**Advocacy and Support Volunteer Role Description**

**Detention Action**

Detention Action is a small NGO working at the frontline of human rights in the UK. We rely on the work of volunteers to deliver much needed support and information to people in immigration detention centres. We provide emotional and practical support to people detained in the two immigration detention centres near Heathrow, and to people detained under immigration powers in prisons across the UK.

**Applying to be a volunteer**

There are three steps to the recruitment of our volunteers. Each step is used to assess the suitability of the applicant for the role they are applying for.

1)    Application form – please [complete the application form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdHCQR0xHoEZqvSV5K0p9VprusBF-tbqJIaIrRSjD6dWpuuaA/viewform?usp=header)
2)    Interview – interviews take place from 10am – 4pm remotely, over zoom. This is an informal space where we can find out more about you and you can find out more about Detention Action and ask questions about the role. There will usually be two people on the interview panel.
3)    Training – the induction training takes place over two weekday evenings, and will be a remote training over zoom.

**Please take some time to read our website and the role description before completing the application form. Consider how your skills and experience are relevant to the role and to the work that Detention Action does.**

If you anticipate any specific barriers that may impact your volunteering with us, please discuss these with your Supervisor. We have a limited budget to support volunteers with equipment loans, so we may ask you to volunteer from our office (with your travel expenses covered) if you do not have access to the necessary equipment at home.

We strongly encourage applications from people with lived experience of immigration detention and/or hostile immigration systems.

If you would like to discuss the application process or have a question about the forms, please call us on 020 7226 3114, or email us and we can arrange a time for a chat about the role.

**Advocacy and Support Volunteer Role Description**

The Advocacy and Support Volunteer role can be done from anywhere in the UK. We will provide induction training via an online platform and ongoing training, telephone support and supervision. If you prefer you can also volunteer from our office in East London.

We will do our best to ensure that despite the distance everyone who volunteers is fully supported and has the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge.

**Purpose of the role:** To provide emotional and practical support to people in immigration detention centres and prisons over the telephone remotely, as part of a friendly, dedicated team.

**Report to:** Casework Coordinator

**Minimum commitment required:** 1 day a week for **9 months** (Mon – Friday, 10 – 5pm).

If there are barriers to you volunteering with us for this length of time, we may also be able to consider a 6 month commitment, please explain why you would need this in your application. We will prioritise applicants who can make a longer commitment.

Sometimes we have space on certain days but not others; we may ask you to go on our waiting list, if we do not have space on the day you want to do at the time you apply.

**Duties include:**

* To answer phone calls from people in detention and deal with requests for assistance.
* To build relationships with people in detention, responding sensitively and professionally to their needs.
* To carry out referrals with new people who get in contact with us, including sending information packs.
* To conduct individual casework for each person with the support of Advocacy Coordinators. as needed (including applying for bail addresses, contacting solicitors & other professionals)
* To ensure the people you are supporting are informed about their rights and access to services and information (eg right to apply for bail, how to get legal advice, how to access healthcare).
* To provide proactive and ongoing emotional support to a caseload of people.
* To refer and signpost people to other organisations for specialist support (eg. on medical issues, bail advice).
* To record all information, including conversations and action taken on our database.

**Administration**

* To undertake regular administrative duties, including filing, data entry, taking messages and ensuring our database is accurately updated.

**General duties**

* To ensure Casework Coordinators are updated on the situation of people you are supporting as appropriate.
* To immediately seek guidance and advice from your Supervisor or other staff when a difficulty arises in carrying out case work or if you are unsure about how to proceed.
* To be punctual and to inform staff as soon as possible if you are not available at any point.
* To participate in morning briefing meetings.
* To attend volunteer training sessions.
* To comply with Detention Action’s Safeguarding, Confidentiality and Data Protection Policies to protect your own and others’ health, safety and welfare.
* To alert staff if it is felt that anyone is at serious risk of harm. We will provide training on this before you start.
* To act responsibly to the people you support and in accordance with the Detention Action policies at all times.

**Volunteer Development**

* We will do our best to ensure that volunteers are fully supported by their Supervisor with regular check-ins and debriefs where we discuss how you are finding the role and how you would like to grow at Detention Action.
* There will be the possibility to try different volunteer roles as you build your confidence and knowledge.
* We will provide regular training to allow you to carry out your role.
* We will expense any costs that you may incur as a result of volunteering, in line with our expenses policy.
* We can provide a reference for future applications on completion of the volunteer commitment.

# Advocacy and Support Volunteer Person Specification

### Essential Knowledge and Experience

1. Knowledge and understanding of the aims and principles of Detention Action.

2. Experience of supporting people with complex emotional needs. This can be experience gained in a professional or voluntary capacity, or from your own personal experiences.

3. A willingness to learn about the asylum system, immigration detention and deportation policies in the UK and the issues faced by people who migrate to the UK.

**Desirable Knowledge**

1. Knowledge of a language commonly spoken by the people we support (including, but not limited to, Arabic, Albanian, Bengali, Urdu, Hindu, Punjabi, Pashto, Farsi, Dari, Kurdish Sorani, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Russian, Polish, Romanian, Polish, Lithuanian or Tamil)

**Essential Skills**

Ability and commitment to volunteer remotely one day a week for nine months or equivalent as agreed at interview.

Ability and commitment to attend Detention Action’s Induction Training before starting.

Ability to use active listening skills to emotionally support people held in immigration detention over the telephone in a non-judgmental, non-discriminatory, sensitive and empathic manner.

Ability and willingness to seek advice and guidance from your supervisor or other staff when necessary.

Excellent communication skills - ability to communicate with Detention Action staff, detention centre staff, and other organisations and individuals on behalf of the person supported in clear English.

Excellent interpersonal skills – ability to relate to individuals from different backgrounds and cultures and willingness to understand their situations.

Ability to use basic computer packages and willingness to learn.

Ability to work in a busy environment, including to prioritise and multi-task as needed.

Ability to attend volunteer training sessions regularly and to contribute to the running of the organisation in a constructive manner.

Ability to act in accordance with Detention Action policies at all times, particularly the Code of Conduct, Confidentiality and Equal Opportunities Policies

**PRIVACY NOTICE FOR VOLUNTEERS**

**Volunteering Applicants**

**What data we process and why**

Detention Action processes the personal data that you provide as part of the recruitment process for any given role. This includes information you provide in your application form and throughout the recruitment process, such as during an interview, or information provided by your referee. This may include sensitive information, for example about your health, if you choose to disclose such information to us.

We need to know this information so that we can communicate with you about the recruitment process and volunteering with Detention Action. We will not keep any personal data from you that we do not need as part of the recruitment process. Only the person administering the recruitment and individuals on the recruitment panel will have access to your application.

Detention Action operates a blind recruitment process, so your personal details will only be shared with the recruitment panel if you are invited to interview.

**How long we keep this data**

* If you are not invited to an interview, your application will be archived then deleted 6 months after the finalisation of the recruitment in which you participated.
* If you are invited for an interview, we keep your application for 1 year after the finalisation of the recruitment in which you participated.
* If you are successful in the recruitment and begin volunteering with us, your application will form part of your volunteer record *(see section on Volunteers)*.

### Volunteers

**What data we process and why**

Detention Action processes the personal data that you provide as part of the recruitment process to become a volunteer. This includes information you provide in your application form, at interview, and any information provided by your referee(s). This may include sensitive information, for example about your health, if you choose to disclose such information to us. We need to know this information so that we can communicate with you about volunteering at Detention Action and as part of the recruitment process. We will not keep any personal data from you that we do not need as part of the recruitment process.

While you are volunteering with us, we also process personal data you give us through the supervision and support we provide for you. It is important that we process this data so that we can communicate with you and support and supervise you effectively, as well as so that we can continue to develop and improve how we manage volunteers. If you ask us to be a referee, we will also need this data to provide a reference for you.

**How long we keep this data**

We will keep your data for as long as you remain a volunteer with us, and then for 6 years from the end of the financial year in which you stop volunteering with us. This is to allow us to comply with our legal and financial obligations.