

BALLYCASTLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES COVID - 19

If you are considering volunteering your time to support a volunteering opportunity in relation to COVID-19, you need to be mindful that safeguarding people from abuse, harm and infection is paramount – and that includes you! Here are some things to think about:

- Your safety is your number one priority. Do not put yourself (or others) at risk, follow all the guidelines for infection control around handwashing and social distancing.

See <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus>

- You can only provide support to people who are in isolation if you fulfil ALL of the conditions below:
 - ✓ You are well and have no symptoms like a cough or high temperature and nobody in your household does
 - ✓ You are under 70
 - ✓ You are not pregnant
 - ✓ You do not have any long-term health conditions that make you vulnerable to coronavirus.
- Be clear about what activities you will be doing and the expectations and boundaries around the role.
- Your willingness to help is great, however 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 you have clear contact details of the main contact person for this opportunity, so you know who is coordinating the activity and who to contact if you have any questions or concerns. (You will be provided with contact details)
- We may have to carry out certain checks before you start volunteering. Please be patient as this is for the safety of everyone including yourself.
- Do not volunteer if you yourself are feeling unwell or are sick. You must inform the person in charge immediately.
- You will need to wear protective clothing especially gloves, carry water and handwash when you are volunteering or hand sanitiser. We will provide these for you if you do not have them.
- Avoid situations that involve gathering personal details of vulnerable people.
- 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. No cash exchanges must happen unless we've granted permission and issued guidelines
- Keep your distance at all times - maintain the 2 meter distance rule.
- Do not share any information that you gain about vulnerable people in your community – confidentiality is of paramount importance.
- Report any concerns, incidents or disclosures to the BCSG Adult Safeguarding Contact (We will issue you with guidance and contact details)
- You will be issued with ID. Show this ID when you meet the individuals you are volunteering for on our behalf.
- Be prepared to refer on any issues that you cannot deal with, you must report concerns to the relevant authorities such as police or the local Trust.
- Try to minimize your activity to e.g. doing shopping for others when you are doing your own and restrict to only essential items.
- If you are using your own vehicle when carrying out the volunteer role you must inform your insurance company beforehand to ensure your activities are covered, as any cover will be provided under your own vehicle insurance. We may also require a copy of your vehicle insurance.
- Out of pocket expenses may be covered occasionally but only when agreed with BCDG beforehand, and then only on receipt of appropriate receipts.
- Share good news stories when you can through the #HelpEachOther hashtag to highlight the amazing volunteering contribution that is taking place right across Northern Ireland in the fight against COVID-19. These stories can inspire others to get involved and raise everyone's spirit during this uncertain time.

For general government guidance see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely--2/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely>