

In-person Volunteering

24/25

Hello,

Thank you for being so interested in supporting the Soup Kitchen! Since 1986, Soup Kitchen London has been a valuable resource for the homeless, elderly, lonely and vulnerable. We are a secular organisation providing free nutritious meals, clothing, toiletries and a sense of belonging to nearly 200 people daily. In 2019, we launched Europe's first-ever on-site mental health drop-in centre within a soup kitchen to address our guests' mental health needs. With the help of hundreds of volunteers each year, we provide a nourishing meal in a safe and warm environment that welcomes everyone.

As an entirely privately funded organisation, we depend on individual and corporate donations, as well as grants and trusts, to support our guests. The current economic environment has heightened the many crippling aspects of homelessness and food poverty that no one should endure. Thankfully, because of our incredible supporters, we've provided an uninterrupted, critically needed service for four decades.

In-person volunteering is the most popular way to help. Not only will you prepare and serve a hot and nutritious meal, but you will also have an opportunity to speak with and engage people that many in society have rejected. Rough sleepers often feel alone and isolated. One of the things we strongly encourage is interacting with our homeless friends and acknowledging their presence. Some truly fascinating people join us each day with incredible backgrounds. Something as simple as saying good morning can have such a positive effect on someone's day.

When you arrive at 09:00 on your volunteering day, you'll secure your belongings in one of our lockers, wash your hands and put on an apron, gloves & hairnet, which we'll provide. You will be assigned a station in our kitchen or our 'Cabin', where we serve our guests. You can expect to do things such as chop vegetables, make sandwiches, prepare tea/coffee and serve food. Health and Safety requires that all volunteers wear closed-toe shoes with nonslip soles & full-length trousers.

We welcome our friends in at 10:00 and we close at noon, but during that time, you can expect to help about 150 people; it's a busy place! At 12:00, we clean up and then prepare for the following day. We are typically finished by 13:00 but occasionally need additional help with cleaning, deliveries, etc. You're welcome to stay later if you're able to.

You can access the Soup Kitchen via our entrance across from 55 Whitfield Street. You will see a large iron gate with a Soup Kitchen sign on it. Please come through the door and down the stairs and let a staff member know you're a volunteer. Volunteers must arrive at their scheduled time. If you're late or need to cancel, please let us know via email as soon as possible. If we fall below the minimum number of volunteers, we are unable to open. We cannot allow that to happen because, for many of our guests, it will be the only meal of their day.

We hope that you leave the Soup Kitchen with a desire to return. We want our volunteers to advocate for people experiencing homelessness and spread awareness about what we do and the people we help. Thank you again and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Warmest regards,

The Soup Kitchen London Team