Witness Service

Volunteer with us

24 February 2026

Introduction

The Witness Service, provided by Victim Support, welcomes people who want to volunteer to support victims and witnesses through the court process.

If you're interested in the criminal justice system, have some spare time to give and are looking for an opportunity to help within the local community, this could be the right place for you.

As a Witness Service volunteer, you'll be joining a team of trained staff and volunteers who are committed to supporting witnesses to give their best evidence in court. Some of the things you might be doing include:

- Providing information to witnesses when they come to court
- Answering questions about how the court system works
- Facilitating pre-trial visits and virtual court tours
- Supporting witnesses in the run-up to trial (in person or by video or phone)

Who we're looking for

As a volunteer, you'll be friendly and understanding, and confident in supporting people through an anxious time. You'll be empathetic, non-judgemental, and have good listening and communication skills. You'll also be comfortable in supporting people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

You may want to have a think about how much time you're able to give to volunteering with us. In our court-based roles you'll need to be able to attend court for one day a week, while our outreach roles are more flexible.

We encourage you to volunteer for at least 12 months to help you to get the most out of the experience and provide some consistency for the victims and witnesses that we support.

We also ask that you're able to access the internet for communication and online training and have an active email account so we can contact you easily. You should be comfortable using online forms where we collect information to monitor and evaluate the services we provide. You'll receive full training on any systems that you are asked to use while volunteering with us.

Student volunteers

We welcome applications from students. If you are a student looking to volunteer with us, please read our Student Volunteer Guidance [PDF] before applying.

Volunteer roles

The Witness Service has two roles that you can apply for. Court-based roles involve supporting people in court, while our outreach roles involve supporting people before, during and after the court process.

You can find out more about each role below:

Court-based roles

In these roles you'll support victims and witnesses when they come to court by providing practical information and emotional support, helping them to feel confident when giving their evidence. You'll need to be able to attend court once per week in your local area during normal court hours, usually 9am to 5pm.

You'll offer practical guidance around court processes and offer emotional support for witnesses as they wait to give evidence. You may also spend time with witnesses after they have given their evidence to help them process their experience.

This role also involves showing witnesses around the court in advance of their trial date, answering questions and supporting people with understanding how the court works. This may be through either an in-person or virtual pre-trial visit (which includes a virtual court tour).

Find out more in the role description for court-based roles [PDF].

Outreach roles

In these roles you'll support witnesses and victims before, during and after the trial, either remotely or in person.

You'll be a key supporter for your witness, helping them to prepare in advance of the trial and accompanying them to court on the day. You'll work with them to build a tailored package of support that meets their individual needs.

You may also work with the witness after the trial, arranging referrals to other support services where needed.

As you gain experience in the role, you may be working with vulnerable or intimidated witnesses who require an advanced level of support, including victims of sexual or domestic abuse and children or young witnesses.

As part of the role, you'll need to be able to contact witnesses by video call or meet in a safe space such as a school or community centre. You'll need the ability to travel by car or public transport as required. You'll also need a computer with a camera and microphone, and to be able to talk safely in a private space.

These roles can be more flexible than court-based roles, as you will not be attending court on a weekly basis. However, you may need to meet with witnesses and victims at various times throughout the day, and you'll need to be able to spend the day in court with them when their case comes to trial.

These roles are only available outside of London.

Find out more in the role description for outreach roles [PDF].



Image Description: Photo of a woman in a blue headscarf engaged in conversation with a witness, conveying support.

Support and training

All Witness Service volunteers will receive a warm welcome, role-specific training and lots of support. You'll have access to a comprehensive training package, along with a dedicated manager who will answer any questions you have and support you within your role.

As a volunteer with us, you'll have access to our online eLearning platform, where you'll work through mandatory training. You will also need to attend training workshops (online or in-person) where you'll meet other staff and volunteers and gain valuable knowledge and skills about the Witness Service and how you can make an impact.

You'll also have access to a wide range of other support, including:

- An Employee Assistance Programme, which provides a support helpline and information and advice on a range of issues including health, wellbeing, childcare and careers
- A monthly Volunteer Update e-newsletter keeping you informed of volunteer news from across the country, training opportunities and news from the Witness Service and Victim Support
- Agreed expenses applicable to your role

What will you get out of volunteering?

Working as a volunteer can bring many benefits, including improved wellbeing. You'll also gain new skills and learn more about the criminal justice system in England and Wales. This is a brilliant opportunity to meet new people and help give something back to the community.

As a Witness Service volunteer, you'll be working alongside staff and other volunteers who want to help people who have either witnessed or experienced crime. You'll be supporting them to give their best evidence in court, ensuring their voice is heard and making a positive impact on their lives.

Who can volunteer?

You do not need any qualifications or previous experience to work in a volunteer role with the Witness Service in England or Wales, but you will need to be over the age of 18 to apply. We do ask that you're able to commit to a reasonable length of time of volunteering with us to ensure consistency for the victims and witnesses we support. If you're a student and are studying, we can talk about what happens during the holidays.

As part of your application, we will have to do a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This is for the protection of the witnesses and victims we support.

Everyone is welcome – we embrace anyone who wants to volunteer with us, regardless of age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, gender, disability, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment status, socio-economic background, religion or belief.

We look at each application on an individual basis, so if you have a criminal record this will not necessarily stop you from being able to apply for a role with us, depending on the nature of the offence.

How to apply

If you're interested in applying for a volunteering role with the Witness Service, please complete our application form. A member of our volunteering team will then be in touch to confirm if we are recruiting at a court location close to you and what the next steps will be. If you have any questions, or need any support completing the form, please contact us on volunteering@victimsupport.org.uk.

When completing your application form, tell us about how you feel you meet the requirements of the role. You can use examples from employment experiences, community activities or other aspects of your life. Remember, direct experience of the criminal justice system is not required as you'll be given training and support throughout your role.

The application process is simple, and we'll get back to you as soon as we can. If your application is successful and you are invited to an interview, we will then conduct reference checks and a DBS check to ensure the safety of the people we support.