



NORTH PADDINGTON FOOD BANK
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Emergency Back-up coordinators and volunteer opportunities -North Paddington Food Bank (NPFB)

In light of the exponential rise in COVID cases in London and the instigation of another full lockdown, which will likely increase the already high level of demand on food aid services, NPFB are seeking to ensure that they have the appropriate contingencies in place to keep their services running, whilst also providing an update on the volunteering opportunities that are available.

1-Current situation

2-Suggested secondment structure + next steps

3-Volunteering opportunities + next steps

1-Current situation

NPFB is currently distributing food and essentials via appointment or delivery 4 days per week (increased from 1 day a week at the start of 2020) to between 600-800 people. At the height of the first full lockdown, this number was between 1,100-1,200 over 6-7 days per week, contributing to an increase of people served from 8,000 in 2019 to over 25,000 in 2020.

Developing at this rate, whilst having to maintain strict health and safety procedures has meant ensuring that contingencies to continue the service are in place, a level of capacity that has been difficult to establish in the circumstances, but one that has been achieved. By being able to see the signs of stretched capacity and fewer contingencies (such as the number of people having to self-isolate, which is now occurring far more regularly), we can now establish that building in more contingencies is necessary.

It is worth noting that we do not believe that there should be a need for food banks to have to operate in these conditions, and that relevant support should be provided to people to ensure they do not need our support and can purchase their own food. Whilst this is not the case however, we shall seek to ensure that we can carry out our service to the level necessary.

2-Suggested secondment/Back-up coordinator structure + next steps

Our first suggestion to those who may be able to help is for willing and able staff members to come forward who would be confident assisting in the coordination of distributions. People can come forward in pairs and carry out the role together, or on their own to be either paired up with someone else or with a staff member to ensure that these duties are shared.

Overall aim

To have a suitable pool of volunteer coordinators able to respond at short notice and assist in carrying out distributions.

The key elements of these roles would be:

- Ensuring that packages are distributed effectively to households based on the information provided to you by our admin teams, and accurate records are kept in relation to customers
- Communicate with the admin team to ensure changes are noted and acted upon properly and that the distribution is carried out effectively
- Preparing routes of deliveries for drivers
- Welcoming and serving customers collecting food packages
- Helping ensure that health and safety procedures are followed
- Receiving donations and deliveries of food and essentials
- Ensuring that the food hygiene and safety guidelines of the food bank are followed
- Overseeing and delegating tasks to volunteers to complete the above

There will be full access to staff and experienced volunteers so that coordinators are supported properly.

The key elements we are looking for in the people carrying out this role would be:

- A facilitative, supportive and patient management approach
- Well organised
- Good communicator. Able to ask for guidance when needed
- Able to work under pressure and carry out tasks quickly and effectively
- Excellent customer service

Next steps

If you're interested, contact olivia@npfoodbank.org.uk with any questions and to confirm your interest (as well as providing the details for anyone who may be able to take on the role with you). From here, Olivia will provide you with the link to sign up to our volunteering platform, where you can access initial training on how the food bank works, which will be followed up by a briefing document covering the coordinator role. You can get a headstart if you wish and sign up to our platform [here](#).

We will then ask you to come in for an introductory day, where you will assist with the running of a distribution.

After this, you will be on call and contacted if we experience a shortage of coordinators. There will of course be no obligation for you to come in, but the aim is to have a pool of people able to come in and pick up the process should the need arise.

Time commitment

A typical day lasts from 9am-4.30pm, although may go for longer depending on how busy we are. Ideally coordinators will be available for most/all of the day.

If you are called upon to help, it would most likely be that help would be needed for 2-4 days over a 2 week period, depending on demand, but either way it would not be the case that we would be seeking full-time commitments, and people can commit for whatever time they are able to.

3-Volunteering opportunities + next steps

if the above does not suit, we have other opportunities available that provide more flexibility. If you are particularly interested in home working opportunities, we will be providing these once we have suitably sorted our in-person requirements.

Driving- We always need people able to drive and lift and carry packages to make deliveries. If we had 10-15 drivers with vehicles helping for as little as two hours a week, much of our delivery demands would be met.

As well as your own vehicle, you will need an enhanced DBS.

You can sign up through our volunteering portal [here](#), and then email olivia@npfoodbank.org.uk to inform her that you have signed up and if you can, let her know when you are available.

Knowing when you are available will mean that we can have routes prepared for you at an agreed time. If you would prefer to be on call however, you can join our volunteer whatsapp group to receive alerts on when delivery drivers are needed at short notice.

Centre/admin volunteering- You can also help out in the centre at times that suit you, just sign up to our portal [here](#) and follow the sign up process to get all necessary information.