

Volunteering with CSTE

Volunteers Information Pack



crisis support team
essex

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN VOLUNTEERING WITH CSTE

Thank you for showing an interest in volunteering with Crisis Support Team Essex (CSTE). This information pack contains all the necessary information to help you decide whether or not volunteering with CSTE is the right move for you.

The following topics are covered in this pack:

- Who are CSTE and what do we do?
- Volunteering roles
- The benefits of volunteering with CSTE
- What CSTE expects of its volunteers
- How to apply to be a volunteer
- The recruitment process

WHO ARE CSTE AND WHAT DO WE DO?

Crisis Support Team for Essex (CSTE) is a multi-agency support service for people affected by major emergencies within Essex, or residents of Essex affected by an emergency or disaster that occurs in another area of the UK or abroad.

CSTE was set up in 2004 on the back of recommendations from previous emergencies, as well as the introduction of the Civil Contingencies Act, to provide timely and appropriate psychosocial support to persons and their families who have been affected by emergencies and disasters. By providing this support CSTE hope to reduce the negative longer term impacts that traumatic situations can cause, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other stress related illnesses.

The CSTE programme is owned by Essex County Council's Adult Operations Service (formerly social care), but is managed on a day-to-day basis by Essex Civil Protection & Emergency Management (ECPEM). ECPEM are responsible for providing emergency planning services to Essex County Council.

CSTE can provide a wide-range of psychosocial support services to assist victims, families and emergency responders who have been involved with, or are affected by, an emergency or disaster. These services include: immediate practical support, emotional support, telephone helpline and support for bereaved families.

Together with the emergency services, the voluntary sector and other responders, CSTE helps to provide a seamless joined up multi-agency response to support the wellbeing of people affected by an emergency or disaster.



VOLUNTEERING ROLES IN CSTE?

The primary voluntary role with CSTE is the position of Crisis Support Worker.

Crisis Support Workers are the lifeblood of CSTE. Our Crisis Support Workers are all trained to deliver a wide-range of emotional and practical support to both adults and children who have been affected by an emergency or disaster.

Crisis Support Workers are on hand 24/7 to help respond to emergencies and disasters that affect the people of Essex and could be deployed to any location within the county.

Crisis Support Workers are split into two different levels. Level One Crisis Support Workers, are the newer less experienced members of the team, whilst Level Two Crisis Support Workers are those who are more experienced and have been involved in a number of responses with CSTE.

Level Two Crisis Support Workers also have the capability of putting themselves forward to become Team Leaders.

Crisis Support Team Leaders are responsible for managing Crisis Support Workers during CSTE's operational activities in response to an incident. They are also responsible for liaising with CSTE's management team to keep them up to date about the team's activities.

Crisis Support Team Leaders also play a more active role in the day-to-day activities of CSTE. They will take part in management meetings and may also occasionally be asked to organise training events and learning evenings.

VOLUNTEERING BENEFITS?

Volunteering brings with it a number of benefits that can help improve your life and the life of others. Below are some of the benefits you can get from volunteering:

Gain confidence. Volunteering can help you gain confidence by giving you the chance to try something new and build a real sense of achievement.

Make a difference. Volunteering can have a real and valuable positive affect on people, communities and society in general.

Meet people. Volunteering can help you meet different kinds of people and make new friends.

Learn new skills. Volunteering can help you learn new skills, gain experience and sometimes even qualifications.

Take on a challenge. Through volunteering you can challenge yourself to try something different, achieve personal goals, practice using your skills and discover hidden talents.

Have fun! Most volunteers have a great time, regardless of why they do it.



WHAT WE EXPECT FROM VOLUNTEERS?

Professionalism

We expect all volunteers to act in a professional manner at all times. This includes in meetings, training and when deployed for an incident.

Respect

We expect all volunteers to show respect to their colleagues and anybody who they come into contact with when representing CSTE.

Support

We expect all volunteers to support their colleagues when required and to ask for support when needed. We are a team and we do things together.

Punctuality

We expect all volunteers to be punctual for all meetings, training sessions and deployments. Volunteers give up their own spare time to help CSTE.

Compassion

We expect all volunteers to show care and compassion when assisting people who have been affected by a disaster or crisis, our support can help get them back on their feet.

APPLICATION PROCESS

If you are still interested in volunteering for Crisis Support Team Essex there are two ways that you can start the application process.

The first way is to fill out the Volunteer Enquiries Form on the website. The form can be found on the 'Contact' page. The second way is to email the Essex Civil Protection & Emergency Management team at cste.admin@essex.gov.uk.

Please remember to include your name, contact details, reasons why you want to volunteer and a brief description of your experiences of providing care, if applicable.

We will aim to acknowledge your application within 3 working days and we will provide a full response within 28 working days.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!



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