

# Volunteer Handbook

Phone Credit for Refugees and Displaced People





# To our volunteers

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Phone Credit for Refugees

Volunteers are integral to our work. Whether working with our marketing team, providing technical support, or processing mobile phone top-ups as an administrator, you are changing the lives of refugees for the better. In return for giving us your time, energy, and experience, we will do all we can to ensure that you are motivated, supported, and feel appreciated for all that you do.

This handbook tells you what you need to know to help you get the most out of your volunteering. An induction checklist is included at the back of the handbook to make it easy for you to keep track of the key things you should cover as you are settling into your role.

We hope you enjoy your volunteering experience with us. On behalf of everyone at Phone Credit for Refugees, and all the people we help and work with, thank you for supporting us in our mission. Without your time, effort and commitment we could not deliver this essential service.

In hard times, the least advantaged in society are often the hardest hit. By volunteering for Phone Credit for Refugees you are not just helping these vulnerable people to survive – you are helping them to stay in touch with their families, communicate with support agencies and stay safe.

Thank you!

James Pearce  
Founder

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# About us

Phone Credit for Refugees and Displaced People supports asylum seekers and refugees separated from their families by war and conflict. We provide mobile phone top-ups so that they can get in touch with their families, communicate with support agencies and stay safe.

We are a humanitarian response organisation set up by ordinary people - volunteers who give their time freely to help refugees feel safer. It is volunteer led and run, with no full-time employees. Our team is made up of both refugees and supporters, and greatly benefits from the diversity in age, religion, gender, culture, and background of our volunteers. All money raised is used to provide phone credit, with a very small percentage going to provide outsourced infrastructure support.

Today, the group has over 64,000 members, has completed over 30,000 tops ups, and has raised over half a million pounds. Our support has expanded to cover refugees across Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Although we'd like to be able to support all refugees and displaced people, we have limited resources. Therefore, our focus is on helping those who are the most vulnerable - women, children, those sleeping rough or in dilapidated and overcrowded camps, and those who can't receive financial support from local aid agencies or organisations.



## Our Vision

How we can make a difference



*We want a world where it is possible for refugees to feel safe and to be connected to the people that matter to them – their families, their supporters, and the agencies that help them.*



# Your support network

We want to ensure that you are happy, confident and motivated in your role to help both you and us to get the most out of your time with Phone Credit for Refugees and Displaced People.

*Here are some of the ways in which we'll support you:*

- When you begin volunteering with us, you'll receive an induction introducing you to the organisation, your role, and what you need to know to get started and stay safe
- You will have a one-month introductory period during which you'll have named volunteer supporter to help you in your role
- You will have access to our Facebook Admin page and our 24 hour Admin chat so that you can seek support and guidance as required
- We will provide you with on-going safeguarding training to ensure you can confidently recognise vulnerable people
- We will provide a safe and flexible working environment
- We will listen to and act on your concerns if things are not going well

*In return, we expect you to:*

- Undertake all training and learning required for your role, and operate within our agreed policies, procedures, and guidance
  - Treat everyone you come into contact with through your role with dignity and respect, upholding our commitments to diversity and inclusion
  - Try to be as reliable as possible and provide as much notice as you can if you are unable to fulfil your volunteering agreement or no longer wish to volunteer
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Thank you so much, I really appreciate you from the deep of my heart. Today I will call my family and see whether or not they are okay for the first time in months. Thank you for helping me, I will never forget. God bless you.

— Ahmad\*

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# Our commitment to diversity

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion means that we embrace all the different identities, beliefs and cultures of our volunteers and the people we help. We encourage people from all backgrounds to volunteer with us. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure our volunteering opportunities are as widely accessible as possible.

In accordance with the terms of the Equality Act (2010), we provide a fair and open environment in which all volunteers can contribute and participate.

We expect all volunteers to play their part in upholding these commitments and treat everyone they come into contact with, as part of their role, with dignity and respect.

We aim for our volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of the community and treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment and victimisation, unlawful and unfair discrimination, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. The Act outlines the nine 'protected characteristics' of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender reassignment, pregnancy or marital status. Any behaviour, act or conduct which is found to be bullying, harassment or victimisation could constitute 'gross misconduct' and will be dealt with accordingly.



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## Complaints and concerns

We do everything we can to make your volunteering as positive an experience as possible. However, we recognise that sometimes things might go wrong and volunteers may need to raise an issue or complaint. We ask that you raise any issues with your volunteer supporter initially, as they will be keen to provide advice and support.

If you feel the role isn't working out, you and your supporter will be able to decide together if it is possible to make changes to improve things within the role. If, ultimately, you feel that the role is not right for you, we will understand. If you are not comfortable speaking with your supporter, or if the matter is of a serious nature, you may need to raise a formal complaint.

More information on how to do this can be found in our Complaints policy and in our Whistleblowing policy. We are committed to treating all complaints fairly and transparently and will do our best to support you through the process.

## Confidentiality and data protection

The term 'confidentiality' means the nondisclosure or sharing of sensitive or personal information with anyone other than an authorised person such as your volunteer supporter or another established supporter. You must maintain confidentiality during your time with us as a volunteer. During your induction you will be asked to sign our volunteer confidentiality agreement to confirm your understanding and commitment to this.

You may have direct involvement with children, young people and families or have a role where you have access to confidential or personal information about the people we support, our volunteers, our work or the organisation itself. This information must be kept private and not disclosed to any third parties, unless sharing it is required by law, or if some of the information given to you suggests the person is at risk of harm.

We have a Data Protection policy which you are expected to fully comply with. On-going support and training are available to you for the duration of your role with us.

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# Boundaries and behaviour

Every volunteer has the responsibility to help create and maintain an environment that is free of bullying, harassment and discrimination

- Be aware of how your behaviour may affect others, and if necessary, change it
- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Challenge what you think are inappropriate comments, actions or behaviours by making it clear to others that you find their behaviour unacceptable
- Be aware that, in some cases, people may be unaware that their behaviour is inappropriate or objectionable, and acting accordingly
- Try to resolve it informally, where possible, to stop harassment, victimisation, bullying or discrimination
- Intervene if possible, to stop harassment or discrimination, or raising it with the Volunteer Supporter
- Understand the difference between constructive feedback on action and behaviours; and harassment, victimisation or bullying
- Reporting any concerns to your Volunteer Supporter if you witness, or are made aware of, potential concerns.

While behaviour that is perceived as bullying and/or harassment by one person could be perceived differently by someone else, there are commonly accepted definitions of behaviour that are deemed as unacceptable. Examples of bullying are:

- Repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise
  - Ridiculing or demeaning someone
  - Unfair treatment or exclusion
  - Unwelcome sexual advances, display of offensive materials, asking for sexual favours, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected
  - Misuse of power or position
  - Spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone (particularly on the grounds of the Equality Act's protected characteristics)
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# Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a vital part of our work. We have a safeguarding policy which we expect all volunteers to read and comply with. Our commitment to safeguarding includes:

- We take all practical steps to protect the safety and welfare of refugees, observing all related legislation and guidance.
- All volunteers have an obligation and responsibility to be aware of and always report concerns related to the protection, safeguarding and welfare of the children and vulnerable adults we work with.
- We will provide you with information about safeguarding on our website introducing you to our Safeguarding Policy, your role in safeguarding the people you work with, and who you should share any concerns with.
- You will be fully supported by your volunteer supporter and Safeguarding Officer in any matter that involves child protection, vulnerable adult and confidentiality issues.



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# Money and gifts

Volunteers must never accept a gift of money from a refugee for themselves or on behalf of another volunteer. We recognise that some refugees may wish to provide volunteers with gifts as a form of thank you for the support. You should, however, inform your Volunteer Supporter of any gifts that people or families offer you.

Volunteers must never buy from, or sell anything to, a refugee. This includes services, work or favours as well as objects. Volunteers must not lend money to refugees from their own pocket, or borrow money from refugees. Volunteers must not cash cheques for service users or open bank (or other) accounts for them under their own name.

Please remember that even when not actively volunteering you still carry our reputation with you and we ask that you do not act or speak in a way that is in opposition to Phone Credit for Refugees and Displaced People's brand, values or volunteering policies and could bring Phone Credit for Refugees and Displaced People into disrepute.

# Health and Safety

## Staying safe while volunteering

We are committed to our health and safety and our responsibility to provide an environment for all volunteers that is safe. We will also expect you to be committed to your responsibility for your own health and safety, and that of those you come into contact with as part of your role. It is important that you understand and accept personal responsibility to maintain health and safety standards, so that together we can maintain a safe environment for everyone. You should raise any safety concerns or incidents with your volunteer supporter as soon as possible. In an emergency, you should contact the emergency services immediately.

We have Employer's liability insurance through the Prism Trust, which insures our legal liability for injury to volunteers as a direct result of our activities. You are also covered by our Public Liability Insurance when carrying out tasks on our behalf. This covers our legal liability to pay any compensation for injuries or illness to a third party or damage to the property of third parties where this is due to negligence on our part. It does not cover incidents which are not related to our activities or deliberate damage. If you require more information about our insurance policy, please contact the Chief Volunteer.

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# Your policy checklist

Before you start your role with us, please ensure you have read and understood the following policies:

Policies - working safely	Done
Safeguarding	
Confidentiality and Data Protection	
Whistleblowing	
Conflict of Interest	

Policies - operational	Done
Volunteer Job Role	
Health and Safety	
Code of Conduct	
Complaints and Grievances	

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