

Detention Welfare Volunteer

JRS mission and work

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation, at work in 50 countries with a mission to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. JRS in the UK has a special ministry to those who find themselves destitute as a consequence of government policies and those detained for the administration of immigration procedures. JRS UK runs a day centre, activities and hosting scheme (At Home) for destitute asylum seekers, detention outreach services to Heathrow IRC and has recently begun a legal advice service. We work to raise awareness of the situation facing refugees we accompany and serve by enabling their story to be heard.

Volunteer role: Detention Welfare Volunteer

Each week, JRS UK holds a drop-in session at the Welfare Offices at Colnbrook and Harmondsworth, the two sites of the Immigration Removal Centre near Heathrow airport. Open to all individuals currently detained, these sessions provide practical help in accessing support at the centre, liaising with solicitors and casework. Alongside practical help, volunteers offer emotional support and a listening ear during a time which can be incredibly isolating for those detained.

Detention Welfare Volunteers are expected to attend the Welfare Offices at the Heathrow IRCs for 6-7 hours one day a week (Welfare runs from 10am-12pm and 2-5pm) assisting those detained with the issues they present, helping to signpost them to the relevant support where necessary, assessing paperwork and liaising with legal representatives and other NGOs. You will be available as a listening ear for those detained, offering free, confidential and non-judgemental support. For any support you give during welfare, you will be responsible for recording this casework and any appropriate follow-up which is needed. **As our resources are limited, we expect a commitment of at least 6 months.**

Person Specification

- The ability to build trust and make people feel relaxed
- Strong communication, including listening
- Strong literacy and note-taking skills
- Excellent IT skills and experience of databases
- Patience, tolerance and sensitivity
- Empathy and a non-judgemental attitude
- The ability to work in a multi-cultural environment
- Respect for an individual's confidentiality
- Self-awareness and the ability to examine your thoughts and values
- A good sense of personal integrity and ethics
- We are currently seeking volunteers who can speak any of the following languages: Albanian, Arabic, Farsi, Mandarin, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Sorani, Urdu, Vietnamese

Volunteers are needed for one day a week (plus travel time) and 3-4 additional hours for casework follow up. JRS will provide induction, training and on-going support for volunteers. Travel will be paid.

We particularly welcome applications from people with migrant and refugee backgrounds.

Covid-19

Given the current Covid-19 situation, we will be interviewing online and all contact with people detained at Heathrow will be conducted solely over the phone, with no face-to-face visits. This

system will remain in place until we can ensure the safety of our volunteers and of those we visit in detention.