



## Volunteering FAQs

### Why Volunteer at Mind?

Many thousands of people volunteer for Mind every day and we value their commitment and hard work. We simply could not operate without the dedication of our volunteers who do a tremendous job helping people with mental health problems.

Volunteers tell us how much they enjoy being involved with the charity and the potential to make a real difference to people's lives.

### Who can volunteer at Mind?

Anyone can volunteer and we'd really appreciate your help. We have a range of opportunities so keep checking our [vacancies and volunteering](#) page if there isn't anything for you right now.

### What volunteering opportunities are there?

You can [volunteer at our head office](#) Stratford, London and Cardiff, a [retail shop](#), at a [fundraising event](#) or local Minds across England and Wales.

Volunteers are welcome to get involved with as many or as few different types of volunteering that they are interested in.

### What do we mean by local Minds?

For your information, national Mind is not directly involved with service provision, as this takes place at local level through our federated network of local Mind organisations. National Mind have offices in London and Cardiff, whereas 130 local Minds are located throughout England and Wales. They are independent charities and are responsible for their own volunteer recruitment. A full listing of Local Mind contact details can be found on Mind's [website](#)

### How much time do I have to give as a volunteer?

The amount of time needed is different for each opportunity and would be outlined in the role description. It could be one-off, short or longer term commitment.

### What skills do I need to volunteer?

The skills required for a role depends on the opportunity and the nature of the project. For some roles, there is no specific set of skills required and we only look for enthusiasm, commitment and workplace values. The role requirements will be clearly stated in the role description.

### What will I get out of volunteering?

It depends on the motivations and reasons you have chosen to volunteer. Volunteering is a great way to use your existing skills or further your skills and knowledge, as well as meet new people and gain confidence. And, it is also a good addition to your CV.

Many volunteers get huge satisfaction out of making a difference to the lives of anyone with a mental health problem.

**Will I be interviewed?**

Most roles will involve an informal chat so you can find out more about Mind and what the opportunity involves. The recruitment process depends on the nature of the volunteering opportunity chosen at National Mind, Retail or a Local Mind.

**Will I be paid to cover my expenses?**

Yes. You will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses that arise from volunteering, such as travel and lunch. The types of expenses you can claim for will be confirmed once you start a volunteering role.

**Will volunteering affect my benefits?**

No. Volunteers are not paid for their time but are entitled to be reimbursed for their travel and other legitimate expenses. Volunteering does not affect the benefits payments you receive although you should inform your benefits advisor when you start volunteering.

**Do you offer training to volunteers?**

We will provide the necessary training to help you perform your role effectively. Volunteers will receive an induction and training depending on the role to perform their task well. The training provided will be appropriate for the demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer.

**What support will I get?**

We will make sure you have all the information and support you need to perform your role. The Volunteer Manager or a designated member of staff will be the main point of contact so you know who to go to with any questions or concerns, information about health and safety and your expenses reimbursed where agreed. We also encourage volunteer managers to have regular one-to-ones and catch ups with the volunteers to check how they are getting on and address any concerns.

**Can I leave if I don't like it?**

Yes of course you can. We want all our volunteers to have a worthwhile and positive experience so we welcome feedback on how we could make improvements. We encourage volunteers to talk to us before making the decision to leave.

**Are you using volunteer roles to replace paid members of staff?**

As a charity, we depend on our volunteers to help us continue our work. Mind has a volunteering policy that states that volunteer roles should never be used in place of paid roles. Volunteers are usually recruited on a time limited basis to work on specific projects.

Mind firmly believes that a volunteer is someone who is unpaid and gives up their own time, of their own free will, to the benefit of Mind.

Mind expects the same high standard from our networks and would expect any placements to be voluntary, well organised, meaningful and supportive, particularly for people with mental health problems.

**Do we offer work experience/internship placements?**

At national Mind, we currently do not offer work experience or internships, however we have a range of volunteering opportunities. Another option is to contact a local Mind to see if they have any suitable roles. Although affiliated to national Mind, they are independent charities and are responsible for their own recruitment – work experience/internships or volunteers.

**Do we offer corporate volunteering opportunities?**

Unfortunately, we are not able to organise staff volunteering for companies, where we don't have an existing corporate partnership. If you would like to become a corporate partner, please [click here](#).

Alternatively, look at our website to see possible opportunities that staff might be able to get involved with individually or as small groups or email [volunteering@mind.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@mind.org.uk)

**What about disclosure and barring checks?**

As part of our safeguarding policies we ask you to disclose if you have any convictions that are unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, when you sign up to a volunteering opportunity.

As part of our equal opportunities policy, we wish to ensure that we don't discriminate against ex-offenders. However some posts within Mind are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as they involve working with vulnerable adults and/or children and young people and will require a DBS check.

By using the DBS to assess volunteers, as well as all other roles at, or which work with Mind, we fully comply with the DBS Code of Practice. We are committed to treating all applicants equally and undertake not to discriminate unfairly against the subject of a positive disclosure.

Please let us know if you would like to see a copy of Mind's Guidance on Disclosure and Barring Service.

If you have any further enquiries, please email [volunteering@mind.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@mind.org.uk).