

# Volunteer with CUSO International



The BC Public Service and CUSO International have teamed up to provide employees with the opportunity to volunteer overseas. If you're accepted to serve with CUSO-International for up to two years, the BC Public Service will continue to cover the employer costs of your benefits while you're away. You'll also be able to return to a public service position equivalent to the position you held before you left and you must return for a period equivalent to your leave.

## Interested in a CUSO International Placement?

As an employee interested in being considered for a CUSO International placement, you will apply for:

- An unpaid leave of absence from the workplace from your manager
- A specific placement directly with CUSO International

## Before Applying for a Placement with CUSO International

### Employee

- Visit the [CUSO International website](#) (This website outlines current opportunities, leave timeframes etc)
- Talk to your manager about how a placement with CUSO International could assist you to meet goals outlined in your current *MyPerformance* plan. What is the best time to take this type of leave etc
- Submit a written request to your supervisor or manager that you're interested in pursuing this leave

### Manager

- Determine whether approval can be granted and advise the employee of the decision
- If Leave approved, acknowledge in writing to the employee

## After Approved for a Leave of Absence from the Workplace

### Employee

- Apply for a placement with CUSO International using the application process on the CUSO International websites
- Await notification from CUSO International regarding next steps in the process
- Phone interview with CUSO (30 min) to determine fit and interest with existing opportunities

## After Notification from CUSO International

### Employee

- Advise your manager of the specifics of the placement, including start date and anticipated return to work date
- Complete and submit a benefits form to [apply for available continued benefit coverage](#) (for questions regarding benefits coverage during CUSO International service, email [CUSOInfo@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CUSOInfo@gov.bc.ca))
- Consult with CUSO International on placement and other opportunities:
  - all travel related details
  - ¾ day session run by CUSO on simulations of being abroad
  - Receive notification from CUSO approved to be a volunteer – sign a contract
  - 5 days in Ottawa training through CUSO (approx. 1 month before departure on placement)

## Manager

- Plan for the leave of absence in your department to ensure operational needs are met
- Complete and submit a *General Leave Without Pay – Approval and Acknowledgement Letter* [available here](#) - share with employee and submit letter through AskMyHR
- CUSO International will advise the BC Public Service Agency of confirmed employee placements

## Returning to service with the BC Public Service

### Employee

- Advise your manager of your return to work date providing one month advance notice for planning purposes
- Advise AskMyHR of your return to service to ensure benefits are reinstated
- CUSO International provides reintegration services – check in one month following your return
  - Optional: participate in Ottawa session held within 5 months of return to work through culture shock etc
  - Counselling services available through EFAP (BC Public Service) as well as through CUSO
- Pension contributions are not made while you are on CUSO, but after returning to work you can purchase pensionable service for the time you were away. [» Go to Purchase of Service on MyHR.](#)

### Manager

- Plan for the employee's return to the BC Public Service
- Consult with the BC Public Service Agency as needed

## Other Resources:

- @ work
  - Blogs "[Volunteers do it everywhere](#)" and "[Next Stop, Jamaica](#)"
  - <https://qww.gov.bc.ca/community-involvement>