

Lincolnshire Action Trust

Visits Centre Volunteer

Lincolnshire Action Trust:

Lincolnshire Action Trust was established in 2000 and works with a variety of agencies within the criminal justice system to reduce re-offending, by working with people with convictions to address some of the issues and challenges which have resulted in their sentence.

The charity offers a range of training opportunities and employment support to prepare people for their release. Additional key services are also offered to their families and dependants, both during their time in prison and following their release.

General overview:

Visitors' centres exist to meet the needs of adults and children visiting relatives or friends in prison and immigration removal centres. Prison Service Guidelines state that they aim to offer "a safe, pleasant environment where all visitors are met with dignity and respect, provided with the facilities they need, and offered information, support and the opportunity to discuss the difficulties they may face in confidence". This statement is reflective of the visitors' centres that Lincolnshire Action Trust runs.

Volunteers in this role will therefore offer a warm welcome to all visitors arriving for a domestic visit and assist in the processes of booking in visitors. They will offer emotional and practical support to the families who are waiting for a visit, providing activities, information and answering questions when required.

Main tasks will include:

- Welcoming and talking to visitors as they arrive
- Ensuring new visitors are able to understand visiting processes
- Assisting staff with booking visitors in and ensuring everyone adheres to prison regulations
- Providing information and support as necessary to the families of prisoners or detainees
- Respecting confidentiality and safeguarding policies whilst acting courteously at all times
- Supporting children by encouraging them to join in play and activities
- Ensuring the visits centre, play areas, and visits hall are tidy at the end of visiting time
- Supporting staff on family visit days

Skills required:

- Welcoming and friendly attitude
- Non judgemental
- Ability to work confidently as part of a team
- An understanding of confidentiality
- Patience and understanding
- Basic numeracy and literacy

Requirements:

Due to the nature of the project, volunteers must be over 18.

Locations:

The role is available at:

- HMP Humber
- HMP Hull (*visits house only*)
- HMP Lincoln
- HMP Stocken
- Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre

The role is available in visitors centres based outside of the prison, and in visits hall within the prison. Volunteers initially begin in the visitors centre/visits house, and progress to the visits hall, but can choose to limit their support to the visitors centre if they do not wish to enter the prison.

Expenses:

- Public transport costs with receipts or mileage up to a 20 mile radius at 45p per mile

Training and support:

- Initial project induction and training, including safeguarding and an overview of the criminal justice system
- LAT offers a training and recognition day for all volunteers annually
- Volunteers may be eligible to attend some prison organised training

Commitment:

LAT asks volunteers to:

- Commit to the project and its purpose
- Give notice of absence as soon as possible
- Be available for a minimum of two sessions/8 hours per month
- Undertake an induction and training programme
- Agree to an Enhanced DBS check, reference checks, and potentially prison clearance (this will require a form of photo ID)

Volunteers can expect:

- Regular support and supervision from the volunteer coordinator and senior practitioners
- Training and progression opportunities
- A clear and understandable volunteer policy
- Invitation to volunteer meetings
- Recognition of their work

Recruitment process:

- Email or call for more information or to request an application form. Alternatively download an application form from the website
- Complete and return the application form via post or email
- Applicants will be invited to attend an informal interview with the volunteer coordinator and/or a senior practitioner
- If both parties wish to continue the application process references will be sought
- The applicant will then be invited to a volunteer training session relevant to the role they have applied for and a DBS form for an enhanced DBS check will be completed
- After training, the applicant will meet with the volunteer coordinator and/or senior practitioner after training to discuss next steps and the DBS form will be sent to the umbrella body for processing
- Volunteers will be given regular support and supervisions, as well as the opportunity to access development opportunities and training. Volunteers are also reimbursed for 'out of pocket' travel and expenses incurred in the role

To apply:

- Download an application form from the 'Getting Involved' page of our website
- Email volunteering@LATcharity.org.uk
- Ring 01522 806611