

Croí Volunteer Handbook 2025

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Croí, the West of Ireland Cardiac & Stroke Foundation Ltd – a company limited by guarantee

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1. Volunteering with Croí

1.1 Introduction

At Croí, our aim is to lead the fight against heart disease and stroke, with a particular focus on the West of Ireland. Our vision is an end to premature death or disability from cardiovascular disease in Ireland.

Our mission is to prevent heart disease and stroke, save lives, empower and support families, communities and future generations to take control of their health and well-being.

Our work is funded from the proceeds of fundraising events, voluntary contributions and philanthropy. We are deeply grateful for the support and endorsement of our donors, supporters and volunteers who give so generously of their time and resources.

This policy outlines the guidelines and expectations for volunteers working with Croí.

1.2 Volunteering Opportunities

Croí offers a variety of volunteering opportunities, including but not limited to:

1. **Event Support** - Support the Croí team at our annual fundraising events, including our Corrib Cycle &, Annual Night Run and other fundraising and events and campaigns that arise through the year.
2. **Street collections** – Join us for Croí collections, including World Heart Day collections and matchday events with our various sporting partners.
3. **Health promotion** – Support the Croí Health Team at public awareness events, talks and more.
4. **In-house** – Help the team in Croí House around events where there are opportunities to visit Croí and offer in-house support with reception etc.
5. **Administration support** – Providing administration assistance in areas such as data entry, filing, mailings and at our front desk.
6. **Volunteer drivers** – We always need a pool of drivers to work with our service users and bring them into Croí. A volunteer driver must have a clean driver's licence for this role. Volunteer drivers will have access to the Croí minibus for this role.
7. **Patient Support Services** – Offering support to individuals and families affected by heart disease and stroke through our support programs. This may also include taking part in walking groups, summer exercise classes, summer outings with our stroke group,
8. **Other** – We are always on the lookout for photographers, videographers, gardeners and many more!

1.3 Scope of Policy

This volunteer policy applies to all volunteers with Croí.



2. Recruitment & Selection of Volunteer

2.1 Recruitment Process

Croí welcomes enquiries from prospective volunteers at any time and will hold subsequent information and training sessions in Croí House on occasion. A prospective volunteer is required to meet the Fundraising Team (or other Croí team members as appropriate) at a convenient time for them.

2.2 Diversity

Croí encourages the recruitment and engagement of volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds, and actively seeks to have a team of volunteers which is representative of the community. Volunteers of all genders, ages, cultures, nationalities and experiences are welcomed and valued.

2.3 Information Session

The session will include background information on the organisation, volunteer role description, what is expected of volunteers, opportunities available, and an explanation of the application process.

These evenings will be hosted by Mike Cubbard (Volunteer Manager) and involve an informal discussion on the above mentioned.

2.4 Application Process

Following an application received by Croí, applicants are emailed the paperwork which they need to complete, along with the details of training. Paperwork requirements include completing a general application form and for the volunteer driver role, a full clean driving licence must be produced. These requirements may be subject to change. The Croí fundraising team are available to assist with queries concerning the paperwork requirements.

2.5 Garda Vetting

Garda Vetting The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 ('the 2012 Act') requires that a 'relevant organisation' which recruits employees or volunteers to undertake certain work or activities with children or vulnerable persons must ensure that these employees and volunteers are vetted by An Garda Síochána before undertaking such work or activity.

Croí is a 'relevant organisation' within the meaning of the 2012 Act and the work it recruits volunteers to undertake in our vehicles falls within the scope of activities for which Garda vetting is required. All prospective volunteer drivers and on-vehicle assistants must therefore be Garda vetted.

Croí will conduct the vetting application process in respect of its prospective volunteers. After the National Vetting Bureau has processed an application from a prospective volunteer it will provide a disclosure to Croí. Where the disclosure reads 'NIL', vetting is completed. Where the Bureau disclosure includes a report of convictions or concerns a risk assessment will be conducted by Croí in order to decide if the applicant is suitable to work with Croí as a volunteer. Garda Vetting is to be renewed after three years where a person is still volunteering with the organisation.

2.6 Volunteer Training

All new volunteers must attend an information session hosted in Croí House, Moyola Lane, Newcastle. This training includes a section on the key requirements for volunteers set out in the Croí Volunteer Manual, and scenario-based discussion of the Code of Conduct for volunteers. All volunteers will be



given a copy of the Volunteer Manual, which includes the Code of Conduct. CPR training will be offered to all volunteer drivers & assistants with first aid training available to all volunteers.

Croí will provide appropriate training and on-going support to volunteers to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.

Volunteers are encouraged to communicate any concerns or difficulties they encounter throughout the training sessions to the Volunteer Manager.

2.7 Volunteer Placement

On completion of the Croí training session and application process and a disclosure satisfactory to Croí under the Garda Vetting process if required, new volunteers will be advised of the calendar of events open to volunteer opportunities. Volunteers can then identify suitable roles and advise Volunteer Manager, Mike Cubbard accordingly. The volunteer should feel free to contact the Volunteer Manager for information and support if they have any queries or are experiencing any difficulties in identifying a role.

3. Supporting Volunteers

3.1 Support for Staff members

The Volunteer Manager, Mike Cubbard holds the primary responsibility for engaging with and supporting the organisation's volunteers. The Volunteer Manager remains in contact via communications through team leaders and through email throughout the year. In addition, given the invaluable role played by volunteers, all Croí staff members recognise that supporting and engaging with volunteers is an important part of their work.

3.2 Team Leaders

Team leaders are experienced volunteers who, after discussion with the Volunteer Manager, take on the additional role of supporting new and current volunteers. This includes responsibilities in the area of induction of new volunteers, team level communications, organising informal get-togethers, and more in-depth communication with the Volunteer Manager

4. Volunteer Management Procedures

4.1 Data Management

Croí understands that all personal information given by a volunteer is privileged, must remain confidential and used only as it directly relates to the volunteer position and for the purposes it was requested. Croí will therefore gather, maintain, store, and delete all data in line with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data is retained only for as long as a person is volunteering and for one year afterwards.



4.2 Confidentiality Agreement

All volunteers must sign a confidentiality agreement before they can be placed as a volunteer. In this, volunteers commit to treating their co-workers and the families and service users with whom they work with respect for their dignity and right to privacy. Volunteers agree that information they may become aware of in the course of their work in the charity must not be shared beyond needs that may arise from their role as a volunteer. This does not preclude volunteers from sharing information with Croí regarding any concerns. Failure to abide by the confidentiality agreement may result in disengagement of the volunteer by Croí.

4.3 Health & Safety

Croí is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for volunteers. All volunteers are covered by Croí's insurance policy whilst volunteering for the charity, within the parameters of agreed tasks and work programmes. Volunteers are expected to be vigilant regarding issues that may affect them during their time volunteering and should report any safety hazards, incidents or accidents to the Volunteer Manager immediately. Volunteers should adhere to Croí's policies and procedures, including health and safety guidelines. No volunteer should feel pressurised to undertake a task which they would not feel confident or comfortable in undertaking and volunteers are also encouraged to ask any questions or seek clarification if they are unsure on any aspect of health and safety protocols.

4.4 Dress Code

Volunteers are expected to dress appropriately for their assigned tasks and the environment in which they will be volunteering. While there is no strict dress code, volunteers should wear clothing that is comfortable, neat and suitable to the task they are performing. Croí may also provide ID badges and lanyards to volunteers.

In certain situations, such as fundraising events, volunteers will be provided with Croí attire to wear during their time volunteering with the organisation.

4.5 Complaints Procedure

Croí operates a complaints policy to ensure that complaints, from whatever source, are dealt with in a fair and courteous manner and that problems are resolved as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Volunteers who have concerns or grievances are encouraged to discuss them with the Volunteer Manager in a timely manner. The Volunteer Manager will address the issue promptly and confidentially, seeking a resolution in a fair and respectful manner.

Croí will issue a resolution letter detailing the outcome of the investigation. This letter will include, if applicable, an explanation of the steps being taken to ensure there is no recurrence of any problem(s) or failure(s) identified. If at any time the complainant is dissatisfied with the handling of the complaint, or if Croí cannot resolve the complaint within the anticipated timeframe, the complainant will be notified of their right to refer the matter to the Chief Executive and ultimately the Chairperson of Croí.

4.6 Disengagement

Volunteers who do not adhere to Croí's policies and procedures or fail to comply with the Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures or disengagement. No disengagement will occur without first discussing the situation or incident with the volunteer and using the complaints procedure outlined in the Volunteer Manual. Grounds for disengagement include, but are not limited to, volunteering under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft, misuse of equipment and exchanging



sensitive information with a third party. All disengagements will be noted in writing and all relevant records will be stored securely.

Volunteers may also choose to end their service with Croí by providing notice in writing to the Volunteer Manager.

5. Volunteer Support & Recognition

5.1 Initial & Ongoing Support

In line with Croí's mission, volunteers are recognised as a core part of the organisation and valued as individuals. Staff members strive to support prospective, new and existing volunteers through the full life cycle of the volunteering experience. Thus, throughout the recruitment process the Volunteer Manager is on hand to make the experience as clear and manageable as possible.

Croí will be in touch regarding dates for recruitment and training and paperwork to be completed, and will, in so far as possible, follow up on missing forms. Volunteers are asked to check in with the office regarding any delays. Once placed, there are several layers of support available to the volunteer. This arises in the first instance from building close working relationships with other volunteers and Croí staff.

Ongoing training and learning opportunities will be made available to volunteers throughout the year. These include occasional further trainings in specific areas around Heart Health. Interested volunteers have the opportunity to progress to the role of team leader. Team leaders, as described earlier, take on the additional role of supporting new and current volunteers, facilitating communication within the team and between the team and the Volunteer Manager. The Volunteer Manager remains in contact with all volunteers throughout the year.

5.2 Financial Impact of Volunteering on the Volunteer

Croí strives to minimise the financial impact volunteering will have on the volunteer. Free parking is provided at Croí House, however travel to external events and parking arrangements remain the responsibility of the volunteer. In an instance where a volunteer is asked to travel to an event over a significant once-off distance, Croí may reimburse reasonable travel expenses in the form of mileage or public transport fares. Prior approval by the Volunteer Manager is required for any travel expenses to be reimbursed.

5.3 Volunteer Recognition

Croí acknowledges and appreciates the valuable contribution of its volunteers.

Croí strives to hold volunteer appreciation events each year and to provide mementos in recognition of long-standing service. All staff members hold responsibility for ensuring that in their direct and indirect contacts with volunteers they make known, wherever appropriate, the organisation's appreciation of their contribution.

As volunteers form a long-lasting relationship with Croí, the organisation will support volunteers with lifesaving training such as CPR and AED training.



5.4 Feedback

Volunteer feedback is vital for ensuring improvement in services and supports for volunteers. Volunteers may provide feedback informally at any time and have an opportunity to do so formally through the Annual Volunteer Feedback Survey, which is carried out at the end of each year.

When a volunteer completes their time volunteering with Croí, the Volunteer Manger will offer an exit interview, either by telephone, email, or a written survey. The purpose of the exit interview is to ascertain how the volunteer found their experience and to learn of any suggestions they may have for improvements to the organisation and service.

