

Volunteer Handbook

Schools should utilize a Volunteer Handbook for all school volunteers. Below is an outline of the contents of the handbook. It should be made specific to each school. It should include a cover sheet indicating that the volunteer has read and agrees to abide by the policies and procedures governing volunteers. It may be included in your parent/student handbook and the parent/student sign-off sheet would be sufficient for parent volunteers.

Volunteer Policies – A Diocesan background check and Safe Environment Training is mandatory for all volunteers in a student supervisory position.

1. **Philosophy of the School/Center** – (see this handbook)
2. **Benefits of Volunteer Activity to Students, Families, Staff, and Role of Volunteer** – Volunteers in the Catholic Schools/Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg and _____ add a great dimension and enrichment to the life of the school/center. Volunteers benefit students as they enhance student-adult ratio in areas such as: supervised playground monitors, lunchroom monitors, library aides, extra drivers for field trips, classroom aides, etc. Volunteers are valued members of the school/center community. Under the direction and supervision of the Administrator and the school/center staff, volunteers assist in the provision of educational and other services to students, faculty, and staff.
3. **Appropriate Selection of Program Activities for Volunteers** – Volunteers are involved in a variety of activities that span many programs within a school or center. The volunteer should carefully consider his/her special skills, interests, and talents when choosing a volunteer position. It is important that, prior to accepting a volunteer position, the volunteer clearly understands the requirements and responsibilities of his/her assignment.
4. **Description and Routine(s) of Specific Volunteer Activities** – The coordinator of each area will instruct the volunteers in that area about specific requirements and routines.
5. **Confidentiality** – In the course of volunteer work, information, confidential or otherwise about students or teachers may be learned. This and any other information must be kept private and shared only with the supervising teacher if necessary, avoiding unnecessary gossip. **This information must remain confidential in any setting inside or outside the school/center, just as one would wish his/her own privacy rights to be respected.** At times, the volunteer may come into possession of information about students that may need to be conveyed to the volunteer's supervisor (teacher or administrator). If information is appropriate in the judgment of the administrator, other persons on a "need to know" basis may be advised of it by the administrator. This includes, but is not limited to, parents/guardians, and pastor.
6. **Supervision of Volunteers** – The Administrator is responsible for the total school/center operation. The Administrator supervises all who serve in any capacity in the school/center and in official school-related activities. The Administrator may delegate the supervisory role to a designated member of the school/center staff for specific activities. Volunteers will be expected to review and adhere to Policies and Procedures contained in the Parent/Student Handbook.
7. **Behavior Management** – it is the goal of Catholic schools/centers to instruct students in the formation of a Catholic conscience so that they will choose behaviors which foster

responsibility. In order to accomplish this, volunteers should manage students in positive and constructive ways while they uphold the School's/Center's Code of Conduct. This can be accomplished through intervention and encouragement techniques and strategies which are administered through proximity, eye contact, and privacy. In addition to supporting the Code of Conduct, volunteers are expected to support the decisions of administrators and teachers. A volunteer may not employ corporal punishment as a means of controlling a student who has misbehaved. Volunteers are prohibited from using any physical contact in directing and/or disciplining a child, e.g. pulling, grabbing, etc.

8. **Health Emergency and Safety Procedures** – All situations should be dealt with individually with prudent, adult judgment as the primary response to any illness or injury. Simple scrapes, small cuts, bruises, etc., will be taken care of in the school/center clinic. If the injury is of a more serious nature, the parent will be notified and the office will call 911. Serious injury such as a possible broken bone, severe bleeding or allergic reaction should be dealt with immediately and with caution. **DO NOT MOVE THE CHILD. DO NOT LEAVE THE CHILD.** Send to the office for assistance. Remove other students from the proximity of the situation as soon as possible. Keep the affected child as still and comfortable as possible until help comes.
Never dispense any medication (not even aspirin), to any child. All volunteers are encouraged to undergo first aid and CPR training.
9. **Child Abuse** – Chapter 415.504, Florida Statutes protects children from abuse and/or neglect. Abuse is defined as including any non-accidental injury, sexual battery, financial or sexual exploitation or injury to the intellectual or psychological capacity of a person by the parents or other persons responsible for the child's welfare. Neglect is failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, and health care or needed supervision. Under Florida Law, anyone who suspects child abuse is obligated to report that abuse. It is the volunteer's responsibility to inform the school/center administrator of any suspicions of abuse. The administrator will assist the volunteer in making the report. The child abuse hotline number is 1-800-962-2873.
10. **Scheduling of Volunteers** – Volunteers are scheduled by the coordinators of each of the volunteer areas according to the needs of the school and the desires of the volunteer.