



## The My Guide Experience

### What will you gain as a volunteer?

**Confidence.** Volunteering can help you gain confidence by giving you the chance to try something new and build a real sense of achievement.

**Change.** Volunteering can have a real and valuable positive affect on people, communities and society in general.

**Community.** Volunteering can help you meet different kinds of people and make new friends. Volunteering can help you feel part of something outside your friends and family.

**Grow - learn new skills.** Volunteering can help you learn new skills, gain experience and sometimes even qualifications.

**Challenge.** Through volunteering you can challenge yourself to try something different, achieve personal goals, practice using your skills and discover hidden talents.

### Physical fitness

**Reward.** Fun! Most volunteers have a great time, regardless of why they do it.

Volunteers are a gift to our community and it is vitally important to us that everyone who gives their time and commitment has a good and fulfilling experience.

### What you can expect from us?

- We'll provide you with an induction and learning opportunities that equip you to carry out your role and can help develop you, (e.g. our lead volunteer opportunities and the chance to study at My Guide Level 3).
- We'll provide you with clear and concise information about the standards required to carry out your role, and we'll support you to achieve these.
- We will ensure you have access to regular support and supervision with your volunteer manager to discuss your role.

- We listen to and respect all volunteers' views and contributions, and will ensure your voices are heard by decision makers.
- We communicate clearly and directly with all volunteers.
- We'll provide different ways to discuss ideas and share good practice with other volunteers, employees, senior management and trustees.
- We ensure our volunteers are kept safe.
- We'll reimburse your agreed expenses in a timely manner.
- We ensure that all our activities are inclusive and celebrate diversity.
- We address any complaints and difficulties fairly and promptly.
- We ensure the confidentiality and security of personal information.

### As a volunteer we will ask you to:

- Carry out your role to the best of your ability, embracing the values of Guide Dogs.
- Uphold the policies and standards of service delivery when carrying out your role.
- Work only within the boundaries and training for your role.
- Keep up-to-date with information related to your volunteering role(s) through internal communications, training and meetings.
- Have regular dialogue with your manager to discuss your volunteering.
- Attend and participate in regular volunteer meetings with the local team.
- Abide by safeguarding principles when working with vulnerable adults and children.
- Behave responsibly regarding your own and others' safety.
- Act in a non-discriminatory and inclusive manner.
- Keep client information confidential and secure, in line with our data protection policy and procedures.
- Share ideas using the communications channels available.
- Keep your personal data such as contact details up to date on our database via your manager.

### Next Steps:

Providing you have completed the application and approval process and all necessary training you will then be put forward as a My Guide for the area you wish to volunteer in.

Whilst we aim to offer a start in the role as quickly as possible, there may be instances where you are waiting. During this period, we will keep in regular contact.

Once an opportunity is identified we will contact you to discuss this and if this is suited to your needs we will arrange a matching visit where you will meet the service user you will support.

During this meeting we will discuss suitable activities and agree what we call an activity plan. The activity plan sets out what both parties want to achieve during the partnership and when the activities will take place.

Following this meeting your partnership can commence and you can agree how you keep in touch. If you wish your personal information to remain confidential meetings, this can be arranged through your local team.

Approximately 4-6 weeks after the partnership is set up you may be contacted to complete a short survey on your experience so far. This enables us to address any issues at an early stage, so please do share your feedback with us.

We hope your time volunteering with us is positive and rewarding.

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