



**Children's**<sup>SM</sup>  
Healthcare of Atlanta  
*Dedicated to All Better*

# Volunteer Manual

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The **Mission, Vision, and Values** of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta were created through an in-depth process involving employees, physicians, volunteers and board members.

## **Mission**

To make kids better today and healthier tomorrow

## **Vision**

Best Care...Healthier Kids

## **Values**

Care about People  
Passionate about Kids  
Dedicated to Better

## **Volunteer Policies and Procedures**

### **Volunteer Benefits**

As a valued member of the Children's volunteer program, you are offered special services and benefits provided by the hospital and our community:

- Complimentary parking in designated parking decks while volunteering
- Complimentary volunteer uniform to wear while in the hospital
- A 20% discount on most items in the hospital gift shops
- Free flu shots
- Invitations to special events
- Meal voucher to use in the hospital cafeteria during your shift

### **Attendance**

Consistent, dependable and scheduled attendance is vital to the success of our volunteer program. Please call your volunteer supervisor if you will be late, or unable to work your shift.

### **Badges**

All volunteers must wear a Children's identification badge above the waist while on duty. No person may borrow or loan an identification badge. The number on your badge is used to clock you in and out at the beginning and end of a shift. You will also use this badge to receive complimentary parking. Wearing your badge allows the Children's Volunteer Services office to report volunteer time and help patients, families and staff to recognize you as a volunteer.

### **Signing In and Out**

All volunteer must sign in on the touch screen in the Volunteer Services office upon arrival. You must also sign out when your shift is completed. Be sure to check the bulletin board for information on patient needs, new policy information and other hospital events.

### **Dress Code**

Volunteers are asked to dress in a comfortable, practical and conservative manner. A volunteer uniform, to be worn over your clothing, is required and will be provided. The dress code is as follows:

- No shorts
- Skirts must be knee length
- No jeans or denim
- No open-toe shoes
- No sleeveless shirts, tank tops or low-cut blouses
- Moderate use of perfume or cologne and jewelry

All volunteers are asked to use common sense with regard to these guidelines. The Volunteer Services staff reserves the right to ask a volunteer to leave if their dress is inappropriate or does not meet code.

## **Personal Belongings**

You may store your personal belongings in the lockers in the Volunteer Services offices. Do not leave personal belongings unattended anywhere in the hospital. We cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. If you lose something, there is a lost and found in the security office.

All cell phones must be silenced while you are in the hospital. Wearing headphones and listening to music while on duty is prohibited.

## **Visitors**

Friends and relatives may not accompany you while you are on duty. When visiting a patient or family member, do so before or after your volunteer shift when you are not in uniform.

## **No Smoking Policy**

In an effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for our patients, visitors, volunteers and employees, Children's has adopted a smoke-free workplace policy. Smoking is not permitted on any Children's campus.

## **The Joint Commission**

The Joint Commission's purpose is to improve the quality of care provided by hospitals. Periodically, The Joint Commission conducts a survey at Children's for accreditation purposes. As a volunteer, you are required to stay current with our infection control and safety procedures.

## **Change of Contact Information**

It is important to keep our records accurate in order to contact you and to ensure you receive mail from Children's. Notify a member of the Volunteer Services staff with any changes to your personal information, including changes to your address, email, phone numbers or name. Please note that email is the primary way we communicate with our volunteers.

## **Exit Procedure**

We expect your volunteer service to be satisfying and beneficial. If you wish to end your service with us, please give your staff supervisor and the Volunteer Services staff as much notice as possible. Be aware that violation of Children's policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action ranging from a verbal warning to termination. Serious violations may result in termination without prior verbal warning.

## **Serving Our Patients**

All patients, parents, visitors and employees are customers of Children's and should be treated that way. You, as a volunteer, are an ambassador for our healthcare system, and it is important that you positively support our values and mission.

## **Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

All of our volunteers are responsible for protecting the privacy of the patients who receive our care. HIPAA is designed to protect private health information (PHI) which includes name, date of birth, address, unit, etc. For any HIPAA-related questions and issues, contact the Volunteer Services office.

## **Standards of Conduct**

The Children's Compliance Program is designed to prevent fraud and abuse in our facilities. All volunteers are expected to report any perceived or potential violation of the law. The standards of conduct and our policies and procedures can be found by calling the toll-free Compliance Line at 877-373-0126. This number can also be found on the back of your badge.

## **Patient Confidentiality**

As a volunteer, you may have access to confidential patient information or confidential information about a patient's family. All information about a patient is confidential, and this information cannot be disclosed to anyone. Disclosing confidential patient information has possible civil and criminal penalties.

By completing and submitting an online application, a volunteer agrees to uphold the Children's Confidentiality Code. This states that the volunteer understands all patients and their family members are entitled to the privacy and protection of their personal information.

By signing the Statement of Understanding, you agree not to:

- Reveal (to anyone) the name or identity of a patient.
- Repeat (to anyone) any statements or communications made by or about the patient.

- Reveal (to anyone) any information that you learn about the patient as a result of discussions with others providing care to the patient.
- Stay in a patient's room while a procedure is being performed or discussed by a clinician.
- Photograph a patient.
- Post any patient or family information or photographs on any social media sites.
- Write or publish any articles, papers, stories or other written materials which will contain the names of any patients or information from which the names or identities of any patient can be discerned. If anything is written about your volunteer experience here, you agree that you will submit it to the director for approval.

### **Patients' Rights**

Every patient has the right to be treated with respect and to be given quality care while at Children's.

### **Risk Management**

We strive to provide a warm, caring and safe environment for our patients, visitors and employees, but everyone is responsible for identifying and reporting potential risks. If during your volunteer shift you encounter a situation involving: a patient or visitor complaining, or any activity that is a potential risk to the hospital or a person, contact your immediate supervisor or the Volunteer Services office.

### **Customer Service**

To make our customers comfortable, always address everyone in a warm and sincere manner. Knock on a patient's door before entering and identify yourself as a volunteer. Use a patient's first name when possible, and maintain eye contact when speaking to a patient and his family. Escorting rather than pointing patients and visitors to various areas in the hospital is an excellent way to show our customers how much we care.

### **Diversity**

Children's is a culturally diverse organization, so please be respectful of people who may be a different race, age or religion than you are. If you have trouble communicating with a patient or family due to language barriers, ask a staff member to help you contact an interpreter. Remember that your religious beliefs may not be the same as the patient or his family. If a child or parent begins a conversation about religion, refer him to a chaplain, who is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## **Infection Control**

### **Hand Washing**

Hand washing is the single most important way to prevent infection. To correctly wash hands:

- Remove watches, bracelets and rings.
- Wet your hands in warm water.
- Apply soap and rub hands vigorously for 20 seconds.
- Make sure to wash between fingers, under nails and backs of hands.
- Rinse well.
- Dry hands and use a paper towel to turn the water off.

In lieu of hand washing, hand sanitizer is 99.9 percent effective at removing germs and is provided outside each patient's room and throughout the hospital. You are expected to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer at the following times:

- When starting your volunteer shift
- Before and after any patient contact
- Before and after eating and drinking
- After using the restroom
- After removing gloves
- After sneezing and coughing
- Before going home

### **Universal Precautions**

Universal precautions help protect persons in healthcare settings from coming in direct contact with blood or body fluids. To be effective, precautions must be consistently used for all body fluids of all patients. If you discover a spill that contains blood or body fluids, notify a hospital employee to have it cleaned up safely.

Personal protective Equipment (PPE), which includes gloves, gowns and masks, are available for you in patient rooms and other patient care areas. Hands should always be washed or sanitized after removing gloves. If your hands become soiled with blood or body fluids and you are not wearing gloves, prompt hand

washing is required. Always consult the staff member you are assisting regarding these and other measures that might be necessary.

### **Isolation**

Patients who are on isolation will have a sign posted on their door. A cart containing all necessary PPE will be outside of the patient room. Always remove all PPE before leaving the patient room. Be sure to check with a nurse before entering a patient's room marked with an isolation sign. Volunteers are never permitted to enter a room marked Airborne Precautions.

### **Volunteer Health Requirements**

As a volunteer, you are required to have documentation of the following vaccinations or immunity (via titer) in order to be compliant with our infection control policy:

- 2 MMR (Measles, Mumps & Rubella)
- 2 Chicken Pox (Varicella)
- Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis)
- Tuberculosis Screening (Tspot)
- Flu (seasonal)

The Volunteer Services department is responsible for screening all volunteers for immunity/vaccination requirements. All of these requirements can be completed free of charge at Children's through our Employee Health department. Any follow up needed is the responsibility of the volunteer.

Additionally, all volunteers are required to receive an annual tuberculosis (TB) test and annual flu shot. Both can be received free of charge here at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

### **Volunteer Illness Policy**

In order to protect our patients from possible exposure to any infectious disease, please do not come in to volunteer if you have any of the following:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Rash
- Upper respiratory infection
- Persistent cough
- Draining sore
- Chickenpox
- Shingles
- Measles
- Flu

If you are not feeling well, please stay home and notify your supervisor of your absence. If you are exposed to any contagious disease inside or outside the hospital, please notify the Children's Employee Health department at 404-785-2182. All injuries sustained while at Children's must be reported immediately to the Volunteer Services and Employee Health departments.

## **Safety Guidelines**

Children's uses a code system to alert staff and volunteers of emergencies that might occur throughout the facility. To notify an operator of an emergency situation, dial ext. 56161. If you are in one of our hospitals, be sure to give the location and type of emergency. Dial 911 if you are at any of the other Children's facilities.

Every department has a policy and procedure manual containing instructions for staff and volunteers to follow in a variety of emergency situations. Check with the supervisor of each of your assigned areas for emergency procedures. It is important for you to familiarize yourself with the different codes and the appropriate way to respond to each.

### **Code Red—Fire**

Code red designates that a fire is suspected or detected. When a fire alarm is activated, the operator announces a Code Red, followed by the location of the fire. If the fire is in your area, move to the nearest hallway and await further instructions from staff. When the alarm stops and the "all clear" announcement is made, you may return to regular activity.

If you discover a fire, please follow the procedures below:

**R:** Rescue anyone in danger.

**A:** Activate the fire alarm at a pull station and dial ext. 5-6161 if inside the hospital. If you are at any other Children's facility, dial 911.

**C:** Contain the smoke and fire by closing the doors.

**E:** Extinguish the fire if possible. If not, evacuate the area.

Fire alarm boxes are located next to every fire exit and stairwell. Fire extinguishers are located in hallway cabinets, fire hose cabinets and in some offices. Know the location of the nearest fire alarm to your work area.

To operate a fire extinguisher, follow the instructions on the label:

**P:** Pull the retaining pin.

**A:** Aim the hose at the source of the flames.

**S:** Squeeze the lever.

**S:** Sweep the hose side to side and spray.

If the fire will not extinguish, evacuate the area and close the door behind you. Security and fire department personnel will respond to the area. Direct them to the location of the fire.

### **Code Blue—Medical**

Code Blue designates an internal cardiac or respiratory arrest. Children's has a team that will respond to this code. If you encounter anyone experiencing breathing difficulties, please alert staff immediately. If a Code Blue occurs in your area, please assist staff by removing yourself from the area.

### **Code Yellow—Bomb Threat**

Code Yellow designates a bomb threat. If you receive a call relating to a bomb threat, proceed carefully and follow the protocol listed:

- Attempt to keep the caller on the line as long as possible.
- Ask the caller to repeat the message.
- Write down the exact message.
- Ask for the location of the bomb and when it will explode.
- Ask the caller, "Why did you plant the bomb here?"

### **Code Green—Internal or External Disaster**

Code Green designates an internal or external disaster resulting in multiple casualties needing emergency care. Each department has assigned responsibilities during a Code Green. During a Code Green, volunteers should immediately report to Volunteer Services or their placement supervisor to find out how to help.

### **Code Pink—Kidnapping or Missing Patient**

Code Pink designates a kidnapping or missing patient situation. Please report to Volunteer Services or your placement supervisor to find out how you can help.

### **Code White—Winter Weather**

In the case of inclement weather, volunteers will be notified via email regarding their volunteer shift. Volunteers are to use their best judgment with regard to transportation to the hospital.

### **Code Orange—Contamination Incident**

Code Orange designates the need for prompt and effective decontamination (decon) of patients that may have been exposed to hazardous materials, in order to minimize harm to the patients and to protect the staff and facility from secondary contamination.

### **Code Silver—Active Shooter/Hostage Taken**

It is the policy of Children's to promote a coordinated response in situations where hostile person(s) with weapon(s) are posing a threat to staff, patients or visitors or has taken hostages.

Upon hearing a "Code Silver" overhead page, employees/volunteers shall "Shelter in Place" which includes:

- Moving into a nearby room that can be locked. If the door cannot be locked, employees/volunteers will need to barricade the door with furniture.
- Close all blinds, turn out all lights, silence all phones and remain quiet.
- Listen for additional overhead page announcements and follow procedures after the announcements are made.

- Wait for the “Code All Clear” overhead page before resuming normal operations.

Should you encounter an active shooter situation should:

- Call 911 with the location of the incident and provide a description of the active shooter(s) and the type of weapon, if known.
- Call the Security Services department at ext. 5-6161, for Scottish Rite, Egleston and Hughes Spalding locations, and ext. 5-7711 for the Park and neighborhood locations.
- Evacuate all persons from the affected area, if it is safe to do so.

### Code Purple- Disruptive Behavior

Code Purple designates an emergency situation for staff to quickly access a team of support if face with threatening behaviors or violence.

### Georgia Mandated Reporter Law

What is a mandated reporter?

- Under Georgia law, certain professionals are designated as mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect.
  - A child is anyone under the age of 18.
  - Abuse includes physical injury (other than by accidental means), neglect, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.
- Hospital volunteers are considered mandated reporters.
  - Specifically, the law defines child service organization personnel to include people employed by **or volunteering** for any type of organization or business that provides children with care, treatment, education, training, supervision, coaching, counseling, recreational programs or shelter.

What does this mean for you?

- Mandated reporters who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused, **must** report the suspected abuse immediately to Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) or law enforcement.
- At Children's, our social workers are designated to make the actual report to DFCS or law enforcement.
- If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, you must report your suspicion to a leader in Volunteer Services or to a social worker, who will in turn make the required report.

What if I think there is abuse, but I am unsure?

- Failure to report suspected abuse is a crime.
- When in doubt, talk to a leader in Children's Volunteer Services or a Children's social worker.
- You do not have to confront the family or patient to confirm whether abuse has occurred.
- Any person who reports or causes a report to be made is immune from liability so long as they have acted in good faith.

## Patient Awareness and Interaction

When you become a volunteer, you join us in a special endeavor—helping children during the stressful experience of hospitalization. Your actions and words can leave a lasting impression on a patient or family. Even if you are not assigned to directly volunteer with patients, you will interact with them as a volunteer at Children's.

We understand there are many reactions and emotions volunteers may experience as they interact with patients and families. Some volunteers are often surprised or challenged by the emotions that meeting these special children can spark. We often feel the same way, and we invite you to share your feelings with us. The Volunteer Services staff is here to support you.

### Coping Behaviors

A patient in the hospital may present some of the following behaviors:

- Regression—Aggravated by hospital procedures, which may cause loss of independence
- Use of fantasy—An escape mechanism, he may need you to be his bridge to reality
- Denial—Rejects procedures, routines and illness
- Rebellion—Refuses to cooperate with procedures, angry toward family and staff
- Submission—Becomes passive, withdrawn or isolated

### **Avoid Making Promises**

Avoid making promises to a patient or a parent because you cannot always guarantee they will be carried out. For example, some patients may not be able to eat or drink anything, and a promise of food may only lead to greater frustration. Also keep in mind, a patient may be on specific dietary restrictions—do not offer anything until you have checked with the patient's nurse. Do not accept a child's word that it is alright to give him food or drinks.

### **Stick to Your Word**

You will find patients truly light up when you walk in the room and offer to play with them. They also tend to hang on your every word. Always follow through with what you tell a child you will do.

### **Maintain Eye Contact**

Try to make eye contact with every patient, even if that means adjusting to meet them at eye level. Kneel or sit down during interactions to reassure patients that they have your full attention.

When you are with patients, keep conversations with adults brief, so you can focus on the person who needs you the most—the child.

### **Think Before You Speak**

Looks can be deceiving; never assume you know a patient's age or gender. An illness may cause a patient to look older or younger than he is, or a patient may look like a boy, but is, in fact, a girl. If you do not know a patient's age or gender, privately ask their nurse.

Respect a patient's privacy and never ask questions that might make him feel uncomfortable. Do not ask about an injury or illness, health history or family. A patient's information is strictly confidential. Never repeat any of a patient's information to anyone. If a situation is overwhelming, and you need to talk to someone, speak to your placement supervisor or a member of the Children's Volunteer Services staff.

Never give a child false hope by saying things like, "You will go home soon" or "You will get better soon." Some patients have a chronic or terminal illness and may never get well. Instead, learn to use phrases like, "I enjoyed meeting/reading/playing with you today."

### **Patient Bathroom Use**

Before taking a patient to the bathroom, check with the nurse first. Sometimes a patient's output needs to be measured as an important part of treatment.

### **Keep a Professional Relationship**

Always remember your boundaries with a patient—this begins when entering a room. Always knock before entering and identify yourself. If a doctor or nurse is performing a procedure, excuse yourself and say that you will be back later. Upon entering a room, do not assume that you can touch a patient's personal items or touch their arm to look at their ID bracelet—always ask their permission.

You should only be at the hospital during your designated shift. As a volunteer, you will get to know families of patients, but it is best to only visit them when you are volunteering. Never give patients or their family members your contact information. Let them know that the Volunteer Services staff can always get in touch with you.

Even if you can relate to their illness or injury, do not give a patient your personal experience or opinion.

### **Boundaries**

If patients or parents talk to you about their problems or illnesses, be a listener. Do not offer advice. Notify the patient's nurse or staff if the parent or patient seems upset, angry or expresses a particular need.

### **Patient Transport**

If a patient cannot walk, they must be transported by a wagon or wheelchair. A patient should never be carried. Before transporting a patient, always ask a nurse or parent for permission and assistance. Never pick up a child without the guidance of staff or a parent. The patient may have a medical condition that you cannot see, and incorrectly handling the child may cause discomfort, strain or injury.

### **Intravenous (I.V.) Poles**

I.V. poles should always be positioned on the side of the wheelchair or wagon where the I.V. is attached to the patient's body.

Often when you are with a patient you will hear an I.V. monitor beep. If the I.V. display indicates low battery, simply plug the cord into an outlet and allow the patient to sit while the battery recharges. After a few minutes, you can safely take the patient back to his room. Plug the I.V. monitor into the outlet once you are back in the patient's room. If an I.V. display indicates a problem other than low battery, contact a nurse immediately—never try to fix the problem yourself.

## **Patient Safety**

Volunteers must always follow safety rules to protect patients and themselves. Make the patient's safety your first priority in every situation. Following procedures and making simple observations can help avoid accidents.

### **Reporting Accidents**

All accidents, even a slight bump or scrape, should be reported immediately to the patient's nurse. You will be asked to give a description of the incident, which may be used in a written report. An accurate account is essential. Remember that an accident does not always involve an immediate injury. Bruises can show up much later, and a patient's doctor needs to be aware of any potential problems.

### **Latex Balloons**

Some children are allergic to latex. Latex balloons are forbidden in the hospital. Mylar balloons, like the ones sold in the gift shop, are acceptable. Make sure you notify staff if you see any latex balloons. If you see a visitor enter the hospital with latex balloons, escort him to the information desk where the staff will hold the balloons for him.

### **Glitter**

Glitter can interfere or cause damage if a child is here for an MRI. Therefore, all forms of glitter are prohibited for use in the hospital with patients.

### **Younger Visitors**

Siblings or young visitors are permitted in many locations throughout the hospital, but they should always be escorted by a parent or adult. A parent should never leave you alone to watch a patient's siblings.

*We understand you have just been given many policies and procedures about volunteering at Children's. The most important piece of advice we can give you is: when in doubt, ask.*

*The staff at Children's is always willing and available to answer your questions. We value you and your time and thank you for your interest in volunteering at Children's.*