

Voluntary service in the area of sport for refugees

THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Voluntary service in the area of sport means:

Helping people, wherever sporting activities take place

Examples include:

- Sports clubs,
- Sports associations,
- Schools and nursery schools.

If these institutions participate in the voluntary service, they are called **assignment locations**.

Voluntary service involves people helping on a voluntary basis at various assignment locations.

These people want to do it. They want to help others.

They are doing a good deed for society.

In Germany, this is called: **voluntary work**, or alternatively: **voluntary commitment**.

People, who do voluntary service, are called: **volunteers**.

Voluntary service is a special kind of volunteering.

Certain rules apply to voluntary service:

- Volunteers help out at their assignment location for at least 20.5 hours a week, for 6 to 18 months.
- Volunteers carry out activities that interest them. They contribute their own experiences.
- Volunteers do not get paid as they would in a regular job. But they do receive a little money for their help.
- Volunteers learn interesting things for their activity and their future during training days.
- Volunteers meet fellow volunteers while doing their voluntary service.

Voluntary service should be fun.

What kind of voluntary services you can do in the area of sport

Examples of what you can do during your voluntary service:

- Participate in activities that you find interesting,
- Contribute your own knowledge and experiences,

- Engage in sports activities with others and learn about sports,
- Familiarise yourself with working life in Germany,
- Try out what tasks and activities may also suit you,
- Find out what career path you can take after your voluntary service,
- Plan and realise your own projects,
- Meet other volunteers at training days,
- Participate in a language course,
- Use and practise your language skills.

Important prerequisites

There are rules regarding voluntary service.

- You must be at least 18 years old to participate in the “federal volunteer service for people who have experienced displacement”.
- You have to be able to work every week for at least 20.5 hours at your assignment location.
- Voluntary service lasts at least 6 months, and a maximum of 18 months. It often takes exactly 12 months.
- You must have a work permit for your voluntary service.
You can get the work permit from the Foreigners' Registration Office.

The 3 partners of the voluntary service

There are always 3 partners involved in voluntary service:

- The volunteer
- The assignment location
- The supporting organisation

The assignment location

The assignment location is the sports facility where you will be volunteering.

There will be one person who will mentor you.

This person will explain your tasks to you and answer any questions.

Different tasks apply to different assignment locations.

Often the volunteers will work with children and young people in the domain of sports. They play with them and supervise their training. They also help out wherever help is needed.

If you know of a sports club because you play sport there yourself, ask about possible tasks there.

The supporting organisation

The supporting organisations are non-profit associations. Their job is to maintain the voluntary service.

The supporting organisation's employees plan and implement the voluntary service.

They support and help volunteers and assignment locations.

This means that if you do voluntary service, there will always be a point of contact for you at the supporting organisation.

The supporting organisation's employees also perform the following tasks:

- They answer questions if someone is interested in voluntary service.
- They help people find a placement at an assignment location, if someone wants to do voluntary service. In other words: They see to the placement arrangements.
- They advise the assignment locations on how to implement the voluntary service.
- They visit all volunteers and assignment locations.
- They do the public relations for the voluntary service. They safeguard the interests of all those involved in voluntary service.
- They carry out training days.

In order to participate in voluntary service, you sign an **agreement**. The agreement indicates what rights and responsibilities volunteers, assignment locations and supporting organisations have.

In order for you to be able to sign this agreement, you must have a work permit. The organisation can help you get your work permit.

Advantages of voluntary service:

- You can do **activities** that you find interesting.
- You can work with other people.
- You participate in **training days**.
 - If you are under the age of 27, you will have 25 training days in 12 months.
 - If you are 27 and over, you will have one training day per month.

At the training days, you will meet other volunteers from other assignment locations.

You will also learn useful things for the voluntary service and for the period afterwards.

The training programmes are very varied. Much of the content involves sports or inter-cultural understanding.

The training days are free of charge for the volunteers.

The supporting organisation will provide food and pay any travel costs.

- You can use and improve your **language skills** during your voluntary service.

You could also take part in a language course.

- You will receive a little money for your voluntary service. This is referred to as **pocket money**:

Volunteers are not always permitted keep all the pocket money. Refugees often receive money from the state at the same time, such as the “basic security benefits”.

Part of the pocket money is often deducted from the money you receive from the state.

This means: The state will pay you less money.

The supporting organisation can tell you how much you will receive.

- Voluntary service includes social security.

This means: The assignment location pays your social security contributions.

Social security also includes **health insurance**.

This means that you then receive the same medical treatment from a doctor as German citizens.

- You receive **paid leave**.

For example: If you complete 12 months of voluntary service, you will receive 25 days' paid leave.

You will continue to receive your pocket money during your leave.

- After finishing your voluntary service, you will receive a **reference** from your assignment location.

This reference can be used for future job applications. You are also entitled to a **statement of service**. This is proof and confirmation that you have done voluntary service

How to get involved

If you are already active in a sports club, ask about voluntary service there.

You can also send an e-mail to fwd@dsj.de in German, English or French. Please let us know where in Germany you live. We will then try to find a supporting organisation to help you.

Information is also available from the responsible supporting organisation.