

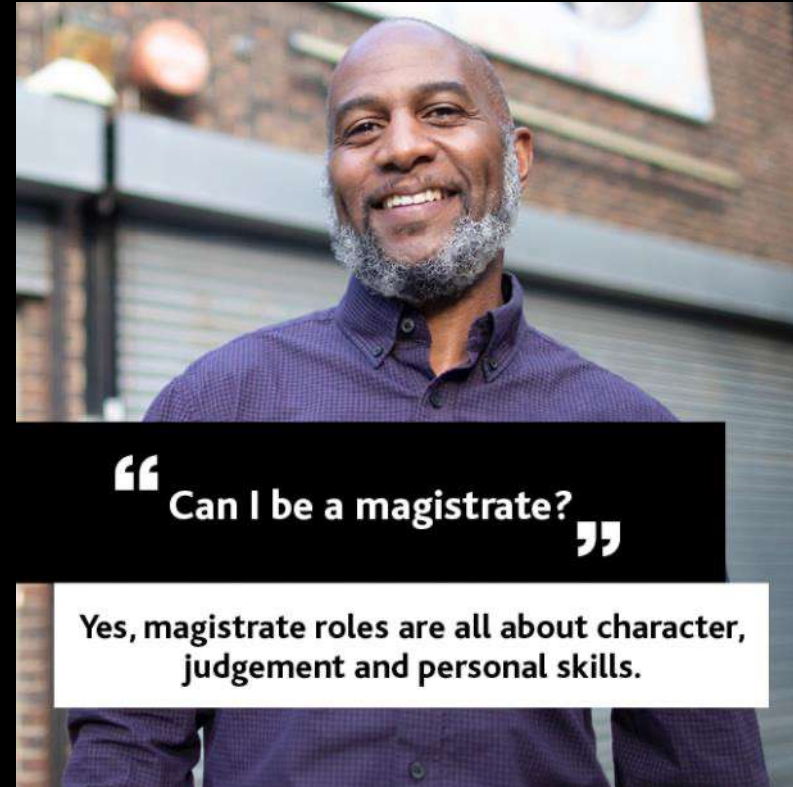


Ministry
of Justice

Supporting your employees to become magistrates

Employers' communications toolkit

February 2022



Great for your organisation and employees.
Good for the community.



About this toolkit

With support from the Judiciary of England and Wales, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is launching a campaign to recruit over 4,000 new magistrates and we want your help to do it.

New recruits will join the current 12,000 magistrates already playing a vital role in the justice system. Over 90% of criminal cases are dealt with by magistrates sitting in local criminal courts, ruling on cases such as drink-driving, theft and assault. People from all walks of life can be magistrates – as long as they are aged between 18 and 70. It is a voluntary role, which people can do alongside any employment.

Becoming a magistrate doesn't just help our communities – it holds real benefits both for the individuals who volunteer and for the organisations that employ them.

As an employer you stand to benefit from any staff volunteers developing business critical skills and, more broadly, supporting employees to volunteer can boost your recruitment and retention.

This toolkit includes an overview of the magistrate's role, how and why you should get involved as an employer, and a range of communications materials designed to help you raise awareness amongst your employees of the role of a magistrate and encourage more staff to volunteer. The materials are designed to act as a base that you can tailor as you see fit. For more information or to discuss creating any new content, please contact:

magistrates@fourcommunications.com

We hope we can count on your support!



What is a magistrate?

Magistrates are volunteers – members of the public - who hear cases in courts in their community. They can hear cases in the criminal court, the family court, or both.

Magistrates come from a range of backgrounds and work in a wide variety of 'day' jobs alongside volunteering as a magistrate. To be a magistrate, you don't have to have any particular qualifications but simply a desire to learn new skills and give back to the community. You must also be aged between 18 and 70 and able to commit at least 13 days a year, for five years.



“The benefits of volunteering – to the employer as well as the employee – are now well-established. At a time when all employers could do with every advantage possible, ensuring your workforce is able to volunteer makes business sense.” **David Allen, Chief Executive, Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service**



Why support us?

Why get involved?

- Supporting individuals to volunteer as magistrates benefits your organisation, employees and the community.
- Enabling staff to fulfil the vital voluntary role of a magistrate is a powerful way of demonstrating your organisation's commitment to their wider personal development, which can really boost retention and morale.
- Magistrates benefit from excellent training and gain a wide range of highly valued and transferable skills – such as critical analysis, influencing and decision making – which can bring significant benefits to your team.
- Employees sitting as magistrates also build a deeper understanding of local issues, which can help your organisation become aware of new local challenges and opportunities.
- Supporting employees to sit as magistrates provides tangible evidence of your organisation's commitment to giving back to the community. This can boost your standing and influence locally and help with recruitment.

What is required from you as an employer?

Magistrates need to attend court (sit) for a minimum of 13 full days – or half day equivalents – a year, during working hours. As an employer, you have to allow time off work for this kind of volunteering.

It is at your discretion whether this is paid or unpaid leave, but many employers support their employees by granting paid leave for at least some of a magistrate's sitting days.

If you're keen to support your employees to volunteer as magistrates but don't know where to start, download our [handy guide to creating a volunteering policy](#).

Materials to support your employee communications




In this pack, you'll find the following content:

- ✓ Social posts
- ✓ Copy – examples of different copy you can include in your newsletter and/or on your intranet to explain what a magistrate is and encourage staff to volunteer
- ✓ Campaign assets – what's available and how to access wider promotional materials like posters to share with your staff
- ✓ Spokespeople for events and supporting your own staff who are magistrates

All creative content in this toolkit can be downloaded [here](#) (social images, posters, leaflets).

Social Posts

These posts can be used across your social channels to signal your support for the campaign:

Suggested copy	Suggested image
<p>We're proud to be encouraging our staff to consider volunteering as magistrates – it's a role they can do alongside their job and brings real benefits to them, to us and to our community – details here: icanbeamagistrate.co.uk #LoveWhereYouLive #Volunteering</p>	
<p>Anyone can become a magistrate if they have the right skills and integrity - volunteering as a magistrate provides development opportunities and can improve staff retention: icanbeamagistrate.co.uk #LoveWhereYouLive #Volunteering</p>	
<p>We're supporting @JudiciaryUK and @MoJGovUK in their campaign to recruit over 4,000 new magistrates – find out more about the campaign here: icanbeamagistrate.co.uk #LoveWhereYouLive #Volunteering</p>	
<p>Did you know most people are eligible to be a magistrate? You don't need legal training or experience to apply! The role is open to people from all walks of life – find out more about how to volunteer today: icanbeamagistrate.co.uk #LoveWhereYouLive #Volunteering</p>	

Copy – news story

This short copy can be used in any internal newsletters or on your intranet to encourage staff to volunteer with the magistracy. We have left gaps for you to update with relevant details. Please also feel free to tailor the copy:

Skills boost

Could you be a volunteer magistrate? Are you looking for a way of learning new skills and giving back to your community that fits in with your working life?

The Ministry of Justice is looking to recruit over 4,000 new magistrates as part of a national recruitment drive. You can find out more [here](#). Magistrates are volunteers from all walks of life who hear cases in courts in their community. They can hear cases in the criminal court, the family court, or both. You don't need any special qualifications or experience to be a magistrate – you are given all the training you need, plus ongoing support. You just need to be between 18 and 70 and prepared to give up at least 13 days a year for five years.

*As your employer, we're happy to talk to you about how you can make volunteering as a magistrate fit in alongside your work and would be excited to support you in this critical work. Please contact **[you should insert details for your relevant HR contact]** for more information.*

Copy – 5 steps to becoming a Magistrate

This short copy can be used in any internal newsletters or on your intranet to explain the role more and the application process. We have left gaps for you to update with relevant details. Please also feel free to tailor the copy:

5 Steps to becoming a magistrate

- 1. Check if the role is right for you by visiting www.icanbeamagistrate.co.uk*
- 2. Talk to us [[you should insert details for your relevant HR contact here](#)] and family or friends and make sure you can spare the time. You'll need to volunteer for at least 13 days a year, for at least five years.*
- 3. If you're applying to the criminal court, make sure you do two court visits before you apply.*
- 4. Check for vacancies on the [magistrate recruitment website](#) and fill out an online application form. There is guidance to help with this in our website [FAQs](#)*
- 5. If you're shortlisted, you'll be called for an interview.*
- 6. Once appointed, you're not on your own – you'll get ongoing training and support and be assigned a mentor.*



Spokespeople for events

We are working with lots of enthusiastic magistrates in your sector – if you'd be interested in hearing from one of these individuals, we'd be happy to set this up. For example, we could work together to arrange spokespeople for events or engaging content including:

- Short article or video from an existing magistrate
- Short lunch & learn / online teach-in with an existing magistrate

Equally, if you've got enthusiastic magistrates you're already working with, please let us know at: magistrates@fourcommunications.com and we'd love to support you to generate PR opportunities in your local, business and sector media to promote the campaign and your organisation.

Campaign Assets

[Here](#) you can access materials to share either physically or digitally:



Posters



Leaflet



Benefits to employers and employees alike

“I grew up in a very deprived part of Middlesbrough, Teesside and saw a lot of crime as well as victims of crime. I found out about becoming a magistrate from my boss and I liked the idea of using my knowledge and skills to help my community. It’s very flexible and can fit alongside work, children and family commitments and other hobbies.” **Adam Rathbone, lecturer and magistrate**

“Providing our employees with time to act as Magistrates not only supports the local communities in which we operate but we recognise it also presents a unique opportunity to develop their skills, experience and knowledge which helps their career development and ultimately, the effectiveness of our business.” **Janet Garner, Head of HR, Skills and Academy Principal, BAE Systems and magistrate**

“I am passionate about being a magistrate as it is important for the court system to reflect the communities and people it serves. I have never looked back after six years of service and would encourage anyone who wants to support their community, to get involved.” **Pam Sheemar, works for NatWest and magistrate**



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**For more information or for any
questions, please contact
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