

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING AT RECEPTION CENTRES

Welcome on board as a Red Cross volunteer. It's great that you have decided to donate your time to volunteer activities and to help the residents of a reception centre with integration. These instructions and rules have been prepared to support you as a volunteer and to ensure the safety of our operations for both beneficiaries and volunteers.

Principles of the Red Cross

The operations of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement are steered by seven principles: Humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, universality and 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 follows 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 impartially helping and protecting people in need.

All Finnish Red Cross volunteers belong to their local branch. All volunteers are required to create a profile on the OMA Punainen Risti online service (oma.punainenristi.fi), through which branches share information about their activities with their volunteers.

Further information: *Ethical instructions and 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 should remain as 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.

Despite the professional secrecy, there are certain things you must report. If you learn that the life or health of a resident of the reception centre, worker, volunteer or any other person is in danger, report it to the appropriate authority. Take the same action if you have concerns about a child's wellbeing. If the situation is not acute, discuss the matter with the person in charge of the activities before reporting to the authorities. Any danger to yourself is also a justification for an exception to the professional secrecy.

Further information: *Reception centre volunteer agreement*

Volunteer insurance

The volunteer's own life, leisure time accident and home insurance take priority in the case of accidents taking place during the operations of the Finnish Red Cross. The Finnish Red Cross has two national insurance policies, a personal accident insurance and a liability insurance for volunteer activities. Personal accident insurance for volunteer activities (SP3552326) covers accidents and

resulting treatment costs of Red Cross volunteers as well as material damage caused in the event of personal injury. Personal accident insurance for volunteer activities is provided by If.

The liability insurance of the Finnish Red Cross is provided by LähiTapiola. The organisation's activity liability insurance (312-1044074-3) 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 third party, meaning a person/party outside of the organisation, as a result of the Red Cross' activities.

Further information: *Volunteer activity insurance policies 2022*

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 towards the staff. You are allowed to talk about your own volunteer activities, but please discuss the matter with the director in advance.

Those who are seeking protection in Finland are in a vulnerable position and having their photos in the public may potentially place them in danger. Photography is not allowed in reception centres. However, if photography is an integral part of the organised activities, you must ask permission from every photographed person. In the case of children, this permission is granted by the guardians. Agree on the photographing in advance with the centre staff. The resident of the reception centre must also be clearly informed of what the photographs will be used for. Publishing the photographs online is prohibited and any publication must always be agreed upon separately in writing with the persons photographed and the staff.

Safety

It is recommended that volunteers always work in pairs with other volunteers or employees, never alone. Activities involving children are always carried out in pairs to ensure the safety of the children (except for activities where working alone is essential and for which volunteers have been specifically selected and trained, and their criminal backgrounds have been checked).

Persons under the age of 18 are allowed to participate in group activities and volunteer activities coordinated by adults, but not in friend visitor activities (in other words, a person under the age of 18 cannot serve as an asylum seeker's or immigrant'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. At a reception centre, volunteers must wear a Red Cross volunteer vest and name tag.

At the Finnish Red Cross, we do not tolerate any form of sexual harassment or abuse. All types of sexual interaction and romantic relationships between persons in the asylum process and volunteers are strictly prohibited. All cases are reported to an internal inspector. All volunteers must familiarise themselves with the policy and guidance on how to prevent sexual harassment or abuse.

Volunteers should also refrain from loaning or giving money to or making purchases for the residents of the reception centre. Volunteers are also not allowed to make their own decisions about

organising activities. Activities are always agreed upon with the staff and the branch. The activities are coordinated by the local Finnish Red Cross branch that is responsible for supporting volunteers.

Misconducts and inappropriate activities can happen in any organisation and work community. It is important that information about inappropriate activities comes to light as soon as possible so that we can find out what is going on and take corrective action, if necessary.

Anyone can report a suspected misconduct. A suspicion is enough: the reporting party does not need to have any specific evidence when reporting, but a justified suspicion of misconduct is enough. All reports are processed in the strictest confidence. The identity of the person making the report is kept confidential throughout the process. Report any suspected irregularities regarding cases of misconduct, unethical activities, harassment or inappropriate treatment within the Red Cross. Misconduct can also be sexual harassment or abuse or a breach of the ethical guidelines.

You can report the misconduct anonymously via the online form.

Further information: *Instructions for violent and threatening situations, Sexual harassment and abuse prevention policy and online training, Misconduct report and PSEA Policy*

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 to be 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 on with the staff.

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 or use the national symbols of any country. 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 is not involved in the

decision-making process on international protection. Volunteers and employees should not express their opinions on immigration policy.

If authorities or providers of reception services are found to be abusing or mistreating those who are applying for international protection or are granted temporary protection, this must be reported to the person in charge of the activities. These concerns will be addressed in an appropriate and controlled way with the responsible parties.

Further information and materials are available on Rednet, in the FRC immigration work group section <https://rednet.punainenristi.fi/maahanmuuttoty%C3%B6> and the branch office section <https://rednet.punainenristi.fi/osastotoimisto>.

<https://www.redcross.fi/misconduct-report/>