

Quick orientation for branch friendship coordinators

You make sure that everyone who needs a friend gets one

Volunteer friends play an important role in alleviating loneliness through the Red Cross. As a friendship coordinator, you coordinate a wide range of friend activities within your branch and ensure that new volunteers can get involved. This helps as many lonely people as possible to find joy in their everyday lives.

You bring together friend activity volunteers and those in need of a friend. You share information about what other activities the branch has to offer, such as group activities and meeting places. It is also important to ensure that the friendship coordination system does not become overloaded: The aim is to primarily provide friends to those who need help the most. You offer other volunteer activities to those waiting in the queue, such as group activities or things to do at meeting places.

You do not have to do this on your own; you will be part of the branch's friendship coordinator team. If a team has not been set up, it is a good idea to establish one.



Your most important duties:

Welcoming new volunteers:

- Contacting and welcoming new friend activity volunteers
- Ensuring that volunteers have completed the friend course
- Interviewing new volunteers and ensuring that each volunteer has created a profile and a friend profile in the Oma Punainen Risti friendship coordination system
- Finding suitable friend clients for volunteers or guiding the volunteer towards a friend activity that interests them (e.g. group activities).
- Attending the first meeting of the friend pair in person or ensuring that an experienced volunteer attends (depending on the area)
- Keeping in touch with volunteers, e.g. checking in with both parties every six months
- Providing guidance to volunteers about handing out their contact details. Forwarding messages between the volunteer and the client.
- Supporting volunteers together with the rest of the friendship coordinator team to resolve any issues and, where necessary, assisting with matters such as filing a concern notification.
- Ensuring that volunteer friends are kept up to date about the meetings and training sessions organised for them.

Responding to client contacts:

- Accepting new clients and friend requests, and entering them into the friendship coordination system if the client has not done so themselves.
- Ensuring that clients understand and consent to the storage of their personal data. In some cases, clients do not request a friend for themselves, but for a loved one. In such cases, the coordinator must ensure that the person who sent the friend request informs their loved one of the rules governing the friend activity service and the storage of personal data in the register.
- Going through the rules of the friend activity service with the client.
- Finding a suitable volunteer for the client. Once a volunteer has been found, contact the volunteer first and tell them what sort of client you have found, then get in touch with the client.
- According to the client's wishes, filling in the You have a Red Cross friend form on their behalf and handing over the form to the client.
- Maintaining contact with clients; checking in with both parties every six months, for example.
- Referring clients to other support services if they cannot be helped through the friend activity service.

Administrative duties:

- Ensuring data protection in the friendship coordination service in accordance with separate guidelines;
- Ensuring that the friendship coordination service has the necessary equipment: a computer or a phone, as the coordination service should not be managed with a personal email or phone.
- Ensuring that the electronic friendship coordination service is up to date and updating it regularly (e.g. entering a note when a person on the waiting list has been contacted again)
- Checking the criminal records of volunteers working with minors in accordance with separate guidelines
- Ensuring that the branch has outreach work cards/brochures and distributing them to volunteers, who can then pass them on to their networks.

The coordinator team appoints 1–2 lead coordinators whose role is to ensure that:

- The workload is divided equally amongst the members of the coordinator team.
- Coordinator rights are kept up to date in the electronic coordination system.
- The details of clients and volunteers who are no longer part of the service are permanently deleted from the system.
- The contact details and opening hours of the coordination service are kept up to date in the friendship coordination system, from which the information is automatically updated on the punainenristi.fi website for those in need of help.

In your position, you will be supported by:

- The branch board
- Other coordinators of the branch
- The branch's friendship coordination service contact person
- Other volunteers responsible for the branch's friend activities, known as the friend activity team
- A sponsor appointed to the branch by the district
- Staff responsible for social well-being in the district
- National support from headquarters yvtuki@redcross.fi

Confidentiality and non-disclosure:

- In carrying out their duties, friendship volunteers undertake to comply with the Finnish Red Cross's code of conduct for volunteers: Ethical, responsible, environmentally friendly and safe volunteer activities – Red Cross
- The following privacy statements govern the friendship coordination services:
 - Privacy Policy – Volunteers
 - Privacy Policy – Friend activity clients

Tärkeää tietoa:

- Online service for volunteers:
<https://vapaaehtoistieto.punainenristi.fi/ystavat-oiminta/ystavavalittajat>

Training sessions:

- Verkkoperehdytys Punaiseen Ristiin + Ystäväkurssi
- Ystävälittäjäkoulutus
- Piirin järjestämät tapaamiset ja koulutukset
- Valtakunnallinen ystävälittäjien tapaaminen
- Ystävätoiminnan täydennyskoulutukset
- Henkisen tuen perus- ja jatkokurssit