



Refugee & Migrant Services Befriender Role Description

About HopeWorks

HopeWorks was started over 30 years ago under the name of King's Arms Project, as a response to seeing people sleeping rough on the streets of Bedford. We now tackle homelessness, displacement, and isolation in Bedford and beyond. We provide professional advice, innovative solutions and person-centred support, accommodation, and opportunities for growth and community.

Summary of Post

The Refugee & Migrant Services was developed in 2015 in response to the conflict in Syria and consequent refugee crisis. Since then, the R&MS Team has helped over 70 refugee families integrate into Bedfordshire, providing them with holistic, trauma informed support.

Main Duties & Responsibilities

The following points are a guide to help with role definition. Some examples of activities that the Volunteer Befriender could do with the client(s) are:

- English practice
- Getting to know the clients and building rapport to help them feel safe and welcome.
- Discussing family, food, hobbies, goals, and interests.
- Supporting clients to understand British culture, history and geography e.g. showing them photos of different places in the UK and famous sites.
- Exploring their local area e.g. going to the park or local library.
- Discussing the customs and culture of the client's home country.

General

- Commit to regular contact with the individual client or family once a week for a minimum 6-month period.
- Promptly inform the family's Caseworker or Casework Team Manager of any developments and / or required actions.
- Respect the privacy of the clients, i.e. Arrange visits in advance and as much notice as possible.
- Agree with the client the types of activities they wish to undertake, ensuring that these comply with HopeWorks' safety requirements and insurance cover.

It is important to understand there are certain roles that a Volunteer Befriender must NOT undertake - these include:

- Advising on; benefits, immigration, housing, health.
- Counselling or any other work of a healthcare professional.
- Any work that is usually done by a skilled professional, e.g. taking responsibility for someone's financial OR legal affairs.
- Pro-actively discussing faith with clients.

This role is subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service check. Repeat checks are initiated every three years.

Personal Qualities

The Volunteer Befriender role is especially suited for someone who fits the following description:

Experience and knowledge of:	Essential:	Desirable:
A genuine desire to support refugees, and willingness to learn more about the issues they face.	✓	
Experience of working with vulnerable people in a similar capacity.		✓
An understanding for and ability to maintain client confidentiality and the need to maintain professional boundaries.	✓	
Skills:	Essential:	Desirable:
Calm under pressure, reliable and trustworthy.	✓	
Excellent listening, communication, and interpersonal skills.	✓	
Good time management, organisational and planning skills.	✓	
Ability to empower others and encourage their growth in self-worth, confidence, and skills.	✓	
An understanding for people struggling with mental health issues.	✓	
Ability to form and promote positive, supportive, non-judgemental relationships with clients which acknowledges their right to make autonomous decisions and supports the individual to achieve their goals.	✓	
Self-aware and able to reflect on how situations may affect you and the client.	✓	
General:	Essential:	Desirable:
Hold a clean driving licence and business insurance on any vehicle used for volunteering.		✓
Committed to Safeguarding and Health & Safety policies and procedures and observing them.	✓	
Able to respect the Christian ethos of HopeWorks and uphold its values.	✓	

Additional Information

Expenses

Volunteer roles are unpaid, but we can reimburse volunteers for travel costs.

Personal Development

As part of HopeWorks, it is our desire to invest in you personally. We do so through supervisions, and on-going training.

Supervision

One-to-one staff supervisions are completed every 6-8 weeks in order to give opportunity to talk through successes, challenges, development/training needs, and other volunteering-related issues as they arise.

Training

Regular on-going training is provided within work hours in the following contexts: HopeWorks-wide team training, suggested reading, and opportunities for regular professional training. HopeWorks allows volunteers to attend our professional training courses when possible, free of charge. Training will be discussed with you during support sessions with your supervisor.

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Health & Safety

The volunteer is responsible for:

Cooperating with the HopeWorks in delivering all legal responsibilities in respect of your own and your colleagues, volunteers, clients and others health and safety whilst at work.

Equal Opportunities Statement

As part of its recruitment policy, the HopeWorks intends to ensure that no prospective or actual employee or volunteer is discriminated against on the basis of sex, race, nationality, marital status, sexual orientation, employment status, class, disability, age, religious belief or political persuasion, or is disadvantaged by any condition or requirement which is not demonstrably justifiable.