

# Volunteer Role Profile – Helpline Volunteer

---



**TITLE:** Helpline Volunteer

**TIME COMMITMENT:** We ask our volunteers to commit to a maximum of 3 hours a week, Monday-Friday 9-5, and to commit to volunteering for a year wherever possible. You will have an opportunity to discuss your availability as part of your volunteer interview, including your ability to commit more time if desired.

**LOCATION:** Helpline Volunteers work from our helpline in Blackpool and our head office in London, or from a regional hub.

**REQUIREMENTS OF ROLE:** You will need the ability to travel to a Silver Line hub location, and have experience in using computer database programmes. If you have a visual impairment, or a disability that may require specialist equipment or telephone/IT support, please highlight this on your application and we will discuss this at your interview

**OVERALL PURPOSE OF ROLE:** You will be part of our 24/7 confidential helpline team, providing information, friendship and advice to older people who may feel isolated and alone. The Silver Line offers support to people in many ways; through signposting to other services, by offering a friendly chat at any time of day or night, and through referrals to our friendship service where older people are supported by volunteers who provide one to one friendship by phone or letter. The helpline is crucial to our service as it is often the first point of contact for older people themselves, concerned relatives and professionals or potential volunteers.

You will aspire to meet older people's needs by being warm, friendly and professional, and you will provide a listening ear and offer accurate and reliable information. You will work as part of a wider family of volunteers, who we encourage to support and connect with each other, and in turn you will be supported by The Silver Line to ensure that together we can make a real difference to the lives of older people.

**MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:**

- Act as the first point of contact at our telephone helpline for older people, ensuring that calls are handled in a way that respects the individual and reflects The Silver Line's values.

- Work professionally in a helpline environment, offering a consistent service to our callers which remains sensitive to their needs.
- Ensure caller records are updated for every call.
- Maintain standards: with emphasis on empathy, patience, understanding, impartiality and caller satisfaction.
- Complete the interview and training required by your volunteer role.
- Agree to a Disclosure and Barring Service check if required, and provide two references.
- Undertake a 3-month probationary period.
- Comply with The Silver Line's IT and other record-keeping policies.
- Where possible, give the Volunteering Team advanced notice of any absence.
- Report any problems encountered to the Volunteering Team.
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of The Silver Line service.
- Develop and maintain appropriate boundaries of confidentiality with other volunteers, colleagues and older people.
- From time to time, complete further training as necessary to support you and your volunteering role.

### **BOUNDARIES OF THE ROLE:**

As a volunteer – for both your own safety and the safety of older people – it is important that you keep within clearly defined boundaries of your role. Some important points to remember:

- Do respect older people's confidentiality by not discussing them with friends, family or other volunteers. You should only discuss their details with the Volunteering Team.
- Do not give out your personal contact details. It is very important that you remain in control of your own volunteering. Giving out your personal contact details could lead to the older person contacting you at inappropriate times, which could be awkward for you and is not appropriate to this service.
- You must not accept or agree to accept any offer of gifts or services offered by members, their family or relatives, suppliers, distributors, or any person having similar connections to The Silver Line. Under no circumstances are volunteers to become party to being involved in the making of an older person's will. If you are called upon to provide support in this respect, refer to the Volunteering team for advice on the appropriate course of action.
- Do not offer to visit older people at home – even if they should live within a close travelling distance – as this is not permissible under the boundaries of The Silver Line.

## **VOLUNTEER PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Knowledge/understanding**

- A genuine desire to support older people. (E)
- An ability to deliver to and reflect The Silver Line values. (E)
- An understanding of older people and the issues that affect them. (E)
- An understanding of the need for older person confidentiality. (E)
- An understanding of the need to maintain safe working boundaries when working with older people. (E)

### **Skills/abilities**

- Warmth, understanding, sensitivity and a willingness to listen. (E)
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to converse at a variety of levels. (E)
- Experience of providing support to people over the telephone in a helpline environment. (D)
- The ability to be supportive and non-judgemental regardless of a person's age, race, sexuality, religion or disability. (E)
- A flexible and understanding approach to working with older people's needs in a busy helpline environment. (E)
- To be willing to learn from your own and others' experiences. (E)
- I.T. literate with the ability to use computer databases. (E)
- Ability to work as part of a team. (E)
- Safeguarding knowledge in relation to older people. (D)

### **Other**

- To be able to make a regular commitment for a minimum of 1 year. (D)
- A sense of humor and the ability to enjoy and share conversation. (E)
- Willingness to work with other volunteers. (E)
- Willingness to undertake further training and supervision as and when requested. (E)
- A commitment and an adherence to The Silver Line's Equality and Diversity policy. (E)

**(E) = Essential requirements; (D) = Desirable requirements**

**Please note: you will be required to undertake a DBS check to be able to volunteer for this role. Information on this will be made available if you are invited to interview.**