



The Order of St John

General information and guidance for volunteers



St John

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1. About the Order of St John

The Order of St John is a unique organisation:

- which stems from roots that began in the 11th Century;
- which, in its current form, was incorporated in the United Kingdom by a Royal Charter granted by Queen Victoria in 1888;
- which is an Order of Chivalry of the British Crown;
- which is one of five mutually recognised Orders of St John;
- which is a major international charity, recognised at the United Nations, that carries out its activities in more than 40 countries; and
- which has about 25,000 members worldwide and is supported by over 4,000 salaried employees as well as by about 250,000 regular volunteers and numerous other supporters.

Our Mission

Our Mission is to prevent and relieve sickness and injury and to act to enhance the health and well-being of people of all races and creeds.

Our Vision

Our Vision is to honour our mottoes *Pro Fide (For the Faith)* and *Pro Utilitate Hominum (In the Service of Humanity)* by being a leading Christian International Humanitarian Charity.

The Order is a major international charity, carrying out a wide range of caring activities through its two foundations, St John Ambulance and St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem.

The St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem Foundation has a modern 49 bed hospital in Jerusalem with operating theatres and a busy outpatient department. It also has well-equipped clinics in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as mobile eye clinics throughout the West Bank.

The St. John Ambulance Foundation, which exists to provide first aid care, first aid training, community support and other care services, includes all of these activities carried out by the Pories, Commanderies and St John Associations worldwide. The Foundation's activities, in various countries around the world, include first aid care and first aid training, ambulance services, sea, cliff and mountain rescue services, home-based care and other responses to HIV and AIDS and hospitals and care homes for the elderly. As well, specialised care activities have been developed to meet particular needs in different countries. These include a haemodialysis service, a dental service for physically challenged people and a therapy pets programme for the elderly.

The St. John Ambulance Foundation is also a major organisation for the training and development of young people.

Much of the work of the Foundation is undertaken by some 250,000 St John Ambulance volunteers.

The Order is also a Non-Governmental Organisation, which has had Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 1999 and which can thereby participate in its affairs.

2. About the Order of St John Secretariat

The Order Secretariat was created in October 1999. Based in Clerkenwell, London, the Order Secretariat:

- Provides a range of direct support to St John Associations via its Assistance and Capacity Building Programmes and motivates and co-ordinates other support from across the Order
- Has a co-ordination function and acts as a link between Pories, Associations and the Eye Hospital
- Oversees the process for nominations for admission to the Order of St John Honours and Awards Committee

The Assistance Programme and the Capacity Building Programme are designed to:

- 1) strengthen selected St John organisations with increased skills and the capacity to contribute to their own mission and goals as well as those of the Order
- 2) provide assistance in the form of training, equipment and resources to St John organisations which need support
- 3) Develop increased financial viability and growth to enable Associations to increase their commercial and charitable roles.

3. An introduction to volunteering with the Order of St John

St John Ambulance is currently working in 39 countries* across Africa, Europe, North America, the Caribbean and Asia-Pacific through some 250,000 volunteers. In each country, the organisation is locally registered, run and managed, usually through an elected Council headed by a Chairman. These local Associations are federated to the centre implying a high level of local autonomy. The smaller St John organisations are called Associations.

St John Ambulance exists to provide first aid training, ambulance services and community support to those in need. The first aid and care work of many St John Associations around the world is very similar to that of St John Ambulance here in the UK, however others have developed very specialised care activities to meet the particular needs in their countries. For example, home-based care for people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS across Africa; haemodialysis services in Malaysia; primary health care in Malawi; care for the elderly in Antigua; blood bank services in Papua New Guinea as well as youth development and peer education.

Many St John Associations are very small and depend on dedicated national volunteers to carry out their vital work. From its experience of supporting St John Associations, the Order Secretariat has recognised the value which skilled and dedicated St John volunteers with relevant experience can have in sharing their skills in selected St John organisations. To date volunteers from St John Ambulance in England have worked in Antigua and Papua New Guinea in particular to assist in developing youth work.

Due to the diversity of the context, activities and programmes of each St John Association the starting point is always the need expressed from an individual Association and how this can match with the skills and experience of a volunteer.,

*St John Ambulance is currently not working in Scotland, the USA and Jerusalem

4. Who can apply to be a volunteer?

We request that to be a volunteer you are:

- over 18 years old;
- an active St John volunteer or have other relevant experience with St John Ambulance for more than 3 years, ideally in developing and running youth programmes;
- available to volunteer for a minimum one month;
- fluent in English;
- willing to be self financing according to the conditions set out later in the document.

5. What is the cost of participating in the programme?

As a volunteer, you will be expected to fund the cost of:

- Return flights to the country of placement
- Medical, accident and personal effects insurance cover during your placement
- Vaccination and medical costs pre-departure
- Visa costs
- Accommodation, food and day to day spending money.
- In-country travel costs in some cases

The placement is entirely voluntary; therefore you will **not** receive a salary from the St John Association which you are working with.

The Secretariat will find out what the host Association is able to offer prior to the start of the volunteer term.

6. How long can I volunteer for?

The length of your volunteer placement depends on the need of the particular St John organisation and your own commitments. You can highlight your desired placement length on the application form and this can be further discussed during the interview process.

In cases where a volunteer is available for over 12 months, it may be possible to be placed in two different countries.

7. How will I benefit from being a volunteer?

Volunteering provides a range of benefits some of what are:

- It allows you to use your St John skills in a different context often where medical services are scarcer than in your home country
- It contributes to the knowledge and development of the St John Association
- It challenges you by applying skills and expertise in a different cultural environment
- It increases understanding across countries and boundaries
- It contributes to the notion of the “global family of St John”

8. What will Order of St John provide?

The Order Secretariat organises the volunteer application and interview process. With close collaboration with St John Associations around the world, the Secretariat is able to match volunteers to selected St John organisations that have particular needs and requests. This ensures that both the St John and the volunteer will stand to gain the most from the placement.

The Order Secretariat is able to provide advice to volunteers during the application and pre-departure period, which includes:

- Selection of an appropriate St John Association/country in which to volunteer
- Putting you in touch with staff/volunteers in their placement country
- An introduction to the work of St John Ambulance in the placement country
- An induction to living and working in another country
- Putting you in touch with former volunteers to talk about their experiences.
- Providing advice about useful web sites and written information

The St John Ambulance in the placement country will be responsible for:

- Picking the volunteer up from the airport on arrival in country

- Helping the volunteer find local accommodation pre-departure
- Ensuring that a work programme is in place for the volunteer and selecting a designated staff member/volunteer to work alongside the volunteer during the placement
- Ensuring the health and safety of the volunteer while in the country
- Paying a stipend, if this has been agreed

It should be clear that the responsibility for organising travel (booking flights), medical accident and personal effects insurance cover will be entirely the volunteers.

Whilst the Order attempts to arrange placements which are as appropriate for a volunteer as possible, the volunteer travels to the country at his/her own risk and the Order will not accept liability for any loss suffered by the volunteers when they are abroad.

9. Where are the placements?

St John Ambulance is currently working in the following countries:

| Africa | Asia-Pacific | Europe | North America/Caribbean |
|---------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cameroon | Australia | Cyprus | Antigua & Barbuda |
| Ghana | Fiji | England | Barbados |
| Kenya | Hong Kong | Gibraltar | Bermuda |
| Malawi | India | Malta | Canada |
| Mauritius | Malaysia | Northern Ireland | Dominica |
| Namibia | New Zealand | Rep of Ireland | Grenada |
| Nigeria | Pakistan | Wales | Guyana |
| South Africa | Papua New Guinea | | Jamaica |
| Swaziland | Singapore | | St Lucia |
| Tanzania | Solomon Islands | | Trinidad & Tobago |
| Uganda | Sri Lanka | | |
| Zambia | | | |
| Zimbabwe | | | |
| Cameroon | | | |

The size and activities of St John organisations vary hugely therefore the Secretariat cannot guarantee a placement in a country of your choice, but where the need is greatest. The focus for 2008-2009 will be placements with St John in Africa and the Caribbean.

10. What will I be expected to do on my return?

On your return you will be expected:

- Write a short report on your placement
- Inform other people about the work of St John Associations
- Be available for briefing and inducting other potential volunteers
- Stay in touch with your placement Association

11. How will my involvement be monitored and evaluated?

The Order Secretariat will be in contact with the St John organisation during the placement. The Secretariat also welcomes and encourages the volunteers to keep us up to date with their activities and plans.

On returning, the volunteer will be asked to write a short report about their experience. A similar report will be submitted by the St John organisation, so we can assess the success of the placement and its achievements. Equally as important, this process should highlight any challenges which arose during the placement and how to these can be addressed for future volunteers.