CORONERS' COURTS SUPPORT SERVICE

What the CCSS Looks for in a Volunteer

The following skills and qualities are desirable in a volunteer for the CCSS:

a) The ability to work alone, but also as part of a managed diverse team.

b) The ability to work reliably within a rota system.

c) Willingness to be contacted and to make contact with the CCSS staff the Lead Volunteer and Volunteer Representatives.

d) To undertake initial induction, training and refresher/top up training.

e) Willingness to demonstrate our values and to work within the framework of the CCSS.

f) Willingness to adhere to the policy of confidentiality.

g) Ability to listen and communicate with a wide range of people which will include, but not limited to, families, members of the public, Coroners and their staff, legal and medical professionals.

h) Ability to be adaptable. To use own initiative and react appropriately to changing situations. This could include when proceedings start later than anticipated or if the location of the court is changed but not to go beyond the remit of the volunteer role.

i) A caring, mature and supportive attitude.

j) Willingness and ability to sit for extended periods of time. This role may not be suited to those less mobile or for those who may have difficulty sitting for long periods of time.

k) Ability to communicate in English, both orally and in writing.

l) Willingness to work with and in conjunction with the Coroner and the Coroner's Officers.

m) To be computer literate with an understanding of and access to email; to have the ability to use online digital media such as Zoom or Teams to attend virtual team meetings or on-line training.

n) Willingness to undertake administrative tasks (when required) including compiling volunteer rotas and recording basic statistical information.

o) Agreement to the CCSS holding and, where appropriate, sharing your personal information within the Charity as set out in our Privacy Notice https://coronerscourtssupportservice.org.uk/ccss-privacy-statement/ and in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations May 2018.

Volunteer Role Description

Expected commitment after training: A minimum of 2 court days per month after completion of induction process. Attending at least 3 team meetings per year and attend all opportunities for top up/refresher training and regional meetings when held, in order to gain the most out of your volunteer experience.

Duration of role: Ongoing. We suggest 1 year minimum after completion of training

Title: Coroners' Courts Support Service Volunteer

Overall Purpose: To enable families, witnesses and their associates to cope with the experience of attending Court and giving evidence by providing confidential support and information in accordance with the CCSS policy and guidelines and the principals of Equal Opportunities.

The Coroners' Court Support Service is seeking volunteers to support families and witnesses that attend Inquests at Coroners' Courts. Everything we do is based on our values and our volunteers and staff are expected to represent the organisation in a way which is centred on these values. Our values are:

- Support
- Trust
- Openness
- Integrity
- Collaboration

You will play a key part in providing emotional help and practical support to all that attend Inquests (either in person or virtually via screen) at the Court you choose to volunteer at. You will do this by listening to the concerns and anxieties of families and witnesses that attend Court. Being empathetic, friendly and approachable are vital skills for this role.

As a volunteer with us you will have an integral role in the successful delivery of our service, working closely with Court staff to provide the best possible support for all that attend. As we are delivering this service in a professional environment it is important that high standards are maintained at all times. Our Service is free and confidential[1] and we must always act respectfully and empathically, being mindful of the sensitive nature of the support we offer to bereaved families and others.

Responsibilities will include: ensuring the support service is running efficiently and managing this within a rota system; being responsible for swapping duties when you

[1] The Service is confidential unless someone is at risk of harm or for legal reasons

become unable to cover a previously agreed duty; undertaking administrative tasks (when required) including compiling volunteer rotas and recording basic statistical information; promoting the CCSS and raising the profile of the charity; liaising with Court staff and other agencies; taking responsibility for working in a team environment with other volunteers and Court staff as well as being able to work on your own within the boundaries of your role. It is vital that volunteers do not go beyond the scope of the role.

The Coroners' Courts Support Service is an equal opportunity organisation and values diversity within our staff and volunteer teams. Our equal opportunity policy can be found on our website or requested from info@ccsupport.org.uk

Please note that the support and assistance we provide to families and witnesses is always as and when required. This means that there will be occasions when support is not needed.

Main role:

1. Listen to and empathise with concerns and anxieties of the families and witnesses.

2. Do not undertake counselling. The support we provide is always family led

3. To undertake pre-Inquest familiarisation of the Court (if time and circumstances allow) and explain the procedure.

4. Unless specifically asked not to, accompany families and witnesses into Court and remain in Court for the duration of the Inquest. If someone becomes distressed the volunteer should accompany them if they need to leave the Courtroom.

5. After the Inquest, allow them time for recovery in a quiet place (if available) and ensure they have received all necessary information from the Coroner's Officer.

6. Signpost family members and witnesses to other appropriate agencies if they so wish.

7. If the Inquest is not concluded that day, pass on all information to the volunteer who will be on duty the following day via telephone only.

8. Complete the relevant CCSS statistics forms. These are to be held in the CCSS file at the Coroner's Court or other appropriate agreed safe place.

9. To be available one day a fortnight if required. To attend the Court from 45 minutes before the Court sits to the end of the day's session.

10. Never discuss evidence, give an opinion on the possible conclusion or comment on the effect of this.

11. Maintain and promote good relationships with other volunteers and court staff.

12. When required, undertake administrative tasks including compiling volunteer rotas and recording basic statistical information

13. The CCSS ask that you are available for regular support and opportunities to attend annual reviews which can be conducted by telephone, email, virtually, group or one-to-one. To also attend at least three volunteer meetings per year unless specifically agreed, attend top up/refresher training and regional meetings when these are held.

14. Submit claims electronically for travelling and other agreed expenses in accordance with the CCSS policy in a timely manner. Travel expenses should be via the cheapest form of transport available wherever possible.

15. To help the Coroner's Officers in any way appropriate within the role of this volunteer role description in order to support family members and witnesses.

16. Refer to the Coroner's Officer any questions that fall beyond the remit of the CCSS. Volunteers will not give any legal advice.

What You Can Expect From Us:

1. CCSS Privacy Promise
   - To keep your data safe and private
   - To ensure we have your advance agreement to share your data
   - To be open and transparent with you on the data we hold about you
   - To give you the opportunity to remove and amend incorrect data we hold on you

2. Reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses in a timely manner.

3. Relevant induction, initial and top up/refresher training.

4. Ongoing support.