

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING AT RECEPTION CENTRES

Principles of the Red Cross

The operations of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent are steered by seven fundamental principles: Humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, universality, unity. The volunteers and employees of the Red Cross have an obligation to follow these principles. The Red Cross and the Red Crescent are best known as international protection symbols, and every volunteer is a visible representative of a worldwide movement. Because of this it is important that every volunteer follow the shared principles, these instructions and the organisation's ethical instructions. In asylum and reception work the organisation's operations are also steered by the aim of helping people in need.

More information: *Ethical instructions and the reception centre volunteer agreement*

Professional secrecy

Volunteers working at reception centres are subject to professional secrecy. Do not discuss residents' personal matters with outsiders. Everything you see and hear about residents at the centre should remain your own information only. At reception centres we only use residents' first names. Not everyone wants to be recognised. If you are unsure about something, you can talk to the staff or the instructor responsible for your activity group.

More information: *Reception centre volunteer agreement*

Volunteer insurance

The volunteer's own life, leisure time accident and home insurance take priority in case of accidents taking place during the operations of the Finnish Red Cross. The Finnish Red Cross has two national insurance policies for volunteer activities. The collective accident insurance for volunteer activities (353-3989247-4) covers for accidents and resulting treatment costs of the Red Cross' volunteers.

The organisation's activity liability insurance (312-0625071-V) covers for personal or property damage caused to another person in the organisation's activities, which the Finnish Red Cross is liable for as the organiser of the activities. This means damage facilitated or caused to a so-called third party, meaning a person/party outside of the organisation, as a result of the Red Cross' activities.

Media and photography

The reception centre's staff (usually the director or assistant director) is responsible for all media contacts. All questions related to the reception centre are directed to the staff. You are allowed to talk about your own volunteer activities, but agree about it with the director in advance. Photography without permission is prohibited. If you wish to take photographs, you must ask permission from the centre staff and the person being photographed in advance. The asylum seeker must also be clearly informed of what the photographs will be used for. Publishing the photographs online is prohibited and publication should always be separately agreed upon with the persons photographed and the centre's staff.

Safety

It is recommended that volunteers always work in pairs with other volunteers or employees, never alone. Persons under the age of 18 are allowed to participate in group activities and volunteer activities coordinated by adults, but not in personal friend activities (in other words a person under the age of 18 cannot serve as an asylum seeker's friend alone). In threatening situations it is important to withdraw, protect yourself and report the threat to the staff. We recommend that volunteers working at the centre only use their first names and not give out their contact information to residents. We recommend that all volunteers wear Red Cross name tags.

More information: *Instructions for violent and threatening situations*

Health

Good hand hygiene and cough etiquette can effectively prevent the spread of infections. Volunteers are not vaccinated or given medical examinations without express health-related concerns.

Volunteers are responsible for making sure that their basic vaccinations (polio, tetanus, diphtheria, MMR) are in order. If the person responsible for health care considers or decides that a hepatitis vaccination is needed and the volunteer works with a group/resident who poses a risk of infection, a hepatitis vaccination can be provided.

Residents should also be informed of and instructed in hygiene matters in order to prevent the spread of infections.

How to behave

Volunteers are considered guests at reception centres. As such, the centre's visiting hours, rules and the staff's instructions must be followed at all times. At the end of your visit/shift, briefly discuss your experience with the staff or the instructor responsible for

your activity group. Bringing items, food or drinks to residents is prohibited unless separately agreed with the staff.

Romantic relationships between persons in the asylum process and volunteers are strictly prohibited. Volunteers should also refrain from loaning or giving money to or making purchases for asylum seekers. Volunteers are also not allowed to make their own decisions about organising activities. Activities are always agreed upon with the staff and other volunteers.

It is important to meet residents as people. Meet people in a friendly and calm manner and with a smile. Make time for small talk and being present. Speak clear Finnish.

Religion and politics

Issues related to religion and politics are not part of the Red Cross' activities. Volunteers and employees do not express their opinions on political or religious matters. The Red Cross' activities are about people, not religions or political views.

The Red Cross' mandate in reception

The Finnish Red Cross establishes reception centres and emergency accommodation units in cooperation with the authorities and under their authorisation. The Red Cross does not participate in the asylum decision process. Volunteers and employees should not express their opinions on asylum processes or asylum policy.

Additional instructions and documents can be found on the pages of the FRC's multicultural group on RedNet: https://rednet.punainenristi.fi/monikulttuurinen_ryhma (in Finnish and Swedish)