

## Things to consider before you apply to become a Crisis Supporter

### **The nature of Lifeline**

Lifeline provides one-off crisis support to people who could benefit from immediate and short-term assistance to cope with crises or distress. Lifeline does not provide long term or ongoing assistance.

Lifeline's one-off service means that a Crisis Supporter will be unaware of what has taken place following their interaction with the help seeker. This includes when Lifeline escalates a situation to emergency services due to issues of risk. Due to these challenges and others, Lifeline places high importance on providing debriefing and supportive supervision to all staff and volunteers.

The role of a Crisis Supporter involves connecting to the sadness and pain in a help seeker's story. These stories often affect Crisis Supporters and may deplete your energy and affect you emotionally. We are all impacted to some extent, however, you may well be impacted by a help seeker's circumstance aligning with your own. This is not to say "don't become a Crisis Supporter" but we want you to be aware of the intensity of digital interactions and what is required to support help seekers.

### **The nature of the interactions**

Help seekers contact Lifeline with a variety of issues and crisis situations. This may include relationship issues, loneliness, family concerns, substance issues, suicidal thoughts, self-harm, domestic and family violence situations, and child safety concerns. Crisis Supporters help to address a range of feelings including anxiety, depression, loneliness and disconnection.

Using digital mediums to connect with help seekers can make people feel more secure to demonstrate openness and honesty early within an interaction.

Help seekers who contact digital services may be younger when compared to the voice service.

All support services experience a small proportion of unwelcome interactions from people who are misusing the service to harass or intimidate. Debriefing and supervision play a pivotal role in seeking support during or after these often-challenging interactions.



### **Remote working**

Volunteer shifts are a minimum of 4 hours per week.

Crisis Supporters who volunteer for our Digital Services will work remotely. Due to the nature of the role, there may be limited opportunity for interaction with other Crisis Supporters. We recognise that this can potentially feel isolating and encourage people to be proactive in seeking support when required.

It is essential that volunteers have a quiet and suitable place to provide crisis support.