk; follow the government guidelines for infection control around handwashing and social distancing. See <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> for further details.
- Your willingness to help is great, however, please try to be clear about what is realistic for you to do under difficult circumstances as your wellbeing is important. Be careful that you do not overstretch yourself as Covid-19 outbreak may go on for a long time.
- Make sure someone knows your whereabouts at all times - ideally a friend or family member. Ask them to contact Realise if they have any concerns about your safety.
- Please don't volunteer if you yourself are feeling unwell or are sick. If this is the case, at any point during your volunteering activity please inform your main contact and/or Geoff Beadle at Realise charity.
- Keep your distance at all times - maintain the 2 metre distance rule.
- Try to minimise your activity to e.g. doing shopping for others when you are doing your own and restrict to only essential items.

Your volunteering role

- Please ensure you are clear about what activities you will be doing and the expectations and boundaries around the role. You should have received a Role Profile for your volunteering opportunity.
- Make sure you have contact details of the main contact person for your volunteering activity and that you keep them with you whilst you are undertaking your volunteering activity. Your key contact is Realise charity Programme Manager – Geoff Beadle. You can reach Geoff on 07701 338639 with any questions or concerns.
- Depending on the role you are undertaking Realise charity may have to carry out certain checks before you start volunteering. We must do this for the safety of everyone, including yourself. Please be patient as this is done, we'll complete it as quickly as we can.

- If you need to wear protective clothing for this role, it will be provided for you.
- Do not enter the homes of vulnerable people.
- Think creatively about the role e.g. how to get shopping lists over the phone, leave shopping at the door, only buying essentials so as they can be carried by the person from their doorstep into the house.
- Avoid handling and exchanging money. We have set up a system to ensure that this is not necessary. Please see our Cash Handling advice (see separate document) for further information.
- Do not offer advice unless you are trained to do so. Sometimes well-meaning advice can lead to negative consequences.
- Keep people's personal information and circumstances confidential so as not to compromise their safety. Do not share people's details with friends and family or on social media.
- Show ID (or a letter of approval provided by Realise charity) with photograph and clearly presented name if interacting with vulnerable people.
- If someone offers you a gift please politely decline it informing them that Realise has instructed you to do so.

Getting support

- If you have any concerns about someone's welfare don't try to handle the situation yourself. Report any concerns, incidents or disclosures to the organisation (see separate Safeguarding policy for further detail).
- If a situation feels risky, it probably is. Call off your volunteering and contact Realise straight away.
- Be prepared to refer on any issues that you cannot deal with. You must report concerns to the relevant authorities such as police or public sector agencies (eg social services). Please ensure you inform Realise charity Programme Manager of any issues.

It would be great if you're able to share good news stories when you can through the #SupportingOurCommunities hashtag on Twitter and Facebook, to highlight your volunteering work. These stories can inspire others to get involved and raise everyone's spirit during this uncertain time.

For more general advice on Covid-19 please see the government website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely--2/coronavirushow-to-help-safely>



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.