

volunteer for us



find the strength

We are Victim Support. We help people find the strength to carry on after a crime.



About us

Set up over 35 years ago, Victim Support is the oldest and largest national charity for victims of crime across England and Wales, their family, friends and anyone else affected. We speak out as a national voice for victims and witnesses and campaign for change.

Every year we offer help to over 1.5 million victims and witnesses, whatever crime they've suffered, whenever it happened and whether or not they've told the police. We help victims and witnesses find the strength to move on with their lives.

How we help people

With our network of over 7,000 specially trained volunteers, we work

hard to make sure that every victim and witness gets the help and support they need, in a way that suits them. We help victims come to terms with what has happened and how they feel. We tell them about the options and choices they have. And we give practical support to help people move on with their lives. All this is free and confidential.

We support witnesses through the criminal justice system. We make sure that they feel safe, well informed and looked-after at court.

Our services include:

- giving emotional support to help victims deal with the fear and distress crime can cause.
- providing information so people can find their way around the criminal justice system.
- helping with applications for criminal injuries compensation.

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Alex, Cambridge

For me, it's a continuous learning curve that enables me to develop my transferrable skills.

Beena: supporting witnesses

What attracted you to volunteering with Victim Support's Witness Service?

After being a full-time mum for 11 years I found I had more time on my hands and wanted to get back out into the world. I saw getting involved as a way to engage with people from all walks of life and make a difference to them at a challenging time. I wanted to become part of a team that helps people through very difficult, often emotional times.

What do you think is your greatest achievement so far as a volunteer?

That's a tough question! The crux of it is seeing people come through their own ordeal and emerge on the other side.

More than any one occasion that I can pinpoint, my sense of achievement comes through knowing that whatever part I've played in supporting the witnesses, their friends and family, it's helped them find the strength to go through the difficult process of giving the best evidence they can.

What are you most looking forward to as a volunteer?

Every week I look forward to meeting new people and being faced with new challenges. I never know who I'm going to be talking to or what situations are going to come up from week to week.

That's the real driver for me. But one thing is certain – the team is always there to support me to deal with very sensitive cases and situations. Because of their support I know I can look forward to coming into court every week and face the new challenges of the day confidently.





- arranging visits to court before a trial so that witnesses can learn about what happens and about legal terminology.
- helping with home security, such as lock fitting and personal alarms.
- putting people in touch with other organisations for more support.
- helping with insurance forms and dealing with other agencies.
- special support packages for people affected by homicide and other types of crime.

Our volunteers are at the heart of delivering these vital services and the rewards they get are huge. But don't just take it from us, read the case studies to hear what some of our volunteers have to say about what they do.

Giving time for victims of crime

It's our volunteers who help victims get their confidence back and find the strength to move on with their lives. Volunteers are involved in all aspects of our work and we welcome people with enthusiasm and with all kinds of skills and interests.

Volunteering at Victim Support is also a great way to get skills which you can transfer to the workplace. And it helps you learn about dealing with life's problems – both personal and professional.

Volunteering with us can help you:

- to develop new skills such as communication, team working and time management.
- show that you're committed, can deal with responsibility, prioritise work and have good listening skills.

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Khan, Nottingham

I can see myself still doing this in another five years' time. I have an amazing support network and I have regular contact with a mentor and my manager.

Lloyd: fundraising champion

What attracted you to volunteering with Victim Support?

I am, and always have been, very passionate about improving people's quality of life. When I learned about the work that Victim Support does, I felt that by joining the charity as a volunteer I could do more to help people at a time when they need support the most.

I am currently studying for a degree in health psychology with the aim of becoming a clinical psychologist. Working as a volunteer in the community has complemented my studies and given me very valuable experience.

What would you consider your greatest achievement so far as a volunteer?

As well as helping victims I've recently arranged many fundraising events. I've organised two very successful and really enjoyable gigs for the charity, as well as training for individual physical fundraising challenges that have allowed me to make the most of my athletic side!

This year, I ran a marathon for Victim Support, and also cycled from London to Paris. It was no mean feat but worth every minute. I feel that this has been my greatest volunteering achievement so far.

What are you most looking forward to as a volunteer?

At the moment I'm extremely busy with my studies, but I'm working hard to fit my volunteer work in with my other commitments. Recently, I've been working with Victim Support to spread the word to other students about all the work we do and the opportunities for people to get involved.

Once I've completed all my university deadlines, I'm really looking forward to organising my third gig with some other fundraising champions!





- be more employable through training, and personal development, helping you stand out from other job applicants.
- work within the community and other local organisations to broaden your experience.
- use your spare time in an extremely positive and satisfying way, knowing that you are doing something to help people in your community affected by crime.

Becoming a volunteer

We'll train you to support someone from the first time you meet them until they no longer need help. And, of course, we'll fully support you as a volunteer. You'll be able to help shape how we work and become part of a unique, but inclusive team of likeminded people from all walks of life.

We want volunteers who are enthusiastic and passionate about our cause. We have roles to suit people who have lots of time to give as well as those who can only spare a few hours. In exchange for your commitment, we'll support your personal and professional development by giving you excellent training opportunities, on-going support and regular feedback about how you're really making a difference to our charity and the people we support.

How to apply

If you like what you've read and heard about us and think that volunteering with Victim Support is for you, simply fill in the enclosed application form and return it to your local VS or WS office, (see our website). We look forward to hearing from you!

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Zoheb, Salford

Volunteering at Victim Support has a positive impact on your life. You can apply the skills you learn from the training to all aspects of your life. I've learned to read people and gain their trust, and can support my friends better when they have problems.

Brad: helping victims

What attracted you to Victim Support?

I had been unemployed for three months and was looking to volunteer for a professional organisation. I wanted to keep my confidence up and I was really keen to meet people regularly.

I went to my local volunteer centre and they pointed me in the direction of Victim Support. I thought my skills would be relevant to the charity so I came in and met the team at Rochdale. They were friendly and I automatically felt part of the team.

The training is top class and I would recommend volunteering for Victim Support to anyone.

What has been your greatest achievement so far as a volunteer?

As I work with victims in the community I'm currently supporting people after crimes such as burglary, assault and criminal damage. I enjoy helping people with their home security and feel humbled by the experiences of the victims I support. Volunteering at Victim

Support is a very levelling experience and has helped me to put my own problems into perspective.

What do you most look forward to when you volunteer each week?

I admire what Victim Support achieves. I also find the charity's professional outlook very refreshing. Although I have lived in Rochdale all my life, it is only since volunteering here that I've really felt part of my community. I enjoy seeing people change and it's great to see people accepting my help. I hope to apply the experience I'm learning to future jobs.



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Anne, North Tyneside

No two cases are ever alike; there's always something new to learn.

At the back of this booklet are role descriptions with details of the different volunteering opportunities we have. They give more information about the time commitments needed as well as the responsibilities and opportunities that go with each role.

Whatever you choose to do, one thing is certain; your time and commitment to our cause will be truly valued.

Frequently asked questions about volunteering with Victim Support

Will it cost me money to volunteer?

No. We pay all your normal expenses as a volunteer.

Do I need previous experience?

No. We'll give you full training so that you're well equipped to work with victims and witnesses.

How long do you expect me to volunteer for?

Well, there are no fixed expectations. Our training is five days long so we hope you will stay around for long enough to benefit from the training and help others. Most of our volunteers stay for several years and some love us so much they stay for decades! If you would rather do a short volunteering project with us, contact your local team to discuss other ways to get involved.

What time of day would I have to volunteer?

In the Witness Service we need volunteers to work during daytime court opening times, usually between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Volunteers who help support victims, can currently visit clients any time between 8am and 7.30pm Monday to Friday and 10am until 1.30pm at the weekends, so we're quite flexible. Your local manager can advise you of the hours of other roles.

Will I get support?

Yes, you will have ongoing support from your local manager and plenty of opportunities to meet with other volunteers in the team

How long does the recruitment process take?

We try to be as efficient as we can, but it does depend a little on the timing of training. Once we have your application form we'll invite you to an informal interview. This is a great way

for you to find out more about us and for us to ask you a few questions. If we're both sure that there is a suitable role for you, we'll ask you to start a distance learning course which prepares you for the core training. After training you will have a chance to practice with experienced staff or volunteers and be accredited as a volunteer.

What is the training like?

The training is fun and interactive and volunteers say they really enjoy being together as a team. The initial training is five days long and we try to work around your availability. During the course you'll be able to meet and hear from members of staff and other volunteers about what it's like to be part of Victim Support. Courses are held all over the country and we refund travel expenses. Later you can take on more specialist training.

Will I have to have a criminal records check?

If you are working with victims and witnesses you will have to complete a Criminal Records Bureau check through us. Your local manager will talk you through this. It is quite straightforward. A criminal record won't necessarily prevent you from volunteering with us so please talk it through with your local manager if you are concerned.

Is there a minimum or maximum age limit on volunteering?

You do have to be at least 18 to work as a volunteer with victims and witnesses. But if you are younger and still want to get involved, please tell us as we may have some other interesting work that you can help with. There is no maximum age limit.

How many people will I be supporting at a time?

This varies a little based on crime levels in your area or the number of court rooms in your local court. We also take your own availability into account and your local manager will try to get the best balance for you and our clients.

66 22

Barbara, Cambridge

As a Victim Support volunteer I get a great sense of satisfaction knowing I've helped to restore confidence and security back to victims so they can move forward in life.

Victim Support volunteer

Reports to Local Manager

Purpose of the role

To give confidential emotional support and practical help to victims of crime and other people affected.

Typical tasks

- Contacting people who have been victims of crime, either over the phone, at the victim's home or another mutually agreed location.
- Clearly explaining the role of Victim Support and empowering victims to overcome the emotional, psychological and practical effects of crime.
- Communicating in a way that is appropriate to the person being supported.
- Helping people explore how their experience of crime has affected their lives and identifying ways to enable them to recover from the experience.
- Finding out what each individual victim's needs and wishes for support are to help them decide on and access their options.
- Identifying situations where we cannot directly meet the needs of

- the victim and working with the client and the manager to make appropriate referrals.
- Liaising with staff to arrange practical help for victims (such as lock fitting).
- Promoting the rights of people you support and respecting diversity.
- Giving information about other agencies' and their procedures.
- Giving information and help with applications for criminal injuries compensation.
- Attending training, support sessions and volunteer meetings.
- Keeping your manager informed of actions and progress on each case.

Skills, values, abilities and commitment needed

 We encourage volunteers working with victims to be available for at least two hours a week whenever possible. Working times are flexible as appointments with clients can be made during the day, in the evenings (up to 7.30pm) or at weekends.



- Able to commit to our mandatory five-day core training for new staff and volunteers.
- A caring, mature and supportive empathy towards others.
- A non-judgmental, impartial and confidential approach to supporting others.
- A commitment to ensuring victims have equal access to our services.
- Respect for the diversity of our colleagues and clients.
- Willing to work within our values, procedures and policies.
- Good listening skills and good verbal communication skills.
- A reliable and organised team player.
- This opportunity is available to all applicants aged 18 and over.

- Join a dedicated team of likeminded people.
- Get excellent training and develop new skills.
- Progress by specialising in supporting victims of specific crimes (such as domestic violence or hate crime).
- Rewarding sense of having made a positive differences to people's lives.
- Learn about the work of criminal justice agencies.

66 99 Mohamed, Northampton

It makes me happy that the people I help feel supported by me and by Victim Support.

Witness Service volunteer

Reports to Witness Service Manager

Purpose of the role

To help witnesses (and family and friends) deal with the experience of attending court and giving evidence.

Typical tasks

- Giving witnesses and supporters confidential support, guidance and information at criminal court to make their experience more comfortable.
- Helping people deal with the emotional effects of giving evidence.
- Explaining court procedures, legal terminology and decisions.
- Showing people around the courtroom before a trial so that they are familiar and at ease in the environment.
- Listening to the concerns witnesses have and empathising with and advocating for them where appropriate.
- Helping witnesses to prepare themselves for a range of possible trial outcomes

- Going into the courtroom with the witness where it's allowed.
- Ensuring that witnesses continue to get our help after court if they need it.
- Working as part of a team with other Witness Service volunteers and staff, liaising with court personnel.
- Promoting the rights of people you support and respecting diversity.
- Attending training, support sessions and volunteer meetings.

Skills, values, abilities and commitment needed

- Able to volunteer during normal court hours. Most offices like volunteers to be available at least half a day every fortnight. Some prefer volunteers to work full day shifts.
- Able to commit to our mandatory five-day core training for new staff and volunteers.
- A caring, mature and supportive empathy towards others.



- A non-judgmental, impartial and confidential approach to supporting other people.
- Committed to ensuring that victims and witnesses have equal access to our services.
- Respect for diversity of our colleagues and clients.
- Willing to work within our values, procedures and policies.
- Good listening skills and good verbal communication skills.
- A reliable and organised team player.
- This opportunity is available to all applicants aged 18 and over.

 To join a dedicated team of likeminded people.

- To learn about the work of criminal justice agencies.
- To get excellent training and develop new skills.
- Rewarding sense of having made a positive differences to people's lives

66 77

Lyn, Gateshead

I've been a volunteer with both Victim Support and the Witness Service for three years now. I can honestly say it's the best move I've ever made. I get so much pleasure from helping people who are in need of help and support. Many of my clients have been so grateful just to have me there to listen to them.

Volunteer trainer

Reports to Regional Learning and Development Manager or Regional Trainer

Purpose of the role

To help regional learning and development teams to deliver learning events.

Typical tasks

- Encouraging other volunteers to take part in training events.
- Delivering sessions in agreement with the regional learning and development team.
- Co-training with regional trainer at events.
- Helping trainers to manage group work.
- Helping administer training events.
- Helping to make sure that rooms are suitable for learning events.
- Liaising with venues and caterers for the smooth running of events.
- Helping to evaluate and plan learning programmes.
- Helping learners meet the learning outcomes.
- Coaching and mentoring.

- General filing of operational and administrative records, both on paper and electronically.
- Collating statistics.
- Attending training support sessions and volunteer meetings.

Skills, values, abilities and commitment needed

- Committed to take part in our full mandatory core training for new volunteers.
- A recognised training qualification (or working towards one).
- Able to be non-judgmental, impartial and confidential.
- Committed to ensuring that people have equal access to our learning opportunities.
- Respect for the diversity of our colleagues and clients.
- Willing to work within our values, procedures and policies.
- Good listening skills.
- This opportunity is available to applicants aged 16 or over.



- The opportunity to join a team of like-minded people.
- To get excellent training and develop new skills.
- To learn about the criminal justice system.
- Rewarding sense of having made a positive differences to people's lives

66 99

Sylvia, Norfolk

By using my training and knowledge I can help victims move on, however slightly, from the crime that's been committed against them. Also just the words 'thanks for being there' are a tremendous boost for me.

66)) Caroline, West Yorkshire

Through volunteering with Victim Support I've rediscovered some of the confidence I lost after finishing work. At the same time I've learned more about the skills I need to improve and practice more. It's an 'odd' job in many ways, requiring patience and self awareness, but it has taught me the power of listening and the satisfaction that you can find in your connections with very different people."

Office administration volunteer

Overall purpose

To help with the smooth running of our offices.

Typical tasks include

- General administrative tasks such as filing, photocopying and faxing.
- Organising events and meetings, booking venues and rooms as necessary.
- Preparing information and documents.
- Devising and maintaining accurate and up-to-date records.
- Collating statistics and producing small reports.
- Organising staff and volunteer meetings.
- Liaising with staff and external contacts.
- Researching and developing contact databases.
- Acting as a first point of contact for visitors and telephone enquiries.

Skills, values, abilities and commitment needed

No previous administrative experience is necessary, but the following skills and personal qualities would be an advantage:

- IT literate, including Microsoft Office.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Able to deal with vulnerable people sensitively and professionally.
- Able to prioritise and manage workloads.
- Friendly, approachable and a good team player.
- Flexible, innovative and selfsufficient.
- Willing to work within our values, procedures and policies.
- Accuracy and attention to detail.



- Full induction, one-to-one support in the role and opportunities for continuous development.
- Opportunity to develop administrative skills in an office environment.
- Payment of agreed expenses.
- Opportunity to become part of a team of like-minded people.
- Chance to contribute to the valuable work of Victim Support.

Training

Administrative volunteers get basic training in our core values and mission and in health and safety.

66 22

Ivor, Norwich

During some 17 years helping victims as a VS volunteer, I've met or spoken with over 2,000 crime victims of every category. So many amazing people of every background, culture and race, each with a life and a story to tell. I cannot recall a single negative encounter. I've been inspired by the courage, resilience and dignity I've so often seen. It has been my privilege to have been of real and valued help to so many fellow citizens through Victim Support. The words of appreciation often heard and the sight of people emerging from the shadow of unpleasant experiences gives me real satisfaction.

Community engagement volunteer

Purpose of the role

To engage with local community groups, particular those focused on ethnicity, faith and sexual orientation. To promote greater understanding, partnership and engagement with us.

Typical tasks

- Helping at presentations and talks.
- Attending community group meetings and events.
- Spreading the word about our services and volunteering opportunities.
- Promoting equality and diversity.
- Talking to potential volunteers about your experiences.

Typical commitment

Flexible. May include evenings or weekends

Skills, values, abilities and commitment needed

No previous community engagement experience is necessary, but the following skills and personal qualities would be an advantage:

- Committed to equality and diversity.
- Good verbal communication skills.
- Friendly, approachable and confident team player.
- Willing to work within our values, procedures and policies.

Opportunities and benefits

- Full induction, one-to-one support in the role, and opportunities for continuous development.
- Opportunity to develop public speaking, presentation and networking skills.
- Chance to engage with a wide range of people and diverse community groups.
- Opportunity to join a team of like minded people.
- Opportunity to contribute to our valuable work.
- Community engagement volunteers get basic training in the our core values and mission and in health and safety.







www.victimsupport.org.uk

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