**Victim Support Scotland – National Support Centre Volunteer Role**

**Description**

This is an incredibly rewarding, and sometimes challenging role as you will be supporting people affected by crime who have likely experienced a degree of trauma. For many people affected by crime, talking to us via our helpline or webchat service is the first step towards moving forward after a crime.

Our National Support Centre (NSC) volunteers offer support through our helpline and webchat services, providing a safe space for a victim, witness, or their family to describe their experiences, ask questions and receive support. Our NSC volunteers make initial contact with all victims and witnesses referred to us from Police Scotland. They provide information and support at the time of need and work with local Victim Support Scotland teams to ensure ongoing support is in place for anyone who requires it.

**Organisation aims and objectives.**

Victim Support Scotland is the leading charity dedicated to helping people affected by crime across Scotland. We support victims of crime, witnesses and their family members, regardless of who they are and their circumstances. Our service is independent, free, non-judgemental and confidential. We offer bespoke support, personalised to the needs of each individual.

Victim Support Scotland provides information, practical help, emotional support and guidance through the criminal justice system. We offer specialist services to support people who face specific crimes including murder, terrorism, rape and sexual assault, domestic violence and hate crime. We empower people to cope with the aftermath of a crime and find the strength to move forward with their lives.

We have dedicated volunteers, supported by paid staff, in our national and local offices across Scotland, as well as our teams in the Sheriff and High Courts, helping us to provide high quality support to those affected by crime. Victim Support Scotland represents the voice of people affected by crime. We influence key national policy decision-making to champion victim and witness rights and improve support services.

**How would you help?**

The role of NSC volunteers is pivotal to Victim Support Scotland and they play a key part in the service users’ support journey with us. Our National Support Centre operates Monday to Friday 8am until 8pm and Saturday mornings 9am to 1pm.

As a National Support Centre volunteer, you can expect to complete the following tasks:

• Provide initial support to people affected by crime through incoming helpline enquiries

• Provide initial support to people affected by crime through by telephone to victims &

 witnesses who have been referred to our services.

• Provide support and information to people affected by crime through our webchat service • Provide relevant support and information to anyone affected by crime

• Promote VSS’ support and work with local VSS teams to ensure ongoing support is in place for anyone who requires it

• Link service users with specialist organisations

• Update our database record system

**Experience required.**

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.
* Active listening skills.
* An empathetic nature with the ability to develop rapport with people affected by crime
* A non-judgemental 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 or willingness to learn to use digital methods to communicate and report, such as email, text, databases, apps and more.
* Ability to be flexible and adapt to organisation and service user needs Further requirements.

**What are the benefits to me?**

As a National Support Centre volunteer you will gain many benefits, such as:

* Supporting people when they most need it, helping them to recover from what can be a very distressing time in their life and empowering them to move forward.
* Learning new skills and gaining experience of working within the criminal justice sector
* Gaining access to a range of training courses that are relevant to your volunteering role.
* Positively affecting your community as a member of a team actively working to reduce the impact of crime.
* Receive support in your volunteering role to deliver services effectively.
* Build confidence and gain a sense of achievement.
* Improved physical and mental health wellbeing.
* Adding to your CV.
* Trying something new and meet new people.

**What is the time commitment?**

We know that our volunteers have busy lives, so we agree time commitment with each individual volunteer.

* Normally we ask volunteers if they can commit to a day a week. However, if you can commit for at least four hours, up to one day per week or more dependent on your availability you would make a lasting difference to people affected by crime.
* If possible, a minimum commitment of at least a year would be welcomed. This would enable you to get the most out your volunteering experience and personal development.

**How can I apply?**

The people we support come from all communities across Scotland, as do our volunteers. We welcome new volunteers from all backgrounds and cultures.
If you are interested in this role, please click the button below.

<https://victimsupport.scot/volunteertoday/>

We look forward to hearing from you. Once you apply you will receive an email inviting you to a Discovery Session. This will provide you with more insight into the role, the opportunity to ask questions and decide if it is the right choice for you. Please check your junk/spam folder on your email in case the invite to the session is in there.

**What else should I know?**

* You must be aged 18 and over to apply.
* This role requires providing two references and joining the PVG Scheme. As you will be a volunteer there is no cost.
* Awareness of strict confidentiality requirements regarding the support you will provide and willingness to uphold data protection.
* Ability to adhere to organisational safeguarding commitments.
* All agreed expenses (e.g.travel) will be reimbursed.

**Taster Session.**

We offer taster sessions to give you an idea of what the role entails.

**Training Details.**

High quality training will be provided to support you in your role and opportunity for personal development. You will receive ongoing support and supervision and the opportunity to connect with other Victim Support Scotland Volunteers.