



# FAQs for Independent Choices Greater Manchester (ICGM) Volunteers

## Why volunteer?

Volunteering is a fantastic opportunity to build your skills and experience while giving back to victims/survivors of domestic abuse in your community. Volunteering provides you with the opportunity to join a small and passionate team who are incredibly knowledgeable and committed to providing support for callers. You'll also be given access to a comprehensive training program that will increase your awareness and understanding so that you may develop professionally.

## Who can volunteer?

We provide support for victims/survivors, concerned family or friends affected by domestic abuse. Advice is also provided to professionals supporting victims and families. Therefore, anyone interested in domestic abuse can apply to become a volunteer. We welcome applicants from all walks of life, regardless of experience, education, or background. All that is required is your enthusiasm, integrity, and commitment. Volunteering can be challenging at times and requires sensitivity and empathy. However, you'll become part of a friendly, warm and passionate team who will support you throughout.

## What volunteering opportunities are available?

There are a number of volunteering opportunities so you can choose which one might suit you best. Our roles are as follows:

### 1. Helpline Volunteer:

As a Helpline Volunteer, you'll be providing a confidential service for those affected by domestic abuse and to professionals seeking support around issues relating to domestic abuse. This may involve giving advice/options around safety planning, legal options such as civil or criminal sanctions, housing options, emotional support, safeguarding children and support in accessing refuge.



## **2. Administrative (Admin) Volunteer:**

Being an Admin Volunteer is a diverse role and no two days might look the same. This may involve supporting the team with general admin tasks, answering emails, photocopying etc. This is also a good first step into the charity where you will be given the opportunity to complete your training and work towards becoming a Helpline Volunteer, if that is something you might wish to do in the future.

## **3. Fundraising Volunteer:**

Fundraising Volunteers are integral. They raise money to support our work with victims/survivors in the community. In the past, our volunteers have organised raffles, sponsored events, swims, runs, skydives, theatre events, quizzes with prize donations from local businesses. All ideas are welcome, so if you have experience in this area and are thinking of getting involved, please get in contact with the team – we'd love to hear from you!

## **4. Social Media Volunteer:**

Our Social Media Volunteers help with spreading awareness of our services via Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. This could involve creating content that spreads awareness, delivering messages about domestic abuse that aim to reach out to victims/survivors in the community, and informing them of the help available to them. Volunteering in this role could also involve creating content to recruit fellow volunteers, spread awareness of fundraising opportunities and increase the social media presence of the organisation.

## **Will there be any training for the roles?**

Yes, extensive training and support is provided so volunteers can learn and develop whilst helping keep the service running. Volunteer training is comprehensive and has been specifically designed by the staff to provide volunteers with the knowledge required for their roles. This includes training in relation to; domestic abuse awareness, including the difficulties victims and survivors have around leaving abusive partners and the trauma this can bring. The training also involves increasing awareness around equality and diversity, safeguarding, confidentiality and more.

Helpline Volunteers will also undergo additional training to get them ready to answer calls. This will involve discussing example calls and role plays. This process is fully supported by



staff members with regular supervision/ongoing support, not only so that volunteers may provide the best service but also to ensure that they feel comfortable and secure in doing so.

## **Who can I contact for more information?**

If you're thinking of volunteering and would like some additional information about the roles, please feel free to contact our Volunteer Co-ordinator via email:

[volunteering@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@independentchoices.org.uk).

## **How do I go about applying?**

If you're interested in applying for a volunteer role you are encouraged to contact our Volunteer Co-ordinator to start the process: [volunteering@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@independentchoices.org.uk). This may begin with attending one of our informal online sessions where you can find further information and ask any additional questions. This will give you a deeper understanding of the roles available so you can decide which position might be best for you. You'll also be asked to complete a volunteer application form, which will ask you about any previous experience and your interest in becoming a volunteer.

## **Will I be interviewed?**

Yes, if successful with your application. This is an opportunity to discuss any relevant experience you may have and your motivations for wanting to volunteer.

## **Do I need any previous experience or qualifications?**

We welcome volunteers from all walks of life with or without experience of working within the domestic abuse sector. Our comprehensive training is designed to provide you with the knowledge you'll need for your chosen position.

Depending on your role, it may be beneficial to have some basic competencies using computer software such as Microsoft Word, Excel etc however there is support available for those who may need it, and this should not deter you from applying to volunteer.



We are looking for volunteers who:

- ✓ Have an interest or passion in working within domestic abuse services
- ✓ Can work well on their own or with others
- ✓ Have a non-judgemental attitude
- ✓ Are good listeners
- ✓ Have a willingness and dedication to learn and grow professionally
- ✓ Can remain calm and professional under pressure and can handle difficult situations.
- ✓ We also welcome volunteers who can speak additional languages

## **Do I need a disclosure and barring check?**

This is dependent on your role.

## **What might a normal day look like?**

This will vary depending on your role. However, a Helpline session will generally involve taking the morning shift (10am -1pm) or the afternoon shift (1pm – 4pm). When you first become a volunteer, this time will be spent working through your training which you are encouraged and supported to complete at your own pace.

Upon completion of your training, your responsibilities will vary depending on your role. Helpline Volunteers, for example, will spend this time answering calls and supporting those affected by domestic abuse, perhaps by giving advice around safety planning, legal and housing options, emotional support and accessing refuge and more.

## **How long is the commitment?**

To get the most out of your volunteering we ask volunteers to commit to a minimum of a year. Dependent on your role, hours can vary and be flexible however the Helpline Volunteers (on completion of training) will normally do 3hours 15mins per week.

## **Can I volunteer remotely?**

Our Fundraising, Social Media and Admin volunteers can support the service remotely. However, unfortunately it is not possible for Helpline Volunteers to volunteer from home, for confidentiality reasons.



### **Can I claim expenses?**

All volunteers will be paid out of pocket expenses.

### **Who can I contact if these FAQs haven't answered my questions?**

If you have any more questions or would like to get some more information about volunteering, please contact our volunteer co-ordinator:

[volunteering@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@independentchoices.org.uk).

**Thank you for your interest.**