

**Victim Support Scotland Volunteer**

 **How can you support victims and witnesses of crime?**

Victims of crime often feel a range of emotions in the aftermath of an offence. It is Victim Support Scotland’s role to provide victims and witnesses of crime emotional and practical support in person, online, and in court. Volunteers are supported by VSS staff who manage the service.

**Making a difference**
Our volunteers provide emotional support, practical help, information and guidance through the criminal justice system. We aim to empower people who have been impacted by crime, to move on with their lives.

* Discuss service users’ needs by telephone, appointments and face-to-face contact, agreeing next steps at the end of each contact
* Help service users feel more confident by arranging and conducting court familiarisation visits
* Support service users in the court room and other appropriate locations on the day of the trial, liaising with court officials on behalf of the service users.
* Feedback and agree follow-up actions with staff members
* Provide administrative support in completing the service users journey

**Benefits to volunteering with us**

Volunteering with Victim Support Scotland can be challenging and also extremely rewarding. As a volunteer you will:

* Support people when they most need it
* Learn new skills and knowledge of the criminal justice sector
* Gain access to a range of specialist training courses that are relevant to your volunteering role
* Positively contribute to your community as a member of a team actively working to reduce the impact of crime
* A chance to give something back
* Receive support in your volunteering role to deliver services effectively
* All reasonable expenses (e.g. travel) will be reimbursed

**Learning & Development opportunities**

You will be required to undergo 40 hours of in-depth learning and development over a period of up to five to six weeks, through online self-study, virtual workshops and supervised support, resulting in accreditation.

This will equip you with the necessary skills, experience, and knowledge to provide high quality support to victims and witnesses of crime.

**Required skills and experience for the post**

Due to the nature of the role, there are key skills and experiences that we look for in our

volunteers to ensure we maintain consistent and high standards of support for our service

users.

• Strong interpersonal and communication skills

•The ability to actively listen to service users and anyone affected by crime

• An empathetic nature with the ability to develop rapport with people affected by crime

• A non-judgmental and accepting approach to working with people from all sections of the community

• An interest in learning about the Criminal Justice System and understanding the challenges a service user might face

• A desire to continue developing skills and knowledge throughout your volunteering time with VSS

• Ability to be flexible and adapt to organisation and service user needs

* An awareness of confidentiality obligations and the responsibilities that come with upholding these obligations

**Further requirements**

* Undertaking a Disclosure Scotland check and joining the PVG scheme.
* Willingness to use own car or public transportation to Victim Support Scotland Office. We will support people with disabilities to access transportation.
* Ability or willingness to learn to use digital methods to communicate and report, such as email, text, databases, apps and more.
* Awareness of strict confidentiality requirement to the support you’ll provide and willingness to uphold data protection obligations.
* Willingness to learn about safeguarding the safety and welfare of service users and protecting them from harm. Ability to adhere to organisational safeguarding obligations to keep people safe, and the elements of risk associated with our service users.
* The ability to represent the organisation and conduct yourself in a professional manner while volunteering.

**Getting the most out of volunteering**

We know that our volunteers have busy lives, so we agree the time commitment with each individual volunteer. However, we ask for:

* a minimum commitment of approximately one eight hours day per week, however this may vary depending upon the needs of the service.
* a minimum commitment of at least one year so that they might get the most out of a volunteering role, ideally two so that you might get the most out of development opportunities and your support experience.

We appreciate that things may crop up that inhibit your ability to volunteer for a session or for a short period of time and we will work with you on this to ensure you are supported during this time and you are in regular contact with your line manager. However, we keep our service users in mind throughout this process to ensure their support needs come first, so it is imperative that you consider this requirement prior to committing to the volunteer role.

**Application information**

The people we support come from all communities across Scotland, as do our volunteers.

We welcome new volunteers from all backgrounds and languages.

If you have any questions about this volunteering opportunity, please contact us at

Volunteer.recruitment@victimsupportsco.org.uk.

**Recruitment and induction process**

We are committed to the welfare and protection of children and protected adults and have

a duty to ensure the suitability of any individual who volunteers with the organisation.

To ensure we provide the best possible service to people affected by crime, we ask all volunteers to follow our recruitment and induction process. This involves:

• Completing our volunteer registration form

• Undertaking a Disclosure Scotland check and joining the PVG scheme

• Providing two satisfactory references

• Participating in an online Discovery Session to ensure this is the right opportunity for you

• Attending an interview

• Participating in an online Induction Session

• Undertaking in-depth training and development

• Signing and abiding by Victim Support Scotland’s confidentiality agreement; data

protection commitment; and volunteer agreement

To apply for the role, please visit: <https://victimsupport.scot/register-to-volunteer-with-us/>