



*Volunteer
with us*



**Kerry
Volunteer Centre**

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Ciarraí

**UNEMPLOYED, HAVE YOU EVER
CONSIDERED VOLUNTEERING?**

www.volunteerkerry.ie

DID YOU KNOW THAT VOLUNTEERING IS A POWERFUL WAY TO ENHANCE YOUR EMPLOYABILITY?

Searching for a job can be overwhelming and time-consuming. It often takes longer than expected to find the right opportunity that fits your skills and needs. Volunteering is a valuable way to stay engaged, build skills, and contribute to your community while you continue your job search.

Volunteering is open to everyone—no matter your background or experience.

WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

According to Ireland's National Volunteering Strategy, volunteering is 'any time willingly given, either formally or informally, for the common good and without financial gain.'

There is a proud, rich and active history of volunteering in County Kerry and in Ireland. In fact, about 1 million people in Ireland volunteer each year! Volunteers are involved in all aspects of life supporting areas such as health, education, culture, social services, environment and the arts. Throughout Kerry, volunteers are engaged in delivering a huge range of services that improve life and living in local communities.

WHY VOLUNTEER?

Volunteering is a unique way to focus on something positive but that also allows you the time you need to look for work. You can volunteer while searching for a job and your jobseeker's payment will not be affected, as long as you remain available to take up paid employment.

Volunteering offers many personal and professional benefits:

- Keep your skills sharp – Maintain your existing skills so they stay fresh for when you return to work
- Develop new skills – Volunteering allows you to grow or develop new skills you never knew you had!

- Enhance your CV – Employers value volunteer experience. It shows initiative and a commitment to self-development
- Meet new people – Opportunity to socialise, prevent social isolation and become part of a team
- Build professional networks – Expand your contacts, which may support your job search
- Boost your confidence – Reconnect with your abilities and feel more prepared for job interviews
- Make a difference – Use your time and talents to contribute positively to your community and your own wellbeing

TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING

There are so many different ways to volunteer that there is sure to be a role to suit everyone. The possibilities are endless and examples of volunteer opportunities include

- ✓ Befriending
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Events
- ✓ Fundraising
- ✓ Practical roles
- ✓ Social Care
- ✓ Administration
- ✓ Graphic Design

If you want to volunteer while searching for a job, there are a few things to consider:

- **How much time can you give?** – volunteering is a great way to improve your chances of finding work but it's important not to let it interfere with your job search. Think about how much time a week you are willing to commit before searching for a volunteering opportunity
- **Do you want to improve certain skills or develop new ones?** – think about what skills you have and in what kind of role they can be best put to use. It is also a good opportunity to think about what other skills you might like to develop

- **Do you want to try a new career?** – volunteering is a great way to try something different and see if you like it. You may have worked in IT for a while but would like to try retail or social care
- **Are you passionate about a particular cause?** – aside from the benefits it can have for the individual, volunteering is a great way to give something back. If you're passionate about a particular cause, consider volunteering in that area.

HOW TO VOLUNTEER

There are 3 easy ways to find a volunteering role in Kerry:

Online

Visit www.volunteerkerry.ie and you can browse volunteering roles all over the county. You can search by location, what kind of volunteering you want to do or what kind of organisation you want to volunteer with. You can register and apply for volunteer roles online.

Face to Face

Arrange to visit the Kerry Volunteer Centre offices at 7 Maine Street Tralee or meet with us at one of our many outreach events throughout the county. We will be delighted to sit with you and find the volunteering opportunity that's right for you.

Call

Phone the Kerry Volunteer Centre office on 066 7117966 and a member of the team will work with you to find the volunteering opportunity that's right for you.



CASE STUDY: SEÁN

Having spent his working life in the building industry, Seán found himself unemployed for a long time following the downturn in the economy. He registered with his local Volunteer Centre and began to volunteer as a Befriender in a voluntary service that helps elderly people maintain their independence. Through Seán's experience as a Befriender, he realised what it was he wanted to do and applied to do a course in care skills. Thanks to this, and his commitment to and track record in the voluntary sector, Seán is now in full-time employment as a Carer.

CASE STUDY: DEIRDRE

Deirdre took voluntary redundancy from her job to stay at home and look after her children. After a few years, she then decided to venture out and look for work. She wanted to get into an admin/accounts type role. After a number of years away from the workforce, she found herself lacking in confidence and decided to volunteer first. She visited her local Volunteer Centre who had a suitable role within the centre itself. Having volunteered for 8 months, she found a part-time job as an accounts assistant. She attributed her success to the fact that she had built up confidence in her ability through volunteering and had refreshed her skills.



VOLUNTEERING AND YOUR JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE

Your jobseeker's allowance will not be affected if you volunteer, as long as you remain available to take up paid employment. Once you have found a suitable volunteering role, you need to fill out a VW1 form in order to retain your jobseeker's allowance. The organisation you want to volunteer with will have to fill out part of the form also. It can be downloaded from www.gov.ie or found in your local Intreo or Social Welfare office. This is a simple form requiring a few details about the volunteering role.

Your Deciding Officer will then review the form and confirm that it is an acceptable voluntary role.

This is an important step. Your Deciding Officer must confirm that it is okay for you to take up the voluntary role so that your jobseeker's payment will not be affected.

GO ON, GIVE IT A TRY!

- ✓ Make a difference in your life and in someone else's
- ✓ Build your confidence, skills, and CV
- ✓ Stay active, connected, and motivated while job hunting.

TO FIND A VOLUNTEER ROLE: KERRY VOLUNTEER CENTRE

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