

# Volunteer Framework



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# Introduction

Volunteers are at the heart of Lymphoma Action’s work. We are truly grateful for the time, passion, skills, experience, and commitment our volunteers give in helping us achieve our vision that **everyone affected by lymphoma will receive the best possible support, treatment and care.**

The Charity was founded by patient volunteers in 1986 and during this time volunteers have been integral to Lymphoma Action’s work and continue to be central to what we do.

Our Volunteer Framework sets out how we involve, manage and support volunteers across the organisation, and the relationship between a volunteer and Lymphoma Action.

Throughout the document we link to digital copies of additional volunteering information and guidance.

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# Volunteering at Lymphoma Action

Volunteers provide significant support in helping the Charity inform, support, and connect people affected by lymphoma. Their contribution and the breadth of expertise and skills they bring truly adds value and increases our ability to deliver our services. Importantly, volunteers help extend our reach within communities across the UK to create a stronger local and online presence and build on existing activity, helping to make sure that no one has to face lymphoma alone.

## Our commitment

Our vision for volunteering is that through a supportive and empowering volunteer experience, our volunteers will make the greatest positive impact for everyone affected by lymphoma. We are committed to making volunteering inclusive, meaningful, and impactful, making sure we support and value everyone who volunteers with us.

Our **Volunteering Strategy** is a key part of our commitment, aligned to **Lymphoma Action's organisational strategy**, and sets out how we will focus our resources to achieve this.

## Responsibilities and code of conduct

The relationship between Lymphoma Action and volunteers is based on respect, trust, and mutual understanding. All volunteers sign a **Volunteer Agreement** with Lymphoma Action that sets out mutual expectations and a code of conduct for volunteers. The agreement is not intended to be legally binding, but instead outlines a two-way commitment to make sure the volunteering experience is mutually beneficial and meaningful. This agreement can be ended at any time by either Lymphoma Action or the volunteer.

## Working together in the spirit of our values

Lymphoma Action's values underpin our work in achieving the Charity's vision, mission, and goals. They reflect how everyone involved with the charity will approach their role.

We recognise that together with our volunteers we can be more effective in our work, and we want our volunteers to get the most out of their volunteering experience. We commit to involve and support our volunteers in the spirit of our values and ask in return that they carry out their volunteering as a representative of the Charity by reflecting our values as set out in the statements below.

- **Collaborative:** to work positively with others and appreciate everyone's contributions.
- **Trusted:** to be open, honest, and reliable in fulfilling your role to provide a good quality experience for all.
- **Focused:** to understand your role and responsibilities in helping to achieve Lymphoma Action's vision, mission, and goals.

- **Innovative:** to share your ideas, welcome feedback and be open to new ways of working.
- **Empowering:** to help create a supportive environment by communicating with others in respectful and inclusive way.

## Representing Lymphoma Action

Throughout all activities that volunteers take part in on behalf of Lymphoma Action, whether this is in person, in writing or online, they are representing the Charity to the wider community.

As representatives, it's important for volunteers to be positive about the Charity during all of their activities, communications, and the relationships they build, in order to maintain the reputation of Lymphoma Action.

If a volunteer has a concern or complaint about the Charity or their volunteering, we ask that they raise these with their volunteer manager or the Volunteering Team so that we can aim to resolve any issues with them - see '**Compliments and complaints**'.

A key part of representing the Charity is sharing information responsibly. Lymphoma Action is committed to providing accessible and trustworthy information for people affected by lymphoma, their families and friends, and healthcare professionals. Therefore, to support our volunteers when talking about lymphoma and our work, we have a resource on [Sharing information responsibly](#), and cover this topic in their role-specific induction and guidance.

## Expectations

### What volunteers can expect from Lymphoma Action:

- A clear outline of their role and responsibilities.
- A welcome induction to Lymphoma Action, role-specific information and details about our policies and procedures.
- The information, training, guidance, and resources they need to carry out their role, including ongoing support from a designated member of staff (volunteer manager).
- Ongoing communication about volunteering with the Charity, including role-specific updates and quarterly volunteer e-newsletters, to help them in their role.
- A commitment to fairly and openly resolve any difficulties, problems or complaints they may have during their time as a volunteer.
- Reimbursement of expenses reasonably incurred during volunteering, in line with the Charity's expenses policy.
- To involve and support them in the spirit of our values.
- To recognise their contribution and celebrate their successes and achievements.

## What Lymphoma Action expects of our volunteers:

- Carry out their volunteer role to the best of their ability, representing Lymphoma Action positively throughout their volunteer activity, communications, and relationships.
- Participate in induction and training opportunities, as required for their role and keep up to date with developments in the Charity.
- Follow Lymphoma Action's policies, procedures, and guidance at all times.
- Carry out their role in the spirit of our values.
- Handle personal data as instructed and maintain the confidential information of service users, other volunteers, staff members and the Charity's information at all times, including after their volunteering ends.
- Keep in regular contact with their volunteer manager, responding to communications and requests in a timely manner.
- Keep Lymphoma Action equipment and resources safe and in good working condition.
- Provide us with as much notice as possible when unable to fulfil a volunteering activity, or if they no longer wish to be involved.

## Our volunteer involvement framework

### The volunteer experience

To fulfil our commitment of making volunteering inclusive, meaningful, and impactful, Lymphoma Action recognises the importance of providing a high-quality volunteer experience. We want our volunteers to feel connected to the Charity and feel part of our valued volunteer community, and that's why we involve them in helping to shape the volunteer experience.

- Lymphoma Action has an active Volunteer Forum, where volunteer representatives have a voice in their experience by providing valuable insights and ideas. The Forum is open to current volunteers.
- Volunteers can share ideas and feedback for how we can improve the volunteering experience using our online submission form.
- New volunteers are invited to fill in an anonymous feedback survey on their joining experience.
- We conduct a Volunteer Experience Survey every 2 years, to find out what our volunteers think about volunteering with us and how we can improve.

We encourage volunteers to share feedback with their volunteer manager and or the Volunteering Team at any time. Please see '**Compliments and complaints**'.

## Valuing our volunteers

Lymphoma Action takes every opportunity to thank our volunteers individually and collectively for generously giving their time, expertise, and skills to support our work. We have a variety of ways that we specifically recognise our volunteers:

- Share volunteer stories and achievements on our social media channels.
- Celebrate Volunteers' Week, International Volunteer Day and other initiatives.
- Host an annual Volunteer Recognition event where we present annual 'Volunteer Service Awards' and Lymphoma Action commendation for 'Outstanding Contribution'.
- Send thanks on their first volunteering anniversary.
- Nominate volunteers for relevant external recognition awards.

We ask volunteers to [log their volunteering hours](#) to help us celebrate their involvement.

## Support and communication

We're here to support volunteers at every step of the way, which is why they will have a named member of staff – their volunteer manager – and the Volunteering Team to discuss their volunteering with, including any issues or concerns they may have. Where a volunteer has more than one role, they might have a different contact for each.

Alongside role specific information updates from their volunteer manager, they will receive a quarterly volunteer e-newsletter from the Volunteering Team containing general volunteering updates and Lymphoma Action news to help them in their role.

We also provide opportunities for volunteers to connect with one another to offer peer support as they carry out their role and feel part of our volunteer community, through online volunteer meet ups, role-specific team meetings and WhatsApp groups.

We ask that volunteers keep in contact with us, as required for their volunteering, particularly if there are any changes to their contact details, and their health and wellbeing.

## Equality, diversity, and inclusion

Our focus is to create an open, safe, and supportive environment where volunteers can be themselves and feel a sense of belonging. We want them to feel welcome, included and respected as we work together to make sure no one faces lymphoma alone. We value the involvement and contribution of all our volunteers regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or religion.

Our [Diversity and inclusion framework](#) includes staff and volunteers and is a practical framework for our work in this area.

We have inclusive, fair, and consistent recruitment practices and aim to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate individual needs, where practically possible.

Our volunteers have a responsibility to respect the rights and dignity of others and be inclusive and welcoming of everyone they meet, in line with Lymphoma Action's [Equality and diversity policy](#).

## Recruiting volunteers

We aim to make getting involved as a volunteer a straightforward process. We offer fair and consistent recruitment practices at all stages and are transparent about what is involved.

All our volunteers must go through an application and selection process, customised for the specific volunteer role. We use a variety of recruitment methods, for example, informal interviews, taking up two references and trial periods.

Lymphoma Action reserves the right to undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks at its absolute discretion in line with requirements of the volunteer role, and the Charity will inform volunteers where this is required.

Our recruitment practices are designed to make sure we take all reasonable steps to find a volunteering opportunity that's right for the individual and involve volunteers who are suitable to carry out the responsibilities of our volunteering roles and to represent the Charity. Everyone volunteering with Lymphoma Action must be at least 18 years old.

## Induction and training

We want to make sure that our volunteers have everything they need to carry out their role safely and effectively with confidence as they get started. All volunteers are welcomed to Lymphoma Action with a Volunteer Welcome Guide, a general induction to the Charity and about lymphoma, and given access to information, guidance, and resources appropriate for their role.

For some of our roles, volunteers will need to take part in a role-specific induction session and/or training before they can get started and attend additional or refresher training sessions too.

We aim to provide ongoing learning and development opportunities to help our volunteers widen and advance their skills and knowledge for their volunteering. If a volunteer identifies a role-specific training need, they should discuss this with their volunteer manager.

We have a dedicated volunteer resources hub on our website, where volunteers will find resources, guidance, policies and procedures: [lymphoma-action.org.uk/vr](https://lymphoma-action.org.uk/vr).

## Expenses

Volunteers should not be 'out-of-pocket' as a result of volunteering with us. Volunteers can claim reasonable expenses associated with their volunteer activities, for example, travel costs, in line with our [Expenses policy](#).

Volunteers must get prior approval from their volunteer manager and claim using the [Volunteer expenses claim form](#), providing relevant receipts.

Volunteers are responsible for paying any fines incurred during their volunteering, including parking fines. These are not covered under Lymphoma Action's expense claims.

## Compliments and complaints

Lymphoma Action is committed to responding proactively and promptly to any complaints we receive. We take a problem-solving approach that includes reviewing how we work and making any improvements we can.

We want volunteers to feel comfortable in raising and discussing concerns about any aspect of their volunteering. We take all complaints seriously and deal with them openly, honestly, and fairly.

Our [Compliments and Complaints procedure for volunteers](#) outlines the informal and formal processes. If a volunteer has a complaint about Lymphoma Action, its services or the conduct or behaviour of staff members outside of their volunteering, they should follow the procedure outlined in [Lymphoma Action's Complaints Procedure](#).

If there are concerns about the conduct or the behaviour of a volunteer, or a complaint is made, we aim to find the best solution for the complainant, for the volunteer and for Lymphoma Action and our services. This will be managed under the Compliments and complaints procedure for volunteers.

Lymphoma Action welcomes and values feedback from our volunteers to help us develop the volunteering programme. The compliments we receive can be used to celebrate and recognise the work of our volunteers and staff and improve the volunteer experience for everyone.

## Insurance

Volunteers are covered by Lymphoma Action's Public Liability Insurance and Employer's Liability Insurance for their volunteering activities. However, these do not cover their personal property or possessions against loss and damage, including personal computers and devices if they are using them to carry out their volunteering activities.

Volunteers who use their own car or motor vehicle when volunteering, or for travelling to a Lymphoma Action event, are responsible for making sure they have adequate motor insurance. Lymphoma Action does not provide motor insurance cover. Driving in connection with charitable volunteering is normally classified by insurers as 'social, domestic and pleasure', which is part of most standard cover.

## Taking a break from volunteering

We offer flexible involvement and put the health and wellbeing of our volunteers first.

Volunteers should get in touch with their volunteer manager, or the Volunteering Team, to discuss the need to take a break if they are going through a period of being unwell, having treatment or have recently experienced a bereavement. Alternatively, their volunteer manager may initiate a discussion if they feel it is in the best interests of the individual and/or the Charity and its service users.



We recommend taking a break for a period of at least six months, which will be reviewed together before resuming their volunteering.

A volunteer may wish to take a break if they cannot commit to volunteering for any other reason and the length of this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with the volunteer and their manager.

Taking a break for any reason will not affect the volunteer continuing in their role when they return. However, refresher training may be required before they can resume their volunteering, depending on the length of the break.

## Ending or changing roles

If a volunteer decides to leave their role or end their volunteering with Lymphoma Action, they should let us know as soon as possible so that we can plan to continue the activity or service they help to deliver. The Volunteering Team will talk through the next steps, which includes an exit survey to get feedback on their experience before they move on.

Should a volunteer wish to take up another volunteering role with the Charity, they will go through the application and selection process for that role. The recruitment processes may be shortened, for example, if we have references on file, and they will have already taken part in a general induction and signed a Volunteer Agreement. This will be managed on a case-by-case basis with the Volunteering Development Manager and the volunteer manager for the role.

## When volunteers may be required to end their role

There may be occasions where Lymphoma Action will need to end a volunteering role. This would usually be because of a change within the Charity, for example, funding or strategic focus. Some roles may have a maximum term of involvement too.

In these instances, volunteers will be given as much notice as possible and we will work with them to manage the closure of the activity or service, and their volunteer role. If they are interested in alternative volunteering opportunities, they will be encouraged to apply.

There may be circumstances in which the Charity has to end an individual's volunteering because their performance or behaviour does not meet the expected standards. This will always be a last resort as we will make every reasonable effort to work together to address any concerns – see **'Compliments and complaints'**. However, if this is not successful, the volunteer will be asked to leave for the best interest of the Charity and its beneficiaries.

## Providing a volunteer reference

Lymphoma Action can provide a factual reference for a volunteer at any time.

If a volunteer asks for a personal reference, a staff member can choose to do so but this must be in a personal capacity outside of the Charity.

# Health, safety and wellbeing

Lymphoma Action has a duty of care towards our volunteers, service users and staff, and legal responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act for protecting everyone involved with the Charity's activities.

Volunteers also have a general duty of care towards others and a responsibility to keep themselves and others safe while volunteering by following Lymphoma Action's health and safety policies, guidance, and instructions. They are asked to share any concerns about health and safety that they may have with their volunteer manager.

To support volunteers in carrying out this duty of care, Lymphoma Action provides volunteers with **health and safety information**, role-specific guidance, as well as a **Personal safety checklist** and the Charity's **Health and safety policy**.

The health and wellbeing of our volunteers is a priority for Lymphoma Action. That's why we have a requirement that individuals must be at least six months beyond a lymphoma/cancer diagnosis, treatment, active monitoring, or 12 months for bereavement before beginning volunteering.

We encourage volunteers to be mindful of their own health needs and emotional wellbeing. Equally, if their volunteer manager notices, or is made aware of anything that raises a concern for the volunteer's health and wellbeing, they will discuss this with them. In some cases, the volunteer will be advised or required to take a break from volunteering, either completely or in their current role – see **'Taking a break from volunteering'**.

The Charity encourages volunteers to contact the Lymphoma Action Helpline to discuss their feelings in confidence at any time and volunteers can also speak with a Lymphoma Action Mental Health First Aider.

## Lone volunteering

Lone volunteering is when a volunteer carries out their activities on behalf of Lymphoma Action without close or direct support from a member of staff, whether it happens regularly, occasionally or as a one-off. It covers activities where they are volunteering without direct support at an external location (outside of their home or the Lymphoma Action office), including travelling to activities, as well as online and from home.

Many of our volunteering roles involve remote support from Lymphoma Action. We will always inform volunteers about the volunteer roles and activities that include or involve lone volunteering before they get involved.

Our **Lone volunteering procedure for volunteers** outlines information to support them to stay safe when volunteering alone.

# Confidentiality and data protection

Lymphoma Action has a legal and ethical duty to protect the confidential information of everyone we engage with and process the personal data of everyone in contact with the Charity in line with the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The personal and confidential information of our volunteers is securely stored, used and accessed in line with our [Privacy policy, Confidentiality and data protection policies and procedures](#), and the processes outlined in our information sheet [How we store, use and access volunteer personal data and confidential information](#).

Volunteers have a responsibility to protect and maintain the personal and confidential information they have access to during their volunteering, including that of other volunteers and staff in line with the Charity's policies and procedures.

Volunteers will be provided with confidentiality and data protection information, guidance, and training, as required for their volunteer role. We have a general [Data protection FAQs](#) document.

All volunteers sign a [Volunteer Confidentiality and Data Protection Agreement](#) at the start of their volunteering, which sets out their responsibilities throughout their volunteering with Lymphoma Action and after it ends.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is about creating a safe and welcoming environment where everyone is respected and valued, preventing actual or potential harm, harassment, bullying, abuse, and neglect.

Lymphoma Action has a duty of care to safeguard volunteers, staff, service users and the general public. In particular, protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The Charity must respond immediately and appropriately to any safeguarding concerns.

Our approach to safeguarding our volunteers is covered within this framework, including the volunteering information, procedures, and guidance that we refer to. These cover recruitment and training of volunteers; ongoing support; providing a safe volunteering experience and dealing with any volunteering issues that may arise.

Volunteers will be provided with the Charity's [Safeguarding policy and procedures](#) and safeguarding information and training, as required for their volunteer role. Volunteers have a responsibility to follow our safeguarding procedures, which includes reporting any information or concerns they have, or are made aware of, during their volunteering activities.

# Gifts, hospitality, and anti-bribery

Lymphoma Action's **Gifts, hospitality and anti-bribery policy** is in place to make sure that all business is conducted in a socially responsible and ethical manner.

Volunteers must not accept any gifts or hospitality unless it's approved by their volunteer manager or Lymphoma Action, or offer any gifts or hospitality to others on behalf of the Charity or themselves.

## Whistleblowing

Lymphoma Action is committed to the highest standards of integrity and honesty. We encourage a free and open culture in which everyone can safely raise any serious concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the Charity, or the way in which the organisation is run.

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, workers are protected for raising such concerns. The Act does not cover volunteers, but Lymphoma Action's **Whistleblowing policy** aims to provide similar protection and support to our volunteers.

Volunteers have access to the Charity's **Whistleblowing policy**, which sets out the process for reporting serious wrongdoings and the type of concerns that are protected by the Act.

In the first instance, volunteers should raise any concerns with their volunteer manager, or a member of the Senior Management Team if they believe their volunteer manager is involved in the wrongdoing.

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## Policy monitoring

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**Person responsible:** Volunteering Development Manager