

**The power
of kindness**

Community response volunteering

Information and guidance

03.04.2020



Thank you!



Hello and thank you for signing up as a volunteer during these challenging times.

I'm Simon, and I run the crisis response team at the British Red Cross. We help people across the UK when any kind of emergency happens, and the coronavirus outbreak is no exception.

Although everything feels uncertain now, we're so grateful you want to share your kindness to support your community. Our priority is making sure no one is left behind, and we couldn't do it without you.

The **community response role** will involve helping pull together food parcels, organising vital supplies and potentially supporting other local charities. You can read more about the role below.

Thank you again. We really appreciate your support and look forward to welcoming you to our team.

Simon Lewis
Head of Crisis Response
British Red Cross

British Red Cross Fundamental Principles

Our fundamental principles guide the work and decisions of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for all Red Cross and Red Crescent workers in all situations and at all times.

Humanity

We are guided by a desire to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

Impartiality

We don't discriminate on the basis of nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinion. We help people in crisis whoever and wherever they are.

Neutrality

We don't take sides in conflict or engage in any political, racial, religious or ideological debates.

Independence

We are independent from government.

Voluntary service

We are a voluntary organisation and are not motivated by a desire for gain.

Unity

There can only be one Red Cross society in any country and it must be available for everyone to join.

Universality

All Red Cross and Red Crescent societies across the globe have equal status.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The British Red Cross is committed to being a provider of inclusive volunteering opportunities. We encourage applications from people from the widest possible diversity of backgrounds, cultures and experiences – including disabled and ethnic minority candidates. This is to contribute to the breadth of experience we need to respond to people in crisis.

We seek to ensure that our organisation and our services are relevant and accessible to all. We value fresh perspectives and insights gained by involving and welcoming people from the widest possible diversity of background, culture and experience.

Key contact information for CRVs

I have a safeguarding concern – there is an immediate risk to the child, young person or adult	999
I have a safeguarding concern – a child, young person or adult has been abused or harmed or are at risk of abuse or harm	British Red Cross Safeguarding Team 0300 004 0377
I need support with my own wellbeing	British Red Cross Employee Assistance Programme www.healthassuredeap.co.uk To login, use the username and password: BRC
I have a question about my volunteering	British Red Cross National Volunteer Welfare Team volunteerwelfare@redcross.org.uk

We have a short online training course which has information on how to keep yourself safe while you are volunteering, [available here](#).

Acceptance and Agreement

I confirm that I have read and understood the requirements of the role/s for which I have applied to volunteer. I understand the boundaries and responsibilities associated with this role and know of no reason that I am unable to safely and competently carry out these duties.

Roles are subject to change as the situation develops so you may be contacted about a role that is not explicitly outlined in the description.

The community response role

This role will help with:

- Additional support to other organisations/charities in local communities
- Sorting and packing food at food banks or collection centres
- Supply of essential items to support those in isolation centres

You will be given all the information about what you need to do through the GoodSAM app or when you arrive for your shift.

Remember:

- The purpose of the role is to support your community with tasks to help those who are isolating.
- For this role, you might need access to transport
- When you present yourself to the organisations you are supporting – you will be able to show them the task you have been requested to do by the British Red Cross on the GoodSAM app.
- We will provide and show you how to use Personal Protective Equipment (such as gloves or masks) if you need this for your role.
- If you are stopped for any reason and questioned regarding the purpose of your journey, then you can show the request on your app – your volunteering is classed as essential travel
- Follow government guidelines around Covid-19 at all times
- Please do not volunteer if you, or a member of your household, are experiencing any symptoms.

Golden rules for a safe drop off:

If your role involves dropping off packages at people's homes, there are a few things you will need to do to minimise the risk of infection.

- On arrival use antibacterial gel on your hands or put on a pair of disposable gloves before getting out of the vehicle
- Place the items to be delivered on the doorstep before ringing the bell or knocking on the door, and taking a couple of steps backwards
- Do not take the items into the person's house, if they are unable to lift the items, see if there is a shelf or an object like a bin that you could put the items on instead.
- Having returned to your vehicle, you need to dispose of your gloves in a bin liner and treat your hands with gel again.
- When you have finished your rounds and before eating and drinking thoroughly wash your hands with hot water and soap.

Looking after yourself

Do what you need to do to keep yourself physically and mentally well. In times of crisis it is very easy to overcommit yourself so please don't volunteer for long hours. It might sound counter-intuitive to suggest doing less during a crisis, but this is a marathon, not a sprint. Before you say yes to a task, think about whether you are fully prepared - both mentally and physically. It is absolutely OK to say no if you need to take a rest to refresh yourself.

If you need to leave your house as part of your volunteering, please [follow the guidance](#) on social distancing.

[Watch this short video](#) for the World Health Organisation to see effective hand washing in action.

If you start to notice any symptoms visit the [NHS coronavirus website](#) for the latest advice. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

Manual handling

If you need to move or carry a load (i.e. shopping) - ensure you follow the [HSE guidelines](#).

Driving

- If you are using your own vehicle, please confirm that:
- You have told my insurance company that you will use your vehicle for volunteering for a charity (stating that you are volunteering for a charity ensures that insurance companies will not add any extra cost).
- The vehicle being used is taxed, roadworthy and has a valid MOT certificate (where appropriate).
- You have the appropriate driving license for your vehicle.

Remember you must:

- Comply with the law and highway code at all times.
- Be fit and well, not taking any medication that could make you drowsy.
- Stop and park safely before making or receiving mobile phone calls.
- Take regular breaks, don't drive for more than 2 hours without a break.
- Drive for no more than 12 hours in a 24 hour period.
- Adjust your driving to take account of road and weather conditions.
- In the case of an accident contact volunteerwelfare@redcross.org.uk

Training

We have a short online training course which has information on how to keep yourself safe while you are volunteering, [available here](#).

Data protection and confidentiality

When you are volunteering for the British Red Cross, you may see or hear other people's personal information. We want you to treat other people's personal information in the same way you would want yours to be treated. If you do have information about someone you are supporting (e.g. names, contact numbers, addresses and medical information), we ask that you maintain confidentiality and do not discuss or disclose any data or information with anyone outside of British Red Cross or with anyone who doesn't need to know.

Please follow the **helpful tips** below:

DO keep any data secure and treat other people's information in the same way you would want yours to be treated

DO tell the British Red Cross if you think there has been a data breach so we can manage this.

DON'T discuss any information or data with anyone outside of the British Red Cross or with anyone who does not need to know.

DON'T leave any messages on answerphones with any personal information if you are not certain who will be able to hear them.

With-holding your phone number

We recommend that you call the isolated person from a withheld number. To withhold your number on individual calls just dial 141 before the telephone number you want to call.

Delete service users' phone numbers from your mobile

We request that you immediately delete any service users' contact numbers from your personal mobile device once you no longer need it and do not contact the service user again after you have ceased providing them with a service.

Safeguarding Essentials

We want to help you understand your role and responsibilities towards safeguarding children and adults who may be at risk of abuse or harm whom you may come across in the course of your volunteering with us. We want you to know how to recognise abuse and know what to do if you come across it.

What should I do if I am concerned someone has been abused or harmed or is at risk of being abused or harmed?

- ✓ If there is an immediate risk to a child or adult, call emergency services on 999
- ✓ If you are concerned that a child or adult has been abused or harmed or is at risk of abuse or harm, call the British Red Cross Safeguarding Team on **0300 004 0377** or if it's less urgent, email safeguarding@redcross.org.uk

1. What is 'abuse'?

Abuse is when someone has been harmed or injured by another person or persons.

2. How will I recognise abuse?

If you are aware of the types and signs of abuse or harm, you are more likely to be able to recognise it and take the right action.

Adults (types and signs of abuse)

Physical abuse	Someone may tell you they have been injured or are in pain but are not able to tell you how this happened. You may see bruises, or signs of discomfort or fear (i.e. they may flinch when someone comes near them).
Emotional and Psychological abuse	You may hear or see someone being shouted at or being talked to or about in a disrespectful way.
Sexual abuse	They may tell you directly or share information with you which indicates they are feeling pressured into doing something they don't want to do or tell you about something which could indicate abuse e.g. a urine infection.
Neglect and acts of omission	They may tell you that the person who is supporting them isn't caring for them properly or you may see signs (e.g. not helping them with personal care or making sure they have sufficient food).

Financial and/ or material abuse	Ask them how they are managing their money and whether they are having any problems. Be aware of scammers posing as community support and asking for pin numbers or for pressure from family or friends about wills/finances/possessions.
Discriminatory abuse	Ask if they are being treated fairly. You may witness them being talked down to or insulted or treated badly in relation to their age, race, religion, ethnicity, gender reassignment or sexuality.
Organisational Abuse (by an organisation)	If someone has regular carers visiting them, they may talk about a lack of flexibility and choice and poor standards of care. It will be difficult to detect this type of abuse as many of these indicators could be covid-19 related.
Domestic abuse	Anything which indicates they are fearful of their family members. When visiting the house, they are not available and always 'sleeping'; you may hear a person being shouted at or talked down to.
Modern Slavery	The person you're supporting appears frightened or hesitant to talk with you or they tell you they are moving and won't be there the next week and don't know where they are going or how they'll get there
Self-neglect	The person tells you they aren't eating properly, have stopped taking their medication or are 'letting themselves go'.

Children

You may come across children during your volunteering. Listen for concerning language and look for physical indicators of abuse (such as bruising etc) which could indicate they are not being cared for appropriately or are at risk of injury. Children can suffer physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

3. What do you need me to do if I think someone might be being abused or at risk of abuse?

- ✓ if you're concerned call the Safeguarding Team on 0300 004 0377.
- ✓ be alert to any indicators of abuse
- ✓ ask open questions when you get safe opportunities to do so.
- ✓ If safe to do so ask the person you're speaking to if they feel safe with the other people who live with them or visit. [If they say no, follow this up as discretely as possible without giving information away to alleged perpetrators who might overhear.]
- ✓ take abuse and the risk of it seriously and act if you are concerned.

Please avoid:

- X making assumptions or jumping to conclusions;
- X investigating or asking leading questions; or
- X keeping your concerns to yourself or taking it on as your sole responsibility.

4. What abuse or welfare issues might I come across while I am volunteering during this Covid-19 pandemic?

You may come across any of the above, however we are expecting an increase for adults in financial abuse, neglect, domestic abuse (including sexual violence), discriminatory abuse and suicidal thoughts and attempts. We also anticipate an increase across all forms of child abuse.