

YMCA OF GREATER SEATTLE

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

“At the heart of this organization, at the heart of its heritage of mind, spirit and body, there is that little element of love that transforms routine work into meaningful activity, that makes a person feel important even when they don’t think they are. That’s the business of the YMCA. That’s what you do when you give your skills and your talents to another generation.”

Andrew Young, from the YMCA’s Seven Rs of Volunteer Development

100. WELCOME TO THE YMCA

Welcome to the YMCA of Greater Seattle. We're glad you are volunteering with us! We've designed this handbook to provide you and other volunteers with a general source of information about the YMCA of Greater Seattle. Most questions you may have can be answered by your immediate supervisor at the YMCA.

We do want you to know that during your volunteer work with the YMCA, any photos taken of you may be used in future promotional materials.

200. ABOUT THE YMCA

201. Mission:

The YMCA is a worldwide organization that is committed to providing programs that help members and participants develop in spirit, mind, and body.

As adopted by its volunteer Board of Directors, the YMCA of Greater Seattle’s mission statement is: "Building a community where all people, especially the young, are encouraged to develop their fullest potential in spirit, mind and body." In all of its programs, the YMCA is dedicated to building strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

This Association’s historic statement of purpose is: "The YMCA of Greater Seattle, rooted in and infused with Christian tradition and values, seeks to serve all people, especially the young, enabling them to achieve their full potential and realize self-awareness through the development of spirit, mind and body."

202. History:

The YMCA (Young Men’s Christian Association) was founded in London, England in 1844 and came to the United States in 1851. YMCAs spread fast and were soon serving boys and older men as well as young men. After World War I, women and girls became an active part of the YMCA and today over half of all YMCA members and staff are women.

In 1876, Catherine Maynard gathered a group of young Seattle pioneers including Dexter Horton and Rolland Denny in her parlor to discuss concerns over the future of their city. Out of that meeting came a dream of a new YMCA organization, the YMCA of Greater Seattle.

The dream of Seattle's first families has been passed from generation to generation. For more than 130 years, the YMCA of Greater Seattle has played a vital role in the life of our growing and expanding community. The involvement of more than 9,000 volunteers enables the YMCA meet ever-changing community needs with creative and innovative programs.

Today, the Association serves nearly 200,000 people annually, with more than half age 18 and under, primarily in King County and south Snohomish County. The YMCA offers many programs in schools, churches and community centers, in addition to YMCA-owned facilities. Some of the major YMCA locations are:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ▪ Auburn Valley YMCA | ▪ Northshore YMCA |
| ▪ Bellevue Family | ▪ Sammamish Family |
| ▪ Dale Turner YMCA | ▪ University Family YMCA |
| ▪ Downtown YMCA | ▪ West Seattle/Fauntleroy |
| ▪ Highline YMCA | ▪ <i>Camping Services:</i> |
| ▪ Lake Heights Family | ▪ Camp Orkila (on Orcas Island) |
| ▪ Meredith Mathews East Madison | ▪ Camp Colman (on Key Peninsula) |
| ▪ Metrocenter | |

203. Association Goals:

The goals of the YMCA of Greater Seattle as articulated in its strategic plan are to:

- Provide activities for youth and young adults which shape values and encourage lifelong community service;
- Support and strengthen all families;
- Lead and support efforts which promote healthy living;
- Provide older adults with opportunities to create healthy and productive lives for themselves and the community; and,
- Attract diverse populations participating together to create a community where all are welcome.

204. "The Seattle YMCA Way:"

"The Seattle YMCA Way" describes the commitments of staff and volunteers at the YMCA:

- *Member Focus* - We provide all participants with the highest quality programs and service and take personal responsibility to ensure that every person is treated with courtesy and has a safe, enriching experience.
- *Environment* - We practice and acknowledge commitment, innovation, good work, personal growth, mutual respect and fairness.
- *Inclusiveness* - We value the capabilities of all people and welcome the diverse participation of all members of our community.
- *Integrity* - We act in an ethical manner in accordance with the YMCA's values: **RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, HONESTY, CARING, FAITH AND FUN.**

205. Partners With Youth:

You are strongly encouraged to participate with other volunteers in YMCA special events and the annual Partners With Youth Campaign, the principal fund-raising activity of the YMCA. Each year the YMCA raises funds to support youth activities and enable participation by those who could not otherwise afford it. Your campaign support can make a real difference to the community.

206. Diversity and Inclusiveness:

The YMCA's vision is to be known for practicing inclusion by valuing the diversity of all people within our association and the communities we serve. An inclusive definition of diversity is used at the YMCA of Greater Seattle. It says: "Diversity is the mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, beliefs and competencies as assets to the YMCA groups and individuals with whom they interact."

As part of its strategic plan, the YMCA of Greater Seattle has launched an Association-wide effort to increase the cultural competence of its staff and volunteers. The successful implementation of this initiative is critical to the Association's long-term ability to fulfill its mission and meet its program goals.

300. VOLUNTEERING

301. Volunteerism:

Volunteers are the backbone of the YMCA. Volunteers not only founded the YMCA, but operated it in its entirety in the early days. The involvement today of thousands of talented, committed individuals greatly extends the range, quality and variety of YMCA programs.

There can be no expectation that employment or special consideration for employment will result from volunteer service. Open job listings can be found at www.seattleyymca.org.

Volunteer service is at the will of the YMCA and may be ended at any time for any or no reason. To avoid misunderstandings, volunteers may not work in an employed position in the same capacity (or a similar capacity) to their volunteer responsibilities. This applies to all YMCA branches in the YMCA of Greater Seattle.

302. Volunteer Records:

In order to keep your volunteer records current, you should notify your YMCA supervisor immediately of changes to your name, address, telephone number or emergency contact information.

303. Benefits:

Volunteering is a demonstration of caring for others, and is at the heart of the YMCA. The YMCA offers volunteers a chance to improve the lives of children and families and to make communities stronger. Through their YMCA experience, volunteers build new relationships, develop more self-confidence and gain new skills. By giving their time to benefit others, volunteers also give themselves the opportunity to learn, grow and have fun.

While the YMCA does not offer free memberships to volunteers, it may provide reasonable facility use, subject to limits approved by the branch executive. Volunteers may not trade their time for free or reduced cost program participation. The YMCA does not provide insurance and related benefits to its volunteers. As examples, there are no medical, accident, workers compensation, disability, or other plans for volunteers.

304. Expenses:

Reasonable expenses incurred by volunteers on authorized YMCA business will be reimbursed subject to prior approval of the volunteer's YMCA supervisor. When required, receipts must be kept and properly submitted with the expense claim.

305. Use of Supplies and Equipment:

YMCA supplies and equipment, including copy machines and postage meters, are for YMCA business use only. Equipment and supplies purchased by or donated to the YMCA belong to the YMCA, and not to individuals.

306. YMCA Property:

Personal locks may not be placed on YMCA property. The YMCA may retrieve, inspect and review both business and personal information and items stored on or in YMCA property, such as computers, diskettes, desks, lockers, cabinets, YMCA vehicles and YMCA-provided housing. You are discouraged from bringing valuables to the YMCA, as the YMCA does not assume responsibility for loss, theft or damage to volunteers' personal property.

307. Use of Personal Vehicles:

State law requires adequate personal auto liability insurance. Not carrying insurance, or having a high deductible, does not release you from financial responsibility for loss or damage to others should an incident happen. Volunteers may be required to show proof of auto insurance or to have a motor vehicle record check done.

308. Background Checks:

The YMCA requires its program, administrative and support volunteers to complete a criminal background disclosure form and a Washington State Patrol form. These forms are required at engagement. Volunteering at the YMCA is conditional pending results of the YMCA's background investigation. A volunteer who omits or fails to fully disclose his/her criminal history will not be allowed to volunteer. Volunteers with criminal backgrounds involving harm or threat of harm to person(s) will not be allowed to volunteer.

400. SAFETY

401. Safety and Health Rules:

Volunteers are to observe the following safety and health rules and use care to prevent accidents:

- Follow accident and incident reporting procedures.
- Observe all hazard warnings and caution signs.
- Use all safety equipment required for your assignment, including wearing appropriate

- personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head, hands, and other extremities.
- Know the location of fire/safety exits, fire extinguishers, and emergency alarm pulls; know proper evacuation procedures.
- Keep all aisles, walkways, working areas, and emergency equipment free of obstacles.
- Refrain from running, fighting, horseplay, or distracting others.
- Observe safe operating procedures for all equipment; make sure that all guards and other protective devices are in their proper places prior to operating the equipment; and operate only equipment for which you are authorized and properly trained.
- Observe all safety precautions when handling chemicals or hazardous products, including use of personal protective equipment. Use only products in which you have been properly trained.
- Do not wear frayed, torn or loose clothing, jewelry or long unrestrained hair, near moving machinery or electrical equipment.
- Follow proper lifting procedures at all times.
- Drive a YMCA vehicle only if properly trained, licensed and authorized to do so.
- Use seat belts when driving or riding in any vehicle in accordance with state law.
- Maintain your own vehicle in safe working condition if used for YMCA purposes.
- Adhere to state rules of the road.

402. Bloodborne Pathogens:

The YMCA seeks to minimize the risk of exposure by periodically training individuals who may encounter bloodborne pathogens in the course of their volunteer assignment. The YMCA subscribes to the concept of "universal precautions," which means that all human blood or other body fluids must be treated as if it were contagious. Universal precautions mean that you are expected to use certain procedures and to use personal protective equipment when necessary.

Volunteer lifeguards and emergency medical technicians, physicians and nurses are offered the Hepatitis B vaccination series to guard against exposures to the virus in their capacity as emergency responders at the YMCA. The complete series is offered at no cost to the volunteer as long as he/she continues to serve as an emergency responder at the YMCA.

403. Abuse Prevention:

A principal endeavor of the YMCA is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of youth and children. Thus, the mistreatment or neglect of youth or children and the resulting severe effects are of primary concern to the YMCA. Child abuse is mistreatment or neglect of a child by parent(s) or others resulting in injury or harm. Abuse can lead to severe emotional, physical and behavioral problems. Because of its concern for the welfare of children and youth, the YMCA has developed policies, standards, guidelines and training to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse. In addition, all volunteers are screened, and undergo background checks upon engagement and re-engagement. Additionally, the YMCA provides training in recognizing, reporting and preventing child abuse, which includes training in recognizing signs that a child is being groomed for abuse. Some of the guidelines volunteers are expected to follow are:

- Avoid being alone with a single child where you cannot be observed by staff or adults.
- You may not relate to children who participate in YMCA programs outside of approved YMCA

activities. For example, baby-sitting, weekend trips, foster care, etc. are not permitted. An exception must be approved in advance by the AVP/ Risk Management and the YMCA Branch Executive.

- Giving personal gifts to program participant(s) or their parents is not allowed.
- Program rules and boundaries must be followed, including appropriate touch guidelines.
- Children or youth should not be singled out for favored attention.
- Dating a program participant under age 18 is not allowed. Some YMCA programs may have additional restrictions.
- Children may not be disciplined by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
- Verbally, physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing or punishing children or youth is not allowed.
- Children may be informed in a manner that is age appropriate to the group of their right to set their own "touching" limits for personal safety.
- Children should only be released to authorized persons in programs with controlled pick-up procedures.
- Any information regarding abuse or potential abuse should be documented in writing.
- At the first reasonable cause to believe that *any* child abuse exists, it should be reported to your supervisor or branch executive so that proper reporting can be initiated.
- At the first reasonable cause to believe that *an employee or volunteer* has either crossed the boundaries of appropriate interactions, or has abused a child or youth, even if it was not during working hours, his or her conduct should be reported to the program director and the branch executive or another designated branch representative. Appropriate actions will be taken regarding the employee or volunteer, which may include suspending or terminating YMCA employment or volunteer status, and following the YMCA's protocol on reporting to the appropriate authorities.
- Confidentiality of information related to child abuse is crucial and should be limited to the immediate supervisor and/or branch executive and designated member(s) of the Association office staff.
- Volunteers are required to fully cooperate with an investigation by the YMCA, any law enforcement agency, or any other authorized outside agency, and failure to do so is considered misconduct and will result in dismissal.

404. Smoking:

The YMCA is committed to providing a smoke-free, safe, and healthy environment. Smoking is not permitted in any of our facilities.

405. Workplace Violence:

The YMCA seeks to provide a safe, secure and violence-free environment for all employees, members, participants, clients, volunteers and guests. This applies to YMCA facilities and all other places at which the YMCA operates its programs and activities. The threat or occurrence of violence in the workplace is in direct conflict with the YMCA's mission and values, and will not be tolerated.

The YMCA will work to prevent violent incidents from occurring. Violence, for this purpose, includes, but is not limited to: physically harming another, shouting, shoving, pushing, harassment,

intimidation, coercion, menacing behavior, brandishing weapons, and/or threatening words or behaviors. Volunteers should promptly report threats of violence or conversations that imply threats of violence, whether made by staff, members, youth or other individuals. Reports should be made to the YMCA supervisor and/or branch executive.

500. CONDUCT

501. Misconduct:

Volunteers are expected to behave in a manner which is consistent with the YMCA mission, values and goals. The YMCA does not tolerate misconduct. Some examples of misconduct include:

- Discriminatory behavior or harassment.
- Child abuse, molestation, or indecent exposure.
- Failure to report arrest or criminal conviction, if required to do so.
- Mistreatment or neglect of members, guests or YMCA participants.
- Having unapproved off-hours contact with children in YMCA programs.
- Having contact with a youth or adult client or participant outside of the program where such contact is prohibited by program rules.
- Theft or willful damage to YMCA property or to the property of others; or the removal of property without permission from YMCA management.
- Dishonesty in any form.
- Abusive or profane language.
- Violations of the workplace violence policy, including, for example, fighting or threatening another person.
- Possession of a weapon.
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Possessing, distributing or manufacturing controlled substances.
- Horseplay, unsafe or potentially dangerous behavior.
- Violation of any stated rules, or of commonly accepted rules of responsible personal conduct.
- Conduct which does not support the stated purpose of the YMCA.

This list is not inclusive.

502. Harassment:

All individuals at the YMCA are expected to work actively to maintain an environment which is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment, and to conduct themselves in such a way as to ensure that no illegal discrimination or harassment occurs by employees, or other parties, including members, suppliers, and volunteers.

Harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact; display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender or to racial, ethnic or religious groups. Sexual harassment is a type of harassment and occurs when this type of verbal or physical conduct is sexual in nature or is gender based; that is, directed at a person because of their gender.

If you feel you have been subjected to harassment of any kind, you are encouraged to immediately identify the offensive behavior to the harasser and request that it stop. If the behavior does not immediately stop, or if you prefer not to address the behavior directly with the harasser, you should immediately bring the situation to the attention of your YMCA supervisor, branch executive or the Human Resources Director at (206) 382-5003.

503. Conflict of Interest:

Volunteers are expected to refrain from giving the impression that the personal views and positions they express regarding economic, political or religious issues are those of the YMCA.

504. Political Activity:

Due to IRS regulations for tax exempt organizations, the YMCA does not permit campaigning for a candidate or other political activities on YMCA premises, or using the resources of the YMCA for political activity. This prohibition includes, for example, wearing clothing or buttons with political slogans, and displaying stickers and other political items at the YMCA.

505. YMCA Information:

Information regarding membership lists, employee lists, participant files, donors, financial aid, planning, medical conditions and other information is confidential and should be kept within the YMCA, and should be shared within the YMCA only with those who have a legitimate need-to-know, as determined by management.

506. Arrest or Criminal Conviction of a Volunteer:

Volunteers are required to report a criminal conviction to the YMCA. Additionally, volunteers are required to report an arrest, when the volunteer's activities at the YMCA involve children under 16 years old, developmentally disabled people and vulnerable adults. The report should be made promptly, within five days of when the arrest or conviction occurred or prior to any additional volunteering, whichever comes first. The report should be made in writing to the YMCA branch executive, and include the exact charge or conviction, the location or court and the date of the arrest or conviction. Failure to report arrests or convictions as required may be considered misconduct.

507. Volunteer Solicitation and Distribution:

The YMCA limits solicitations, surveys, petitions, and distributions on its premises. Unrestricted activities of this nature present a safety and security hazard, interfere with normal YMCA operations, and are intrusive and annoying to members and others. Except for legitimate YMCA purposes (e.g., Partners with Youth and United Way) *and* with the prior permission of a member of the YMCA management team, volunteers (and other individuals not employed by the YMCA) may not at any time solicit, survey, petition or distribute literature on YMCA owned or operated sites.

508. Alcohol and Drugs:

The YMCA is committed to maintaining an alcohol and drug free environment. This is particularly important since many volunteers are responsible for the safety and welfare of children and youth. Therefore, the YMCA prohibits the use, sale, manufacture or possession of alcohol or drugs (except those properly prescribed by a physician and used in accordance with the physician's instructions) by any volunteer while volunteering for the YMCA, and/or while in any YMCA facility or vehicle. Additionally, alcoholic beverages are not permitted in YMCA facilities.

600. COMMUNICATION

601. Complaints:

If you have a complaint or problem at the YMCA, in most circumstances, the best course of action is to discuss the matter with your immediate supervisor at the YMCA. If your supervisor is unable to resolve the matter to your satisfaction, you should discuss your complaint or problem with the next level of YMCA supervision.

602. Computer Software and Data Use:

Laws about the use of software are very strict. You may not copy YMCA software, or bring a copy of software from home or another place of business and place the software on a YMCA PC.

All data stored on computer disks and magnetic media purchased by the YMCA of Greater Seattle is the property of the YMCA and may not be used for personal reasons.

603. Voice Mail, E-Mail and Internet:

Use of data sent and stored on YMCA computer and communications systems is the property of the YMCA, including telephone, fax, voice mail, electronic mail ("e-mail"), and Internet systems, and the messages sent, stored or printed on YMCA equipment. There can be no expectation of privacy in using these systems.

These systems are for YMCA business use. Examples of inappropriate use of these systems include: the use of ethnic slurs, racial epithets, sexually explicit images, messages or cartoons, anything that may be construed as harassment; non-business information such as soliciting or proselytizing for commercial ventures, religious or political causes or other outside concerns.

604. Media Relations:

Communications with media is managed through the YMCA Association Office, through its Communications Department (206-382-5020). Volunteers should refer all media inquiries to their YMCA supervisor, including non-emergency and emergency communication situations.

605. Religious Expression:

The YMCA of Greater Seattle communicates the value of faith as being sustained by a belief in something greater than yourself. Founded in 1876 to uphold Christian values, today our YMCA acknowledges and honors the wide range of religious, spiritual and philosophical beliefs that volunteers, members, staff and community participants may hold. Our role is to respect this range of beliefs by modeling acceptance, inclusion, compassion and love. We must embrace the worth of each individual and assist them in developing their unique gifts and abilities.

700. VOLUNTEER TRAINING

701. Safety Related Certifications:

Safety training, including CPR and first aid may be required for volunteers in certain positions. While the YMCA usually makes this training available at no cost to you, you are expected to take personal responsibility to ensure that your required certifications are always current.

702. Orientation and Training Programs:

Each new program, administrative and support volunteer is strongly encouraged to complete a YMCA orientation session within the first sixty days of volunteering with the YMCA. These orientation sessions last about two hours and are scheduled at several YMCA locations each month. The Association training calendar can be consulted for details.

Many YMCA training events, such as program certification training, are be open to participation by volunteers, provided that it is related to the volunteers' YMCA responsibilities. You should direct your training requests to your YMCA supervisor.

Questions?

**Consult your YMCA supervisor or branch executive,
or call the YMCA Human Resources Department at (206) 382-5003.**

**Thanks for sharing your time and talent
with the YMCA of Greater Seattle.**