**Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) Guidance on Volunteering during the COVID-19 emergency situation**

**Purpose**

As you are aware in these unprecedented times there are many different opportunities to volunteer to support the country during the COVID-19 emergency. These guidelines contain advice and guidance as to how you can volunteer if you are able for roles that are unpaid, whilst still receiving your usual pay from the University and balancing your health and wellbeing. We do appreciate that there will be people whom are unable to volunteer due to work or carer commitments despite wanting to. For paid roles for e.g. clinical roles, please see LJMU separate guidance.

**Operating principles**

As a university, we fully support staff volunteering for the COVID-19 emergency, if you can and are able to be released, your volunteering will need to be recorded and agreed with your line manager in the first instance as detailed in the procedure section. We do appreciate that there will be people whom are unable to volunteer due to work or carer commitments despite wanting to.

During these exceptional circumstances, you will continue to be paid by the university, if the volunteering has been agreed with your line manager in advance and recorded. We will also record this on our staff info base system, to allow us to monitor which staff are volunteering and review the health and wellbeing of our staff carrying out these duties.

You remain an employee of the University and contractual terms and conditions with the University are unchanged. All University policies continue to apply. As you are being paid by the University, you should not receive any additional payments for volunteering. It is unlikely that any of the current volunteering opportunities would cause a conflict of interest with your duties to the University. However, the particular circumstances must be discussed with your line manager as part of seeking agreement to volunteer.

If you are unable to work or volunteer due to sickness, please follow, the University’s usual reporting guidelines.

**Procedure**

We request that you consider the following before volunteering:

1. Consider the type of role that you could commit to as outlined in the volunteering opportunities section, there may be more volunteering opportunities that become apparent as the situation changes daily. Especially review the requirements around (1) your current health status – this is not something the University can advise on and you must take your own situation into account and, if appropriate, seek medical advice and (2) the requirement for DBS checks or specific qualifications for certain roles. The University will not be responsible for your health besides safety whilst you carry out volunteering duties as it will not be in control of the duties you are given. You must follow the instructions and directions you are given as a volunteer to ensure that you are able to carry these duties out safely and to protect your own health, and that of others.

2. Think about how much time you could commit to this role whilst balancing other family and work commitments. It is completely understandable that you may be already carrying out key operational roles within the University and/or have caring commitments and therefore not have time available to volunteer.

3. Talk to your line manager about whether your role is essential to continue based upon the operational requirements of the University. It may be possible to agree that you undertake some volunteering, alongside discharging the key elements of your role; for other roles, it may be possible for the University to agree that you can volunteer all of the time when you would normally be carrying out University duties. This will depend on your role, and, as the situation is changing rapidly, any agreement reached will need to be kept under review, as the University’s need for staff to undertake key duties will vary from time to time. Whatever is agreed is it essential to agree with your line manager (on the document below) how you will keep in contact during the volunteering period. This is to ensure you discuss how the volunteering is progressing and any impact on your health and wellbeing, as we do not know yet as to how long this situation may continue at this current time.

4. We are mindful of your safety and the safety of others, so whilst you agree to carry out these volunteering roles please bear in mind your current commitments and the fact that the role may well be physically and mentally exhausting. Therefore when committing to job roles and hours please take this in to consideration. In addition, be mindful that the Working Time Regulations set a limit of 48 hours work unless you have “opted out” of this limit. The limit is averaged over a 17-week period. There are also minimum requirements for rest breaks. If you think that your volunteering hours plus key University duties would result in you working in excess of the 48 week limit and/or having insufficient rest breaks, you must contact your HR Business Partner for advice.

5. If your line manager is in agreement that you can be released they should email HRAdvice@ljmu.ac.uk, please put the name of your HR Business Partner on the email and attach the form in appendix 1.

6. Please note if you are an emergency volunteer in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 7 of the Coronavirus Act 2020. That is, you have been issued with an emergency volunteering certificate by a relevant authority, certifying that you are an emergency volunteer in health or social care, then you should also provide a copy of that certificate to your line manager no later than three days prior to the emergency volunteer leave period commencing.

 If you are likely to receive pay for being an "emergency volunteer", you should refer to separate LJMU guidance

**Some examples of volunteering opportunities:**

**1. NHS Responders:**

NHS Volunteer Responders has been set up to support the NHS during the COVID-19 outbreak. To do this they need an 'army' of volunteers who can support the 1.5m people in England who are at most risk from the virus to stay well. NHS doctors, nurses and other professionals will be able to refer people in to NHS Volunteer Responders and be confident that they have been matched with a reliable, named volunteer.

NHS Volunteer Responders is not intended to replace local groups helping their vulnerable neighbours but is an additional service provided by the NHS.

GPs, doctors, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, NHS 111 advisers and social care staff will all be able to request help for their at-risk patients via a call centre run by the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS), who will match people who need help with volunteers who live near to them. Some charities will also be able to refer people to the service.

This programme enables volunteers to provide care or to help a vulnerable person, which is permitted under the new rules announced by the Government on 23rd March 2020.

**How to become an NHS Responder?**

You can help by signing up for one or more of the tasks listed below. Once you have registered and checks are complete you will be provided a login, to the GoodSAM Responder app. Switch the app to 'on duty', and you will see live and local volunteer tasks to pick from nearby.

**Consider:**

Volunteers may be asked to show the active task they are responding to if asked. Volunteers must be 18 or over, and fit and well with no symptoms. Those in higher-risk groups (including those over 70, those who are pregnant or with underlying medical conditions) will be able to offer support by telephone.

Your safety is a priority. The majority of tasks can be undertaken while social distancing and volunteers will receive guidance through our 'getting started pack'. If you do become ill, you can pause your volunteering.

Patient transport drivers will require an enhanced DBS check and will receive guidance to do this role safely also included within the 'getting started pack'.

**What type of Role can you play as an NHS Responder?**

**Community Response volunteer:** This role involves collecting shopping, medication or other essential supplies for someone who is self-isolating, and delivering these supplies to their home.

**Patient Transport volunteer:** This role supports the NHS by providing transport to patients who are medically fit for discharge, and ensuring that they are settled safely back in to their home.

**NHS Transport volunteer:** This role involves transporting equipment, supplies and/or medication between NHS services and sites, it may also involve assisting pharmacies with medication delivery.

**Check-in and Chat volunteer:** This role provides short-term telephone support to individuals who are at risk of loneliness as a consequence of self-isolation.

**2. Parliamentary Support for research expertise**

If you feel you have any expertise relating to the COVID-19 outbreak or its impacts, the KEU would be very grateful if you would sign up to a database. Signing up does not commit you to contributing in anyway, it’s simply so that Parliament has your details to hand and can contact you very rapidly; if they contact you and you aren’t able to respond, they will fully understand.

Staff in Parliament have identified a number of areas where Parliament may need to be able to access research expertise, listed below, and found on the sign up page. If you identify an area that has not been listed, please do feel free to give detail on the sign up form in ‘other’:

Agriculture and farming, Airlines/airports, Arts, Behavioural science, Burial and cremation, Brexit, Business, Charities, Children and families, Civil contingency planning and management, Climate change, Communicating uncertainty, , Consumer protection, Coronavirus, Coroners, Countryside, Courts, Criminal justice, Criminal law, Crisis communications, Critical national infrastructure, Data protection, Death, Defence, Economics, Education - higher and further, Education – schools, Elections, Emergency planning, Emergency services, Employment, Employment law, Energy, Environment, European Union, Financial services, Financial systems and institutions, Foreign policy, Government, Health economics, Health services, Housing, Human rights, Immigration, Immunology / vaccinology, Industry, Infection control, Inflation, Insolvency, International law, IT, Law, Legal aid, Leisure and tourism, Local government, Medicine, National security, Package holidays, Pandemics, Pensions, Police powers, Ports and maritime, Prisons, Public expenditure, Public finance, Public health, Public order, Railways, Registration of deaths, Religion, Social security and tax credits, Social services, Sports, Surveillance , Taxation, Trade, Transport, Unemployment, Virology, Waste, Water, Welfare, Welfare benefits.

**3. Other potential volunteering opportunities:**

These are changing daily and may include helping at foodbanks or with local charities supporting local people who are at risk or require additional support within your local area.

**Share your stories:**

It would be great to hear your volunteering stories and share them with other members of staff working at home tirelessly supporting the University, if you can send these to Ben Jones, head of communications B.J.Jones@ljmu.ac.uk

**Questions?**

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your HR Business Partner at HRAdvice@ljmu.ac.uk

**Appendix 1: Volunteering during the COVID-19 emergency situation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Line manager: |  |
| Department: |  |
| Current Job Role: |  |
| Volunteering Job Role: |  |
| Date to begin volunteering: |  |
| Hours and days agreed to volunteer: |  |
| Possible conflicts of interest identified and how these will be addressed\* |  |
| Keeping in contact agreement: |  |

\* *Please note that if there are any potential conflict then this should be referred to IMT.*

*Please return addressed to your HR Business Partner via* *HRAdvice@ljmu.ac.uk*