



# Volunteering handbook

## The MND Association

The Motor Neurone Disease Association is the only charity in England, Wales and Northern Ireland focused on MND care, research and campaigning.

Our mission is to:

- Improve care and support for people with MND, their families and carers
- Fund and promote research that leads to new understanding and treatments, and brings us closer to a cure for MND
- Campaign and raise awareness so the needs of people affected by MND are recognised and addressed by wider society.

I am extremely honoured to be a volunteer for the MND Association. The most rewarding thing is knowing that I have helped people to access the services, equipment and support they need.

Jo-Ann, Volunteer

## Our commitment to volunteering

Volunteers founded our Association and continue to play a large role in shaping our activities. Their contribution is unique, essential and crucial to the fulfilment of our mission.

Volunteers are involved in almost all aspects of the Association's work. The complementary contributions which volunteers and paid staff make, working together, enables us to deliver a high quality service to people affected by MND.

We recognise that for some volunteering is a long-term commitment, whilst for others their volunteering activity may be short term or one-off. We value volunteering in the Association whatever form it takes.

## Who is this policy for?

This policy is for MND Association volunteers who have accepted an agreed role with the charity.



## Getting started

### Recruitment process

The MND Association welcomes volunteer applications from diverse communities and values the breadth of experience, skills, dedication and goodwill that volunteers bring.

We carry out informal interviews to ensure the role is right for both parties and that people will be suitable ambassadors of the Association.

Some roles will require additional screening, for example, if the role involves working directly with or supporting people affected by MND.

### Support

All volunteers will have a named volunteer or member of staff as their main contact. While some volunteers get support from their local branch or group committee, others will be supported by a staff member such as an Area Support Co-ordinator or a volunteer such as an AV Coordinator.

### Age of volunteers

We have no upper age limit for volunteers. However, there may be situations that require us to ask someone to stop specific volunteering activities, for example, where health issues are considered a risk to the volunteer or others around them.

Some roles will have minimum age restrictions to ensure we do not put younger volunteers at any unnecessary risk, for example, if the role involves providing direct support to people affected by MND (minimum age is 18). Volunteers aged 16 or 17 will require parental / carer consent in most cases. Under 16s may only volunteer with supervision from a parent / carer or other responsible adult.

### Criminal records

Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a barrier to volunteering with the MND Association. This will depend on the nature of the role and the circumstances and background of the offence(s). For a small number of roles we may need a DBS (criminal records check).



## Responsibilities

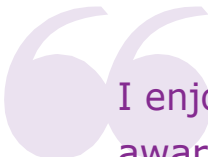
The MND Association will:

- Ensure everyone is included and is able to use their potential
- Work collaboratively with volunteers to identify the right role for them, considering their motivations and aspirations as well as their skills and experiences
- Promote a positive and enthusiastic attitude to volunteering throughout the Association
- Provide a volunteer role profile clarifying the role, responsibilities and the standards required, where appropriate to the role
- Offer appropriate learning and support to volunteers
- Respect all our volunteers, listen and learn from what they have to say, encouraging two-way communication
- Celebrate success and recognise volunteers' contributions
- Keep volunteers informed about our work, policies and procedures
- Make necessary arrangements to ensure volunteers' health, safety and welfare
- Listen to and act on volunteers' concerns if they have any problems or difficulties
- Reimburse agreed out of pocket expenses.

## Expectations

The MND Association asks volunteers to:

- Commit to our aims and values
- Perform their volunteering role to the best of their ability
- Work in partnership with other volunteers, staff and the general public
- Support and follow our policies, procedures, guidelines and management decisions
- Treat everyone they come into contact with through their role with respect
- Challenge and report any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Always protect the MND Association's reputation in their actions and conduct, acting responsibly and within the law
- Let their Chair/Leader or staff contact know straight away if they have any problems, so that we can find a solution together
- Let their Chair/Leader or staff contact know if there are any changes in their personal circumstances that could affect their volunteering.



I enjoy knowing that I am helping to raise awareness and funds for such an amazing charity. It is a great feeling to know you are making a difference in some way.

Sammy, Volunteer



## Volunteering with the MND Association

### Learning and development

Volunteers will be inducted to their role and given information about the MND Association. To help volunteers grow with us, we will offer them opportunities to attend courses, workshops and conferences relevant to their roles.

### Health and safety

We are committed to ensuring volunteers' well-being and safety whilst they are volunteering with us and in turn, we expect volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe working environment. Volunteers can contact their Chair/Leader, volunteer mentor or staff contact if they have any questions or concerns about health and safety.

### Safeguarding

All volunteers will need to gain a basic understanding of safeguarding suitable to their role. The Association will provide suitable information and learning opportunities.

### Data protection and confidentiality

We take great care to safeguard volunteers' information as part of our data protection responsibilities. We expect volunteers to protect any personal or confidential information that they may come into contact with in accordance with the Association's policies and procedures.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The MND Association is committed to treating people fairly and without discrimination. We seek to be a diverse and inclusive organisation, valuing and celebrating individual differences.

We encourage and enable people affected by MND to contribute their knowledge and skills through volunteering. We also warmly welcome people regardless of their previous awareness of MND.



## Expenses

The volunteering relationship is based on trust and respect and does not involve any contract of employment or other obligations associated with employment. No payment, other than the reimbursement of agreed expenses, is made by the organisation to people who give their time as volunteers.

Volunteers can request reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses such as travel costs and, where appropriate, meals or refreshments. Some expenses will have to be agreed in advance by the Chair/Leader or staff contact. Receipts or tickets will usually be required for all claimed expenses.

## Using a vehicle for volunteering

We do not provide motor insurance for our volunteers. Volunteers should check with their insurer before using their vehicle for volunteering. There should not be an additional charge for driving in connection with charitable volunteering. If an insurer does suggest a charge is applicable, please contact a member of the Volunteering Team who can advise on action.

## Volunteering and benefits

People can volunteer while they are receiving state benefits. However, there are some rules that they need to be aware of to make sure that their volunteering doesn't affect the benefits they receive. We advise people to discuss their choice of voluntary work with their benefits provider.

## Insurance

We have insurance in place to cover our volunteers and any liabilities they may incur in their voluntary roles. More details can be found on the **Volunteer Zone**.

## Problem solving


We take volunteers' concerns seriously and we will try hard to resolve any difficulties they're experiencing. If volunteers are faced with problems or have any concerns while volunteering with us, they should talk to their Chair/Leader or staff contact. They will be able to advise volunteers and help them find a solution.

If you become aware of any wrongdoing, the Association would appreciate it if you would let us know.

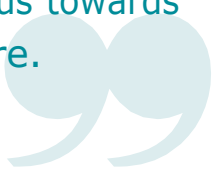
If you are not satisfied with the support from your local contact please get in touch with the Head of Volunteering.

## Political neutrality

The MND Association does not endorse or support any political party. Volunteers will need to be mindful of this, when carrying out their volunteer role, to avoid compromising the Association's political neutrality.



Whether you want to get involved in caring, fundraising, awareness raising or campaigning, you won't fail to be uplifted by this community. And you will soon find yourself making a difference, even if it's just in small steps. Every step is pushing us towards better care and the ultimate goal, a cure.



David, Volunteer

## Further information

We recognise that volunteers' contribution is vital to our work. Specific Association policies and procedures, relevant for both staff and volunteers, can be accessed in full from the

**Volunteer Zone** including:

- Confidentiality
- Data protection
- Health and safety
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Raising concerns

You can also email

**[volunteering@mndassociation.org](mailto:volunteering@mndassociation.org)**

to request a paper copy.

## Further guidance

For further information or advice on any aspect of volunteering with us, please get in touch with the relevant Chair/Leader, staff contact or the Volunteering Team:

Motor Neurone Disease Association  
Francis Crick House  
6 Summerhouse Road  
Moulton Park  
Northampton,  
NN6 3BJ  
Tel: 0345 604 4150

Email: **[volunteering@mndassociation.org](mailto:volunteering@mndassociation.org)**

For more information visit

**[mndassociation.org/volunteerzone](http://mndassociation.org/volunteerzone)**

