



Jewish Family Service of Metrowest

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Volunteer Policies

This manual explains our policies and procedures. It will help you understand how to carry out your duties and give the best service to the JFS/MW clients. This manual is also designed to assist you in answering questions you may have regarding operations at JFS/MW.

Thank you for the time, devotion and caring you are willing to share with our clients. We appreciate your efforts.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Volunteer/Client/Staff Relationships

By law a government agency cannot practice any form of discrimination. Paid staff and volunteers need to treat people with dignity and respect. You will have an opportunity to meet people of different racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds. We hope you will see this as enriching your life and opportunity for learning.

This agency is an equal opportunity employer. As a volunteer you must give fair and impartial treatment to clients as well.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of this agency that there will be no discrimination or harassment in its programs, activities or employment based on race, color, sex, sexual preference, marital or parental status, religion, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, Vietnam era or veteran status. Questions or concerns related to affirmative action, nondiscrimination or equal opportunity should be directed to the volunteer coordinator.

Disability Policy

JFS/MW welcomes volunteers with disabilities. JFS/MW complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact your supervisor if you have special requirements so we may accommodate your needs.

Non-occupational Disability

Medical services for non-occupational illness or injury are the responsibility of the volunteer and his/her personal physician.

Volunteer Support

You will be assigned to work with a staff member who will provide support and supervision. The staff member will provide on-the-job training and serve as a direct link between the volunteer and the rest of the staff. The number of hours volunteers work is based on their assignments. Most volunteers work an average of 3 hours per week. Each volunteer has a supervisor or supervisor who is responsible for day-to-day support and guidance of your work.

Volunteers As Volunteer Supervisors

A volunteer may act as a supervisor for other volunteers after appropriate training for the position has been completed.

Volunteer/Staff Relationships

Volunteers and staff are partners in fulfilling the mission and programs of JFS/MW. Each has an equal but complementary role to play.

Volunteer Coordination

Staff who provide support for volunteers will maintain records on your volunteer service. The volunteer coordinator will be informed immediately of any substantial change in the work or status of a volunteer. They should be consulted in advance before any corrective action is taken. The supervisor shall inform the volunteer coordinator of any changes in your volunteer status.

Limitations On Volunteer Service

Volunteers serve JFS/MW clients at the sole discretion of the agency. Volunteers may leave JFS/MW at any time.

Age Limitation

The minimum age for volunteers is 13 years. Volunteers under this age, may volunteer under the supervision of their legal parent/guardian. Volunteers under the age of 18 are not allowed to work with equipment prohibited by state law. Please see the volunteer coordinator for specific examples.

Recruitment Of Minors

Volunteers under the age of 18 must have the written consent of a parent or guardian before volunteering. The volunteer duties assigned to a minor will comply with all appropriate laws and regulations on child labor.

Employee Volunteers

JFS/MW does/does not accept paid staff as volunteers. This volunteering must be done outside normal work hours and must not be done as a requirement of employment. Family of staff may volunteer with JFS/MW, but if family members of a staff person do volunteer, they must not be placed under the supervision of the employee.

Clients Wishing to Volunteer

Clients of JFS/MW may work as volunteers when such volunteering does not conflict with their role as client or create conflicts of interest.

Length Of Service

Volunteers are assigned for a set period of time. Volunteers are neither expected nor required to accept a position at the end of this time, although they are welcome to do so. Volunteers may instead seek a different volunteer assignment within the program, or may retire from volunteer service.

Interviewing

All volunteers must be interviewed by the volunteer coordinator before any volunteer service. The interview will determine volunteer interests and skills, and appraise volunteers of agency needs. The interview must be in person and preferably include the supervisor(s) who will be working with the volunteer.

Orientation

All volunteers receive an orientation. It will include information about JFS/MW, our policies and procedures for volunteers and requirements for the position they are accepting. Orientations may be done by the volunteers supervisor or by the volunteer coordinator.

Placement

Volunteer interests and desires, and agency needs must be weighed in the interview process to insure the best match possible. When possible, the volunteer will have the final say in determining which volunteer position best fits his/her needs.

Position Description

You will receive a written position description before you begin your volunteer assignment. Your position description includes a description of the purpose and duties of the position, a designated supervisor and work site. Also included is a time frame for the completion of the job, a listing of job qualifications, and a description of job benefits. Every effort is made to place you in an assignment matching your abilities and interests. This position description will be used in evaluation efforts.

Volunteer Position Acceptance

The volunteer will be notified in writing/in person/by telephone of their acceptance as a JFS/MW volunteer within three weeks of their interview. Before starting your volunteer duties all forms and paperwork given you at the interview must be completed and returned to the volunteer coordinator. Upon receipt of the paperwork you will receive the equipment, volunteer registration card and name badge needed to fulfill your volunteer duties.

Assignments

You are considered on an official assignment when the volunteer coordinator has requested that you provide a service. It is important to remember that only the volunteer coordinator or other volunteer program staff can make official assignments. Other staff, clients, or organizations cannot authorize an assignment.

Volunteers who are assigned to a new position will be interviewed for that position and will receive training for that position before they begin work. The volunteer coordinator and/or the program supervisor makes assignments and is your supervisor. Often you may have an on-site supervisor where you are assigned. At times the supervisor may be a volunteer. Some of our assignments carry much responsibility, but it is always a shared responsibility.

Volunteer Probation

Volunteers will be placed for a probationary period of 20 volunteer hours. Following the probationary period a second interview will be held with the volunteers supervisor. They will decide permanent placement in the volunteer position, reassignment to a new position or referral to the Volunteer Coordinator for reassessment.

On-The-Job Training

Besides our formal training procedures, volunteers receive on-the-job training to help them with information and tools to perform their duties. On-the-job training may be provided by your supervisor, a qualified volunteer or our volunteer coordinator as appropriate.

Transfers

The volunteer department will consider the amount of staff time involved in training a volunteer for a specific assignment. Therefore, a volunteer will be required to remain in an assigned position for six months unless a transfer is approved by the volunteer coordinator.

Absenteeism and Punctuality

Be On Time

Be on time and arrive when expected. If you are unable to arrive for your regular time, please let us know as soon as possible.

Be punctual and conscientiousness in the fulfillment of duties assigned and accept supervision from the staff and the experienced volunteers.

You will need to inform JFS/MW staff if you are unable to come in on the day for which you have volunteered. Notify them if you are going to be late.

Absenteeism

Volunteers must inform their supervisor 24 hours before any absences other than illness or emergency. Please inform your supervisor of an emergency or illness as soon as possible. Continued absenteeism with or without notice may lead to reassignment or termination.

Please observe the following policies:

- * If you are ill, please call your supervisor. If you have no supervisor, please call the volunteer coordinator.
- * If you have a planned absence, please attempt to find a substitute or trade days with another volunteer. If your position allows replacement. Please notify your supervisor of the name of your substitute. If you do not have a supervisor, notify the volunteer coordinator.
- * A leave of absence will be granted. Please notify your supervisor as soon as a date is available.
- * Volunteers returning to work after an extended illness must notify the supervisor before resuming duties.
- * Volunteers should immediately notify the volunteer coordinator, or their supervisor of any change in address or telephone number in case we need to contact them.

Leaves Of Absence

The volunteer coordinator must be notified two weeks before a leave of absence.

Illness

Do not come to work if you are ill. Call in as soon as possible, preferably 24 hours in advance, so that we can find a substitute for your position.

Volunteer Performance Evaluations

Volunteers will receive an annual evaluation conducted jointly by the volunteer, supervisor and the volunteer coordinator. The evaluation will include discussion of quality of work, work habits, and areas of growth. The evaluation will provide an opportunity for the volunteer to make suggestions on how best to improve their position and the tasks involved.

Staff Evaluation

Volunteers may be asked to provide input into annual staff evaluations.

Standards For Volunteers

Standards are provided to each volunteer containing measurable indicators of success and timelines for completion of projects. Standards will be jointly developed by the volunteer, supervisor and the volunteer coordinator.

The evaluation will be based on information included in the job description, orientation manual and other written information provided to insure success in the position. A confidential written record of the evaluation will be maintained by the volunteer coordinator.

Corrective Action-Evaluations

Corrective action may be recommended following the evaluation. These may include a requirement for additional training, reassignment, suspension, probation or dismissal of the volunteer.

Evaluation by Volunteer

All volunteers will be asked to evaluate their volunteer experience, their supervision and their overall satisfaction of the program. This is to ensure that the volunteer is appropriately mated and satisfied with their placement. The evaluation will be done at 3, 6 and 12 months. Following the first year, volunteers will be evaluated bi-annually.

Program Evaluation

The volunteer program will be evaluated annually by the volunteer coordinator. The number of volunteers used in the program, and the quality of services rendered through the volunteer program will be evaluated. The volunteer coordinator will prepare an annual report to the director, which will review the volunteer program. The report may be presented to the board at their request.

Mediation

Mediation is a means of facilitating healthy resolution of conflicts. If direct communication fails to resolve an interpersonal conflict between any two staff members or volunteers, the conflict may be submitted to the director for mediation. The parties in conflict will meet with the director. Parties involved in mediation have the right to request an alternate mediator. In such cases, the director will choose another mediator agreeable to both parties.

Paid and volunteer staff members should attempt to reach a solution at the appropriate level. This should involve a minimal number of fellow staff members or volunteers. You will not be subject to reprisal for filing a grievance or for participation in the grievance procedure. If, after exhausting other means to address your concerns you wish to file a grievance, please contact our volunteer coordinator for details and procedures.

Grievances

Grievances

Volunteer staff members should make every attempt to reach a solution at the appropriate level, involving a minimal number of fellow volunteers/staff members. You will not be subject to reprisal for filing a grievance or for participation in the grievance procedure. If, after exhausting other means to address your concerns you wish to file a grievance, please contact our volunteer coordinator for details and procedures.

Note: Grounds for grievances may include the violation of policies, unfair situations where no policies exist, and unfair or discriminatory policies. The grievance procedure is not the appropriate vehicle for resolving interpersonal conflicts. (Please refer to Mediation.)

Volunteer Grievance Procedures

Volunteers may submit a written grievance to the volunteer coordinator if they are not satisfied with a decision made about their volunteer status. The grievance is to be submitted within 30 calendar days of the time the volunteer knew of the decision.

The volunteer coordinator will respond in writing within 15 days. If the grievance is not resolved, the volunteer has 15 days to submit it in writing to the director for a final binding decision. The director will respond within 15 days.

Performance Problems

When a volunteer's performance is below the standards required by JFS/MW, or when client rules are violated, the volunteer supervisor or coordinator may issue a verbal warning outlining the problem. JFS/MW has identified two categories of inappropriate behaviors and their consequences— performance problems and serious violations. Examples cannot be listed to cover every situation. The director may deal with problems and violations not specifically mentioned here.

The following are considered performance problems and are not acceptable:

- Conducting personal business during your shift.
- Excessive personal telephone use.
- Littering or otherwise creating unsanitary conditions.
- Safety violations.
- Tardiness for your shift.
- Unauthorized operation of equipment.
- Unfriendly or uncooperative attitude in dealing with clients, staff members, or volunteers.
- Unsatisfactory work performance.
- Waste, misuse or damage of property.
- Inappropriate dress.

Consequences:

1. First Incident: The volunteer will be notified of the problem and the changes required.
2. Second Incident: The volunteer will be issued a second warning.
3. Third Incident: The volunteer will be placed on probation for a period of four weeks. During that time an evaluation will be done to determine if continued volunteering will benefit the volunteer. The volunteer will be provided goals that must be accomplished to resolve the situation. The volunteer coordinator may meet with the volunteer to provide feedback. If the problem is not corrected following this process, a dismissal notice will be given.
4. Cancellation of volunteer status.

For serious problems, steps 3 or 4 may be carried out immediately. Note: It may be found that the performance problems of a volunteer are the result of the inappropriate placement. Every attempt will be made to help him or her find and train for another volunteer position at JFS/MW.

Serious Violations

The following are considered to be serious violations and are grounds for cancellation of volunteer status:

- * Falsifying reports, records or expenses.
- * Physical or sexual harassment.
- * Negligent or willful damage of property.
- * Theft.
- * Unlawful discrimination.
- * Willfully endangering the safety of others.
- * Working under the influence of intoxicants.

Consequences:

Anything considered a serious violation may be cause for immediate action.

Resignations

Volunteers are requested to notify their supervisor before leaving when at all possible. Please give a minimum of two weeks notice to your supervisor who will inform the volunteer coordinator. This will give us time to fill your position following your departure. The staff appreciates your time, talents and interests, and knows that changes will occur. If you plan to stop volunteering we would like the chance to talk with you before your departure.

Dismissal Of A Volunteer

Volunteers may be dismissed for failure to comply with policies and procedures of JFS/MW. Volunteers may discuss reasons for dismissal with supervisor or volunteer coordinator. Prior to the dismissal the supervisor and volunteer coordinator must agree to the dismissal. Instead of dismissal the volunteer coordinator may recommend a probationary period to develop corrective methods.

Grounds For Dismissal

Grounds for dismissal may include but are not limited to: failure to perform assigned duties, failure to follow JFS/MW policies or procedures, failure to meet minimum standards of performance, abuse of clients or staff, alcohol or drug abuse while volunteering, theft of JFS/MW property, misconduct or insubordination.

Dismissal For Cause

Volunteers may be terminated at any time for violations of agency policy or procedures as defined in this manual.

Appeals Of Dismissal

Volunteers may appeal the dismissal to JFS/MW no later than thirty days following the dismissal. Appeals must be in writing.

Termination

If a volunteer should need to resign his/her volunteer position, the volunteer should notified s his or her supervisor, who will the notify the volunteer coordinator. Volunteers are asked to give at least two weeks notice when terminating their volunteer service. Volunteers are also asked to go through an exit interview upon termination. The exit interview is an opportunity for the volunteer to state reasons for leaving and for the agency to learn other volunteer concerns.

The services of a volunteer may be terminated by the volunteer coordinator for reasons including, but not limited to: violation of JFS/MW policies and procedures, impaired ability to function in a safe and prudent manner, or violation of the privacy of the clients or staff of JFS/MW .

Exit Interviews

An exit interview will be conducted with volunteers leaving volunteer service. Included in the interview will be questions about reasons for leaving, suggestions for improving JFS/MW, and possibilities for future involvement with JFS/MW .

Addendum 1

Policy on Gifts and Tips For other than Pro-Bono Professional Volunteer

Policy

There is never an expectation that Jewish Family Services volunteers and clients will exchange gifts. However, we recognize that gift-giving is an accepted and appropriate way to express thanks and is a way to recognize a significant relationship. Over time, some volunteers tend to think of themselves more as a friend to the client than as a volunteer. But because the relationship began as a Jewish Family Services volunteer project *and the client remains a JFS client*, you are always volunteering.

Volunteers need to maintain some boundaries that ordinary friends do not have. We are aware that this can be hard to do and there is a risk of hurt feelings. This policy was written to give you guidance if you are presented with gifts or wish to give a gift to a client with whom you volunteer.

For some people, giving or receiving even the smallest gift places them in a position of obligation or establishes patterns that might interfere with the relationship. Volunteers should be careful to do nothing that might make the client more vulnerable in this regard. Volunteers should also keep in mind that many of our clients have fixed and/or low incomes.

It may also be the case that a client has the need to view him or herself as a person who gives as well as receives; giving a gift to a volunteer may be the client's way of "balancing" the relationship and maintaining his or her dignity.

Some people's judgment may become impaired or they may become confused. If they are isolated, they may be grateful for any friendly contact. These are some of the factors that may prompt a client to offer an inappropriate gift, and you should keep this in mind if you are offered one.

Procedure

The giving and receiving of small tokens of respect, friendship and appreciation of reasonable value (e.g., a card, flower or snack) is a natural part of this kind of relationship and is acceptable.

It is **never** appropriate to accept from or give to a client or client's family a monetary or financial gift of any kind, such as tips, gratuities, cash, loans, securities, bequests, etc., or a gift of property. Volunteers should neither give, solicit, nor accept material gifts the value of which is in excess of \$10.00. Gifts of property are also inappropriate.

You should notify the Director of Volunteer Services immediately if a client offers you a gift in excess of \$10.00.

Volunteers who drive clients may not accept reimbursement for mileage, gas or any other car-related expense; to do so can jeopardize your status as a volunteer with limited liability

(Wisconsin State Statute 181.0670). Volunteers who use their personal automobile for their volunteer work may be eligible for a tax deduction.

Clients sometimes confide their or their family's financial troubles to a trusted volunteer and may directly or indirectly ask for your help. You should resist the natural impulse to help the client financially, and neither offer nor agree to do so. Instead, advise him or her to work with Jewish Family Services to deal the issue. You should also immediately report the information you receive to the Director of Volunteer Services.

How to Respond to the Client Who Offers an Inappropriate Gift

Acknowledge that the client is offering the gift with the best of intentions and let him/her know that you value their appreciation. Tell the client you enjoy the time you spend together and that you get many intangible but worthwhile benefits from volunteering with him/her.

Make every effort to politely refuse or return a gift that is beyond permissible guidelines (i.e., more than a \$10.00 value). If a client prefers not to accept a similar gift that you have offered, you should graciously take it back.

Explain to clients that you are volunteering without expectation of or desire for remuneration and that volunteers may not accept more than token gifts (i.e., more than a \$10.00 value), and never monetary gifts.

If the client insists on giving money, you may suggest that you would be very pleased if the client made a donation to JFS in your honor instead, which would benefit all the clients with whom JFS works.

Tell the client that if you did keep more than a token gift (i.e., more than a \$10.00 value), you would have to stop volunteering for the client. You can say it is against JFS policy for you to accept more than token gifts (i.e., more than a \$10.00 value).

If despite these explanations a client will not be satisfied until you accept money or a gift in excess of a \$10.00 value, please notify the Director of Volunteer Services immediately and bring the item or money to the JFS office. There is no need to tell the client that you are doing so.

Board of Directors
February 25, 2008