

Keeping you safe while you campaign

Learn how to stay safe while campaigning, whether online, in-person or while using social media.

As a Campaigns Ambassador, you play a vital role in helping Cancer Research UK influence political change to beat cancer. Whether you're meeting with your MP, attending events, or engaging online, we want you to feel safe, supported and confident in everything you do.

Cancer Research UK is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of everyone who volunteers with us – and that includes you. This page outlines the steps we take to make sure you're safe while campaigning, and what you can expect from us in terms of support and guidance.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding refers to the measures and actions taken to identify and protect children and adults at risk of harm, abuse, neglect, or any impairment of their mental and physical health or development. For further information on types of abuse visit: [Types and indicators of abuse: Safeguarding adults - SCIE](#)

Onboarding/safely recruiting

To help ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved in the Campaigns Ambassador programme, we follow a safe recruitment process. As part of this, we ask all new volunteers to declare any unspent criminal convictions during onboarding. This helps us assess any potential risks and make informed decisions about volunteer involvement, in line with our safeguarding responsibilities. All information shared is treated confidentially and in accordance with our data protection policies.

In addition, if at any point whilst you are volunteering for Cancer Research UK you become subject to criminal proceedings, we require that you disclose this information. Dependant on the nature of the accusation or charge we may pause your volunteering relationship until an outcome has been reached when CRUK will review your suitability to continue volunteering.

Emergency contact

We require all Campaigns Ambassadors to share contact details for a nominated emergency contact. We hope to never use these details, but we do have a responsibility to you in the unlikely event that whilst in your volunteering role as a Campaigns Ambassador there is a serious concern for your wellbeing. These details are kept securely and in line with our [Privacy Policy](#)

We'll ask you for a named emergency contact for every in-person event we organise. If you don't arrive at the event, we'll call you in the first instance followed by your contact if we are unable to reach you. If you're taken unwell at the event, a designated first aider will be on site to assist you. If necessary, we will have someone take you to hospital and will inform your emergency contact.

Attending online webinars/meetings

Online meetings and webinars are a key part of how we stay connected and informed as a Campaigns Ambassador community. Whether you're joining a programme-wide webinar or a one-to-one briefing call, we want to make sure you feel safe, respected and supported throughout.

Here's what you can expect when attending online sessions:

Respectful Participation

- Please keep comments respectful, relevant and appropriate.
- You're welcome to keep your camera and microphone off if that makes you feel more comfortable.
- If you experience or witness inappropriate behaviour, please report it to us at campaigning@cancer.org.uk

Recording and Consent

- We'll always let you know at the start of a session if it's being recorded and explain why.
- Recordings are stored securely and shared with individuals for the stated purpose.
- You can choose not to be recorded by turning off your camera and microphone.

Data Protection and Privacy

- Recordings are retained only for as long as needed and deleted in line with Cancer Research UK's data retention policy.
- We do not allow the use of unauthorised AI tools (e.g. OtterPilot) to record or transcribe sessions, unless previously agreed. This is to protect everyone's privacy and ensure safeguarding standards are upheld.

Moderation and Support

- All sessions are moderated to ensure a safe and inclusive environment.
- Moderators are responsible for managing the chat, responding to technical issues, and removing disruptive participants if necessary.

We're committed to making online spaces welcoming and safe for everyone. If you ever feel uncomfortable or unsure during a session, please reach out – we're here to help.

Attending meetings in person

As a Campaigns Ambassador, you may occasionally attend in-person meetings, for example, with your MP or with other volunteers. While these opportunities are valuable, your safety is our priority. We've put together the following guidance to help you stay safe and feel confident when attending meetings in person.

Planning ahead

- Meet in public places: we recommend choosing well-lit, public venues such as cafés, libraries or community centres.
- Appropriate meeting times: Arrange meetings in locations where you are comfortable and during standard daytime or early evening hours. For example, meeting in a café after work is appropriate, but meeting late at night or in venues such as bars after 9pm is not advised.
- Travel arrangements: For your safety, do not offer or accept lifts from the person you are meeting. Where possible, use public transport or arrange your own travel to and from the meeting location.
- Let someone know: always tell a friend, family member where you're going, who you're meeting and when you expect to return.
- Record your plans: you can note your meeting details in your calendar or phone as a backup.

During the meeting

- Keep your phone charged and with you, this ensures you can contact someone if needed.
- Consider carrying a personal safety alarm, these are small, discreet and can help you feel more secure.
- Trust your instincts, if something doesn't feel right, it's okay to leave and let us know.

After the meeting

- Check in with someone: let your chosen contact know you've finished the meeting and arrived home safely.
- Report any concerns: if anything made you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, please email us at campaigning@cancer.org.uk

Travel safety

- Avoid travelling late at night or when fatigued: if you're feeling tired, consider rescheduling or using public transport or a taxi.
- Plan your journey: Use well-lit routes and transport hubs, and avoid isolated areas.

- Travel independently: For your safety, do not accept or offer lifts to or from meetings with people you do not know well, including those you are meeting for the first time as part of your campaigning activity.
- If using a car: make sure it's roadworthy, and keep your mobile phone and breakdown service details with you.

Additional support

If you ever feel unsure about attending a meeting, please let the Campaigns Team know. We'll work with you to find a solution that feels safe and comfortable.

Social media

Many Campaigns Ambassadors use social media to raise awareness, share campaign actions and engage with their communities. While this can be a powerful tool, it's important to stay safe online and know what support is available if something goes wrong.

Facebook Group: Campaigns Ambassador Community

Our private Facebook group is a space for Campaigns Ambassadors to connect, share ideas and stay informed. By joining, you agree to follow the group's rules, which include:

- Treating others with respect and kindness
- Keeping discussions relevant and constructive
- Not using the group to promote external causes or organisations

The group is monitored by the Campaigns Team. If you have a request for help or raise a concern, the best way to contact us is by emailing campaigning@cancer.org.uk we will respond as soon as possible during standard working hours (Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm). If your concern relates to safeguarding, please follow the guidance in section 7. How to report and respond to a safeguarding concern.

Using personal social media accounts

If you choose to campaign using your personal social media accounts, please be aware of the risks and take steps to protect yourself:

- Trolling and abuse: if you receive abusive or inappropriate messages, do not respond. Instead:
 - Hide or delete the comment if possible
 - Block the user
 - Report the behaviour to the platform (e.g. Facebook, X, Bluesky, Instagram)
 - Let us know at campaigning@cancer.org.uk so we can support you, for further information see [How to report and respond to a safeguarding concern](#)
- Privacy settings: review your account settings to control who can see your posts and contact you.
- Tone and content: remember that anything you post publicly may be associated with Cancer Research UK. Please be respectful, accurate and avoid sharing misinformation.
- Signposting: if someone asks for health advice, signpost them to the Cancer Research UK website or the nurse helpline.

Staying safe online

Here are some practical tips to help you stay safe while campaigning online:

- Use strong passwords and enable two-factor authentication
- Avoid sharing personal contact details publicly
- Be cautious when clicking on links or downloading files
- Take breaks from social media if it becomes overwhelming

If you ever feel unsafe or unsure about something online, please reach out. We're here to support you.

Campaigners Connect

Campaigners Connect is a WhatsApp-based community for Ambassadors to share ideas, ask questions and support each other. It's a great way to feel connected and motivated, but it's important that everyone feels safe and respected when taking part.

By joining Campaigners Connect, you agree to share your name and phone number with your group. These details should only be used for the purpose of taking part in group discussions about campaigning. Please do not share anyone else's contact details outside the group.

Groups are not monitored by the Campaigns team, but each group will have a Group Lead who can help keep conversations on track. If you ever feel uncomfortable or have concerns about behaviour in your group, please let us know straight away by emailing campaigning@cancer.org.uk.

Tips for safe group communication:

- Protect your privacy: only share personal information you're comfortable with and remember your profile picture is visible to everyone within the group.
- Keep it respectful: be kind, inclusive and avoid language that could offend or be misinterpreted.
- Stay on topic: use the group for campaigning-related discussions only.
- Respect boundaries: don't pressure others to respond quickly or share more than they want to.
- Don't share others' details: keep group information private and secure.
- Report concerns quickly: If something feels wrong, email campaigning@cancer.org.uk.

Coffee Roulette

By taking part, you're agreeing to share your name and email address with your match. These details should only be used for organising your virtual meet-up – unless you and your match agree otherwise.

If you're unable to make contact with the individual you've been matched with, or if they don't show up without giving a reason, please let us know at campaigning@cancer.org.uk. We'll follow up and offer support if needed.

To help ensure a positive and safe experience for everyone, we ask all participants to follow these simple guidelines:

- Mutual respect: allow space for both people to speak and listen. Be kind, inclusive and open to different perspectives.

- Camera and microphone use: agree together whether cameras should be on or off. Use headphones if possible to maintain privacy and reduce background noise.
- Safe and comfortable environment: choose a quiet, private space for your conversation where you feel comfortable.
- Boundaries and privacy: only use contact details for the purpose of arranging your meet-up. Do not share personal information unless you feel safe doing so.
- Helpful conversation starters: if you're unsure what to talk about, we've created a [list of suggested topics](#) to help get the conversation flowing.

How to report and respond to a safeguarding concern

Safeguarding concerns can arise at any time and in any environment. It is therefore important that we all remain vigilant to harm and abuse as we all have a responsibility to respond to these concerns.

The advice for all, including Campaigns Ambassadors, is if the situation is urgent or there is immediate danger to someone's life – in the first instance:

You must contact the emergency services on 999 as soon as possible and when it is safe to do so – do not put yourself or others at risk.

Once emergency services have been contacted and they have managed the immediate risk, you then have a responsibility to report the incident by email to campaigning@cancer.org.uk

If the matter does not require emergency assistance, for example if you experience or witness:

- verbal abuse or trolling on social media,
- discriminatory remarks based on race, gender, disability or other protected characteristics,
- unwanted contact or harassment from someone you've met through your campaigning,
- or concerns about another Ambassador's wellbeing or behaviour online

you should report these incidents to campaigning@cancer.org.uk

We take all safeguarding concerns seriously. Our team will acknowledge your report within **five working days** for non-urgent concerns. Please note that this inbox is monitored during **standard working hours (Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)** only. All safeguarding concerns will be shared securely with our internal Cancer Research UK Safeguarding Team for advice and guidance in relation to any preventative actions required.

Looking after yourself

Dealing with a safeguarding concern, whether it affects you directly or someone else, can be emotionally difficult. It's important to look after your own wellbeing too.

You may not always know the outcome of a concern, and that can be hard. But by reporting it you'll have done the right thing and helped protect others.

Please be kind to yourself, and if you ever feel overwhelmed, know that support is available via our Employee Assistance Programme. Contact us if you need access to this service.

[Other non-Cancer Research UK services are also available](#)