



Kingston Stronger Together

Guidance for Resident Volunteers

Thank you for volunteering to support vulnerable members of our community during the Covid 19 pandemic.

This handbook provides guidance for residents volunteering under the council's response to COVID-19 pandemic. It contains background, context and information about the requirements for resident volunteers.

Kingston Stronger Together is a new online and phone service launched by Kingston Council. It is a service for residents who are self isolating because they have symptoms of the coronavirus or who have received a letter from the NHS advising them to stay home for 12 weeks.

The council will also be directly phoning those we know are most vulnerable. Any resident in a vulnerable group who cannot support themselves with help from friends and family will also be offered assistance.

We are supporting people who need to stay at home because of their risk of catching the virus. Due to a variety of health conditions, around 20,000 people in Kingston are in self isolation for their own safety. It is important that they have access to essential items such as food and medicine as well as social contact.

As a volunteer you will ensure that affected individuals receive the support they need due to self isolation.

The council's established volunteering network called Kingston Stronger Together working in partnership with Kingston Voluntary Action (KVA) and Volunteering Kingston. If you are interested in participating, please see details [here](#).

This volunteer scheme is part of Kingston's overall response to COVID-19 and ensures that we support Kingston residents in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. An overview of all of the support is described below. It is free and available to any person living in the Royal Borough of Kingston.

All services relying on volunteers will need to ensure they have the relevant handbook **(please refer to Workstreams and Tiered Approach)** advice, guidance and training in place for volunteers signing up to their specific areas. If a service or task specific handbook does not exist, general requirements under this guidance will need to be adhered to when volunteering

Thank you again for volunteering to support vulnerable members of our community during the Covid 19 pandemic.

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Section A: Background and Context

- The whole population is being asked to undertake social distancing measures
- Currently people with symptoms of infection and members of their households are being asked to self isolate for periods of 7 or 14 days
- The government has advised people with certain health conditions that make them extremely vulnerable to self isolate for “an extended period”.
- Those who are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (including all over 70s) are also advised to be particularly stringent in social distancing measures
- In addition to practical issues of ensuring those unable to leave their home have the supplies they need and access to care if they become unwell, there will likely be a major issue of social isolation.
- The council alone does not have the capacity to meet all the likely needs of residents on the scale presented by the current pandemic
- Kingston has a very active and generous voluntary sector. A number of organisations have come forward to the council to offer their help. We have joined forces to mobilise our resources in an organised, coordinated and safe way to meet the needs of our residents
- A point of contact in the place or service you are volunteering will be known as the Local Organiser.

Council's Approach

a) Workstreams and Tiered approach

The council has defined two workstreams in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Workstream 1: Support for people who are self-isolating. We are currently offering help to all those that cannot leave their homes and those that are vulnerable and unable to support themselves with the help of friends and family due to the current situation.

This workstream is about contacting people identified as being in a higher risk group and assessing their needs and support; and **encouraging people who need support whilst self-isolating to contact the council and to develop an offer of support to meet their needs.**

Tier 0: Contacting all higher risk people identified by NHS. Access to 24/7 contact centre support

Tier 1: Self-care: Effectively signposting people to information and advice

Tier 2: Developing the service offer for those that contact us that are Tier 2 - Need support with basic tasks such as food shopping, collecting medicines etc.

Tier 3: Developing the service offer for those that contact us that are Tier 3 - Are vulnerable and need social contact and support. This will be achieved through a buddying system.

Tier 4: Developing the service offer for those that contact us that are Tier 4 - Are unwell and at risk and may need the support of Adult Social Care

Workstream 2: Identifying, Recruiting and Deploying Volunteers

This workstream is to **identify, recruit and deploy volunteering support to those that need it and advise those that are volunteering already on how to do it safely.**

A) External volunteer recruitment - how we recruit people in the community and deploy them to those that contact us to say they need support (**ie front line organisations needing additional capacity**)

B) Identify internal volunteering capacity - how we identify council staff that can support with 'volunteering' outside of their contractual hours, on an unpaid basis with the agreement of their manager. Then how we deploy them to those that contact us to say they need support.

C) Provide guidance to those that are volunteering in the community

b) A Central point of coordination

- Kingston council has established a central hub to coordinate activity to protect those that are self-isolating and support the vital efforts of the community and voluntary sector that are already supporting vulnerable people.
- The Central Hub will receive calls from the public, the health sector, social care and other partners. If they need help with symptoms or the decision on whether to self isolate people can access advice using the 111 coronavirus service <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> but are encouraged to call back if they need support to self-isolate. If people are self-isolating, they will be asked about their condition and why they are self-isolating to inform an assessment of need and risk.
- The hub will collect data on those that are isolating and their support needs and will match them to support from volunteers and local services where necessary.
- The council phone number will be promoted through all available communication channels to try to reach all residents and partner organisations.

Section B: Information for resident volunteers

Currently residents are encouraged to sign up as volunteers.

a) Where to register as a volunteer

Click [here](#) to register as a volunteer and to access resources for volunteers

b) Frequently asked questions by volunteers

What is my role?

Your skills and experience will be matched to the appropriate volunteering opportunities and you will then be assigned a volunteering role. Someone will be in contact with you to discuss your volunteering role and potential tasks they would like you to undertake. Please note that those with enhanced DBS check will be specific roles with vulnerable members of our community

What tasks am I being asked to do?

Your role may include a range of roles; each role will have its own requirements (**See Induction and Code of Conduct below**; due to the specific nature of tasks under Tier 2 and 3, specific guidelines need to be adhered to) and you will be asked to adhere to the requirements.

- Delivery of food or medication
- Acting as a buddy through telephone support
- Supporting food banks
- Supporting front line organisations
- Roles will be updated as the crisis evolves and this will be updated on a regular basis

What days / times am I needed?

It is anticipated that volunteering hours will be between 9-5pm. Your local contact will discuss any out of hours volunteering with you if needed. There may be specific requirements in the Tier 2 and Tier 3 handbooks

Do I need any specific equipment?

You may need to have access to a vehicle or a bike (depending on your role)
Please refer to clauses on Parking and insurance below. You will be provided with any other equipment needed to fulfil your role as a volunteer. This will be provided by your lead contact. These will also be outlined in the **Tier 2 and Tier 3 handbooks**.

Do I need to record any information?

Depending on your role and service you will be assigned to, you may be required to record information. Please refer to **Induction and Code of Conduct section** below and relevant Tier handbooks)

Do I have any guidelines?

In some cases guidelines have been developed under Tier 2 and Tier 3 (**Please refer to Induction and Code of Conduct**). If you are not volunteering under these tiers, then this guide will give you the information you need outside the scope of the specific tier handbooks. Please also refer to the **Safeguarding section**.

Who do I report any concerns to?

If you have any concerns, please refer to the **Tier 2 and 3 handbooks** (please refer to Induction and Code of Conduct for contact leads). Otherwise please contact the lead you are volunteering under

Who do I report to if I cannot attend my volunteering?

If you are unable to carry out your volunteering role, then please let your lead contact know as soon as possible. This will give us time to allocate any tasks to another volunteer. Please refer to **Sickness reporting section below**

If I need to, can I stop volunteering?

As above, you must notify your contact lead by email or telephone as soon as possible to ensure that we are able to re assign your tasks to another volunteer in a timely manner.

Do I need to be a resident in Kingston to volunteer

You do not need to be a resident to volunteer. However, please note that we are unable to pay any travel or out of pocket expenses (Please see **Expenses** section)

I have applied to volunteer and have not heard anything?

We may be experiencing high volumes of volunteer interest at the moment. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible. If you are concerned, please email volunteers4covid19@kingston.gov.uk

Can I apply for Emergency Volunteer leave from my employer?

The [Coronavirus Bill](#) has now received Royal Assent and includes provisions for a national Emergency Volunteer Scheme, which entitles employees to take unpaid leave

Employees and workers will be able to take Emergency Volunteer Leave in blocks of two, three or four weeks' statutory unpaid leave to support the medical effort. The emergency reforms recognise that volunteers play a "critical role" in the delivery of health and social care services and are particularly important in caring for the most vulnerable in society, such as the elderly, those with multiple long-term conditions, and those suffering from mental health conditions. Any emergency leave must be agreed with a members of staff's Line Manager

A UK-wide compensation fund will be established to compensate for loss of earnings and expenses incurred at a flat rate for those who volunteer through an appropriate authority. It was previously suggested that this would entail permanent employers keeping the volunteers jobs open for them to return to for a period of four weeks. We await further detail, but employers will need to factor this into their contingency plans as job protection for volunteers is likely. Those who may be furloughed, should seek clarification with their employer on claiming

<https://www.osborneclarke.com/insights/emergency-uk-legislation-covid-19-volunteering-statutory-sick-pay-court-hearings/>

How can emergency volunteering leave be taken?

It can be taken in blocks of two, three or four weeks, and workers can take one period of leave in each "volunteering period". Initially there will be one 16-week volunteering period (beginning on the day the legislation comes into force). Subsequent volunteering periods may be set.

To take the leave, workers must give their employer three working days' notice and produce the certificate confirming that they have been approved as an emergency volunteer. RBK does not envisage it's workers/ employees requesting this as we have a great need to utilise skills within the organisation

Are emergency volunteers entitled to paid leave?

No, the right will be to statutory unpaid leave, but a UK-wide compensation fund will be established to compensate these volunteers for loss of earnings (if they suffer loss of earnings due to volunteering), travel and subsistence. It isn't clear yet whether the compensation offered by the government will replace volunteers' full pay or whether it will be subject to a cap.

What employment rights and benefits will volunteers have?

During emergency volunteering leave, workers remain entitled to the benefit of all of their terms and conditions of employment which would have applied if they had not been absent - except for terms and conditions relating to remuneration. The period of absence will be deemed not to have any effect on their pension or benefit entitlements.

These volunteers will have a statutory right to return to the job they were employed in before taking this leave, on terms and conditions no less favourable than those which would have applied if they hadn't been absent. So volunteers will be in a similar position to employees on maternity, and other family leave.

In addition, volunteers will have the right not to be subjected to a detriment or dismissal on the grounds of taking emergency volunteering leave.

c) Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)

To be suitable for a particular volunteering position you may need a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS check or an Enhanced DBS)

[How DBS is supporting the fight against Coronavirus](#)

You will receive an induction and information relating to your role and code of conduct through your local contact:

d) Parking

Owner-drivers do not need to notify their insurers and any volunteering activities relating to Covid-19 will be covered under the usual Social Domestic and Pleasure use. Please ensure that you have private motor insurance in place and that you are licensed to drive the vehicle. Parking guidelines for key workers and volunteers have been drawn up and can be found at the end of this document.

Parking guidelines for key workers and volunteers have been drawn up [here](#)

e) Insurance

Volunteers are covered by the council's public liability insurance. Volunteers are required to carry out their role in a safe manner. Please refer to **Parking** section

f) Advising people on how to get help

If you or someone you know needs this support, please fill in this online form and we will contact you. You can complete the [online form](#) at any time. If you do not have online access you can phone 020 8547 5000. If the request is not urgent please try to call us between Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. If the call is urgent, the number will be answered out of these hours but we need to prioritise these times for urgent calls only.

g) Procedure for raising concerns

If you have any concerns about your volunteering role, please contact your local contact or the appropriate Service lead. (Please refer to the **Safeguarding section** in this handbook)

Section C Standard requirements for all volunteers

a) Induction and code of conduct

You will receive induction and information relating to your role and code of conduct

By accepting the role of a volunteer you are agreeing to the requirements set out in this handbook, including to:

- Only using personal data for the reason it was given to you
- Reporting any concerns about residents that you deliver to
- Informing the Local Organiser (if you are unable to complete a task for any reason)
- Abide by the relevant code of conduct in this handbook and specific relevant requirements.

Each of the Tiers will have their own requirements and code of conduct and undertake their own risk assessments and training requirements depending on the nature of the role

You may be required to undertake specific training:

- Under Tier 3; Buddy Scheme, you may be required to undertake further training
 - [Guide to staying digitally connected](#)
 - [Covid-19: Keeping in touch with each other when we can't meet face to face](#)
- Volunteers should watch Age UK's Introduction to becoming a digital buddy to find out more: to find out how they can help the people they are working with to make the most of technology by watching this short (8 minutes) training video created by Age UK. [Become an Age UK digital buddy | Volunteering](#)
- [Safeguarding Awareness for Volunteers \(Waltham Forest\)](#)

Read the following handbooks:

[Kingston COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) Tier 2 \(COURIER\) Handbook](#)

[Kingston COVID-19 Buddy Service \(Tier 3\) Handbook](#)

Tier 4 - The lead contact for Tier 4 will inform you of the specific requirements needed to undertake your volunteering role.

Please refer to our [Volunteering Code of Conduct](#)

b) Sickness reporting and Incidents

Volunteers should contact the following by email as soon as possible if they are ill in general or have symptoms of COVID-19 and have an incident or an emergency

Tier 1 email covid-19support@kingston.gov.uk

Tier 2 email Covid-19Tier2@kingston.gov.uk

Tier 3 email Covid-19Tier3@kingston.gov.uk

Coordination hub email: volunteers4covid19@kingston.gov.uk

We need to be informed of any accident or incident, no matter, how small. It ensures we are doing everything we can to make your role as safe and risk free as possible.

If you have COVID symptoms, please check the Public Health Guidance on isolation [here](#)

c) Expenses

Due to the high volume of individuals accessing support from volunteers we are unable to cover volunteer expenses, e.g. telephone bills. We know it is good practice to reimburse expenses for volunteers but our budget does not allow us to do so with the current pandemic

d) Social distancing

You will need to ensure that you follow guidance on [Guidance on social distancing for everyone in the UK](#)

e) Volunteering safely

Please read and ensure that you are also aware of the following best practice guidelines [staying safe while volunteering](#)

We have developed a set of resources to support all groups and individuals who are already actively volunteering in the borough to do this in a safe and sustainable way. We will be adding more resources and training offers in the coming weeks and months so please check back with us.

Kingston Voluntary Action also provides support and information for [safe sustainable volunteering](#).

f) Delivering food and supplies

If you are delivering food or other supplies to the homes of vulnerable people or those in isolation, please adhere to the following advice in order to stay safe:

- Do not volunteer if you feel unwell or have a cough or high temperature (fever)
- Ensure family, friends or other volunteers know where you are going;
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before handling supplies;
- Do not enter the home of the person you are delivering supplies to. Leave goods on the doorstep and remain at least 2 metres away when the person comes to the door;
 - Wear disposable gloves if provided to deliver supplies and/or wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds (or use alcohol based hand sanitiser gel if you have some and there are no washing facilities available) as soon as possible after you have delivered the supplies.
 - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze. Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.

g) Safeguarding

A helpful video is [here](#) on safeguarding

There are also details on the RBK website

https://www.kingston.gov.uk/info/200287/health_and_wellbeing/1748/covid-19_corona_virus/8

We have detailed information on safeguarding available if you are concerned about an adult or a child while you are volunteering:

[Safeguarding information for Adults](#)

[Safeguarding information for Children](#)

If you are concerned please follow steps

1. Record what was said/what you saw as soon as possible (don't do it in front of the person if possible)
2. Try to use exact language used, specific description in recordings
3. Contact safeguarding lead to report what you have recorded

Please ensure you undertake the [Online Safeguarding Level One Training](#)

Please refer to Managing Data Securely Section below

Top tips

- If you are concerned seek advice
- Never promise confidentiality
- Trust your instincts
- Remember it is not your job to investigate

Report your concern about an adult

Using the [safeguarding concern form](#) and then sending us an email.

- You can also Call the Access and Safeguarding Team during office hours on 020 8547 5005 and
- During out of hours phone 020 8770 5000.

Reporting a concern about a child

Contact the Single Point of Access. They are committed to [supporting and safeguarding children](#).

You can contact the team to request support, or to report a concern about a child or young person.

- Call 020 8547 5008 from 8am to 5.15pm, Monday to Thursday, and 8am to 5pm on Friday.
- During out of hours, phone 020 8770 5000.
- Call 999 if you think a young person is in immediate danger

Remember: If you are worried about the behaviour of a volunteer themselves, maybe towards a child or adult or in their private lives, but this could indicate they are unsuitable to volunteer

Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership (KRSCP) has developed the following resources for volunteers:-

1) **Safeguarding Awareness Powtoon**-see attached . This is a 3 minute animation which highlights key safeguarding issues for both children and vulnerable adults.

 [VolunteerssafeguardingPowtoon.mp4](#)

2) **Safeguarding Awareness Powerpoint Presentation**- This is a short powerpoint presentation which provides information about a range of safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults and local referral pathways

<https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/media/upload/fck/file/C19%20Volunteers%20awareness%20training.pdf>

3) **Safeguarding Awareness Elearning**- This is a 30 minute online learning module which has been developed specifically for volunteers. It focuses on childrens safeguarding and includes information about legislation and guidance, case study scenarios and local referral pathways

https://richmondscb.melearning.university/course_centre

All of the above resources can also be accessed via the KRSCP website by clicking on the button 'Safeguarding for Volunteers'

h) Tips for Working with Vulnerable Adults

- Stay calm, especially if the person you are supporting is very agitated. See below for mental health advice.
- Use language appropriately. e.g for people with learning disabilities keep language simple and speak slowly with short sentences. There is some more advice here [Communicating with people with a learning disability](#) and [covid-19 advice for people with a learning disability](#)
- Give them time to respond and check that the person has understood. Don't give a long list of choices as the person may just pick the last one.
- For people on the Autistic Spectrum: keep communication simple, ask one question at a time then leave time for the answer. Don't use abstract phrases, e.g. 'talk to you soon', unless you have made an arrangement. Texting may be easier for them than talking on the phone (but their texts may be abrupt). Here is a link to some guidance here on [how to talk to someone who has Autism. covid-19 advice for autistic-people](#)
- For some advice on Covid 19 specifically aimed at older people see the attached link [covid-19 older-people](#)
- For some advice on Covid 19 specifically aimed at people with dementia see the attached link [covid-19 for people-living-with-dementia](#)

i) Data Protection

Kingston Council is the data controller and we will process your data safely and securely in line with Data Protection principles. Your data will be used to administer your volunteering and may be shared with our third parties if it is necessary and proportionate to do so in line with the Council's privacy notice. Your data may be used for statistical purposes. The extent of the personal data will vary but may include contact details, DBS checks, medical

information (if you are collecting and delivering medication), etc. We will not hold on to your data for longer than it is required.

In the course of your volunteering you may come into contact with and use confidential personal information about people such as names and addresses or even information about a customer's circumstances, families, health or other private matters. We ask you to manage this data lawfully and not to disclose any personal data to others. Sharing this information may put the Council in breach of data protection legislation.

Withholding your phone number

We recommend that you call an isolating person from a withheld number. To withhold your number on individual calls just dial 141 before the number you want to call.

j) Managing personal data securely - top tips

Personal data (such as phone number, address or medical details) is any information that is clearly about a particular person. It must be managed carefully and lawfully. If you collecting personal data please follow these tips:

- Only collect the data you need to carry out the volunteering you need to do. Do not collect additional data. If you only need a name and address do not ask for a date of birth.
- Make sure personal data is shared on a need to know basis only. Make one or two people responsible for managing the data. Know who has access to it.
- If you are setting up groups such as WhatsApp, Facebook or sharing emails - please make sure that everyone has opted in before adding them to these groups.
- Do not use the data you have collected for any other purpose than what it was collected for.
- Once you no longer need it - delete it.
- Store the data on a secure IT system making sure the information is not seen by unauthorised person(s) or the general public

k) Equality and Diversity

Volunteers are required to work within the Scheme's Equal Opportunities policy. There should be no discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, religion, ethnicity, disabilities, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status or class.

l) Boundaries

Everyone in the group should be aware of the limits of their role and should make sure not to take on too much.

m) Gifts or payments for service

Volunteering is an unpaid activity to help people in need. Other than money that has been agreed in advance to pay for shopping, volunteers should not accept money from the people they are helping. If you are offered gifts or money from the people you are helping you must explain that it's your role to help people, which you are happy to do and therefore it is not appropriate to accept money or gifts for services provided, though the gesture is

appreciated.

If residents are insistent in offering money, you can suggest that they make a voluntary donation to the [Love Kingston COVID-19 Crisis Appeal here](#)

n) Do and Don't¹

Data Protection and Confidentiality

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep any data secure and treat other people's information in the same way you would want yours to be treated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss any information or data with anyone outside of Kingston Council or the voluntary organisation you are volunteering or anyone who doesn't need to know
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you think there is a mistake or breach of data protection tell Kingston Council or the voluntary organisation you are volunteering for so that we can manage this	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leave any messages on answerphones with any personal information if you are not sure who is going to be able to hear them. Ensure others cannot hear you and avoid calls on loudspeaker if you live with others

Equality

Do	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treat others the same you would want to be treated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treat anyone less favourably or exclude anyone who we are supporting in our communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect everyone regardless of who they are, their backgrounds and the communities in which they live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ignore any unacceptable behaviours towards anyone, and ensure that you report it to your local organiser

¹ [Taken from NHS Responders](#), Royal Voluntary Service

n) Useful websites

[Kingston Volunteering COVID-19](#)

[Volunteering Kingston Resources](#)

[Connected Kingston website which has info on Community Support during COVID-19](#)
[connected kingston guide to staying digitally connected](#)

[If volunteering goes wrong:](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-bill-what-it-will-do/what-the-coronavirus-bill-will-do#increasing-the-available-health-and-social-care-workforce>

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/tools-resources/volunteers-and-the-law>

[COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) : Kingston Stronger Together](#)

[Accessing Food - Connected Kingston Website](#)

[Safely exchanging money for essential items](#)

[NHS Volunteer Responders \(good practice\) Royal Voluntary Service](#)

o) Useful contact information

Council phone lines are open 9am - 5pm

- Coronavirus (Covid-19) enquiries - 020 8547 5000
- Other urgent general enquiries - 020 8547 5000
- Housing (Homelessness) - 020 8547 5003
- Revenues and Benefits - 020 8547 5007
- Adult Social Care - 0208 547 5005
- Achieving for Children - 020 8547 5008
- Out of hours Emergencies - 020 8547 5000

Job Centre Plus

- Enquiries - 020 8914 7001
- Universal Credit - 0800 328 5644

For the latest information on COVID-19 (Coronavirus) including service closures, support and advice, volunteering information and more please visit: [.kingston.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.kingston.gov.uk/coronavirus)

NHS Advice

You can find all the latest NHS advice here: www.nhs.uk/coronavirus