

VOLUNTEERING INFORMATION SHEET

Why should I volunteer?

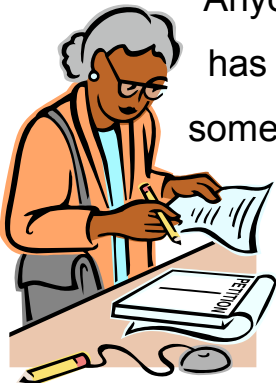
There are lots of good reasons to become a volunteer. For some people it is a great way of learning new skills and adding valuable experience to your CV. For others it is simply an opportunity to get out of the house, meet new people and to become more actively involved in the community. Whatever your reasons for volunteering, it is likely that it will increase your confidence, give you sense of achievement and the satisfaction of doing something worthwhile.



Who can volunteer?

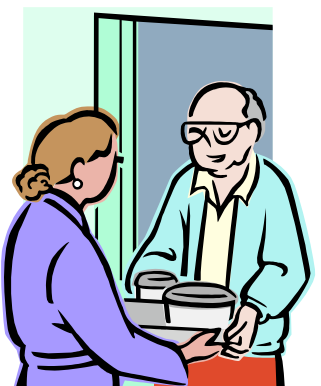
Anyone! There are no rules or age limits to who can volunteer. Everyone has something they can contribute. You simply have to be able to donate some of your time. This can be as little as an hour a week, or 8 hours a day!

Most organisations will prefer some kind of commitment from you (i.e. one hour a week for three months), but are also likely to be flexible and will accommodate those people with conditions which may affect their reliability.



What kind of things can I do as a volunteer?

That depends on what you would like to do. You should try and think of something that interests you, or something that you already have skills in which you would be able to pass on to others. Alternatively you might want to find somewhere you can learn new



skills, or try a job out to see if you like it or not. Here at DISC we can help you identify your skills and interests and find out which direction you want to head in. We can then help match you with a volunteering placement which is right for you.

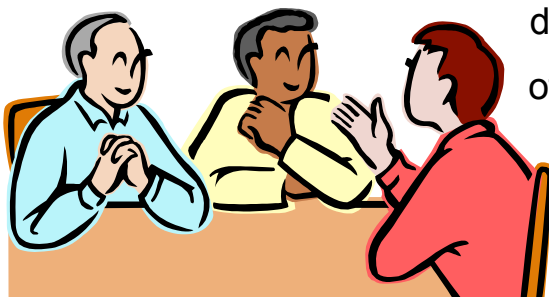


Will it affect my benefits?

Volunteering should not affect your benefit entitlement although you should ALWAYS inform your benefits office of your intention to volunteer. There are no limits on how much time you volunteer as long as you meet the conditions of the benefit you receive and do not receive any money other than out of pocket expenses. For example, if you claim Jobseekers Allowance, you should still be actively looking for work, be available to attend interviews and be able to start work within 48 hours of a job coming up. This however should not stop you volunteering. It is in fact an excellent way of enhancing your job potential.

What about expenses?

Depending on where you volunteer you may receive money to cover your out of pocket expenses. This may include for example, your travel to and from the placement, childcare costs or the cost of meals taken away from the home during volunteering. You should always keep any receipts for expenses. You MUST



declare any expenses you receive to your Benefits office. Remember however, that your benefits WILL NOT be affected if the money you receive covers only your out of pocket expenses.

For more information on volunteering please contact DISC on

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