

GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.**



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF DEEP EAST TEXAS

Volunteer Handbook



Welcome

Welcome to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas. We are thrilled that you have chosen to volunteer with our organization. Volunteers are a vital part of achieving our goals: providing young people with a safe, positive environment, opportunities and expectations, and supportive relationships with peers and adults. We hope that you find the duties of your particular volunteer job description to be fulfilling and that your volunteer experience with us is rewarding and positive. This handbook includes details about our organization, the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers, and volunteer policies and practices in effect at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas.

Volunteering with youth carries a great responsibility. The examples you set and the influence you have may be the determining factor as to whether or not our Club Members become responsible members of society.

Our organization has made every effort to establish policies that are fair and generally acceptable to our type of organization. This manual cannot possibly cover all situations and conditions that might occur, but an attempt has been made to include the important aspects of volunteerism. Our policies are constantly being reviewed and revised in order to be meaningful and to stay current with changing times. The policies described in this manual are intended as information only. They do not, by reason of their publication, confer any special consideration or privileges to specific persons nor do they in any manner constitute a promise or contract of volunteerism, or guarantee any specific condition of volunteerism. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas reserves the right to change, from time to time, any or all of the policies, procedures, rules or benefits described in this manual.

The following policies were created to apply in most situations that may occur; however, where the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas believes that the individual needs or circumstances of a volunteer require special consideration, exceptions to the policies may be made. *This manual is for you, and it should be read carefully and kept for reference.*

Thank you for your support.

Table of Contents

Mission Statement/Youth Development Strategy

Chapter 1 – Volunteer Program

- Volunteer and other Classifications
- Responsibility for Activating Volunteer Staff
- Volunteerism At-Will
- Recognition
- Volunteer Count

Chapter 2 – Harassment-Free Work Environment

Chapter 3 – Volunteer Procedures

- Assignment
- Attendance
- Reference Check
- Background Check
- Evaluations
- Grievance Procedures
- Orientation
- Personnel Record
- Position Descriptions
- Recording Hours
- Resignations
- Supervision
- Trial Period and Transfers
- Termination
- Training

Chapter 4 – Your Relationship with Members

Chapter 5 – General Information

- Confidentiality
- Grooming and Dress
- Drug-Free Workplace
- Holidays
- Hours of Operation
- Accidents/Injuries
- Media Relations
- Personal Belongings
- Smoking and Tobacco Use
- Telephone Usage
- Transportation
- Working Conditions

Chapter 6 – Standards of Conduct

Mission Statement

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas is to enable *all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.*

Youth Development Strategy

Our goal is to provide programs and services that promote and enhance the development of youth by instilling:

- A sense of Competence
- A sense of Usefulness
- A sense of Belonging
- A sense of Power of Influence

We strive to enable all youth to help themselves realize their potential for growth and development. Our programs are created by youth development professionals and are offered in five core program areas:

- Health and Life Skills
- Education and Career Development
- The Arts
- Leadership and Character Development
- Sports, Fitness and Recreation

Within this framework, we hope to reach our goals as youth development professionals and provide a positive and safe place for youth to learn and grow.

Chapter 1: Volunteer Program

The Importance of Volunteers

There are three strong reasons BGCDET incorporates volunteers into its programs. First, it helps build organizational strength. Volunteers strengthen programs with the unique skills and life experiences they bring to our Clubs. Second, you, as a volunteer, have credibility that paid staff does not. You can go into communities and promote the organization because you believe in it. Volunteering is a personal choice, not your job. Never underestimate the power of volunteer advocacy. Third, using volunteers extends the resources of our organization. Volunteers provide extra hands that enable program staff to do tasks and activities that might not otherwise get done. Volunteers also provide valuable input to program leadership and staff.

Why Volunteer?

People volunteer for many different reasons. Some volunteer because they want to enter the youth development profession and wish to gain experience in the field. Some have outside careers and wish to give back to the community. Others are retired and choose to give their time and share their wealth of experience. Whatever the reason for volunteering, everyone receives personal benefits from their work. There is a great deal of satisfaction that comes from being involved in the lives of others.

Boys & Girls Club Staff:

- Are at least 16 years old
- Submit an application
- Complete a criminal background check showing no record.
- Interview with Unit Director or Program Director.
- Attend orientation.
- Sign an agreement verifying that they understand procedures and what is expected of them.

What is most important in volunteer placement is that an individual's skills, talents and time commitments match and meet the needs of the Club. The application process assists in determining placement.

Volunteer and Other Classifications

Volunteer: Any individual who, by choice and without monetary reward, contributes time and service in one or more of the core program areas on a regular basis to assist the Club in the accomplishment of its mission.

For-Credit Volunteers: Those who receive credit from another agency for volunteer service and time (such as court-mandated volunteers, students or interns).

Members: Kids who are registered Boys & Girls Clubs Members.

Paid Staff: Employees of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas who help the Club accomplish its mission.

Responsibility for Activating Volunteer Staff

The Unit or Program Director approve and activate a volunteer. When a volunteer's qualifications and experience are such that the person can fulfill a volunteer position, a position will be assigned. The Unit or Program Director is responsible for activation and termination of all volunteer staff.

Volunteerism is At-Will

Every Club volunteer has an at-will relationship with the Club. Volunteers are free to resign their position at any time, just as the Club is free to terminate a volunteer for any reason at any time.

Recognition

Volunteers will be recognized on an annual basis. Informal recognition of volunteers will also take place year round, in a variety of ways through Club employees and members.

Volunteer Count

The number of volunteers, volunteer hours and a variety of other data will be collected on a monthly basis.

Chapter 2 – Harassment-Free Environment

The Club will not tolerate any harassment of any volunteer staff relating to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. The Club will not tolerate any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or any other conduct of a sexual nature by a female or male. These actions constitute harassment when:

Submission to or rejection of such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a condition of volunteerism; or becomes the basis for a placement decision regarding the volunteer; or creates a hostile, offensive or fearful work environment.

Harassment of any nature is a serious offense. Retaliation against a volunteer staff member who makes charges of harassment is also serious and will not be tolerated. Harassment or retaliation will result in action, up and to including discharge. Any volunteer staff member believing he/she has been a victim of harassment should talk to the Unit Director, Area Director, Director of Program Services, Vice President of Operations or CEO.

Chapter 3: Volunteer Procedures

Assignment

A volunteer can be assigned to a position when all the application paperwork has been returned. Assignment to a specific position will occur when a volunteer appears to have the skills and abilities to meet the needs of the Club and its members.

Attendance

The positions volunteer staff fill are vital to our Club Members. Therefore, it is essential that volunteers be punctual and regular in attendance. Volunteers need to sign in and out according to regulations established by the Club. Volunteers are expected to remain on duty for the full time agreed upon, except when conditions vary and are approved by the supervisor. Volunteers should notify the supervisor as soon as possible of any planned excused absence.

Personal & Professional Reference Check

References for all potential volunteer staff of the Club, who have direct contact with children, will be checked.

Background Check

All employees and volunteers for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas must pass our criminal background check procedures. Any volunteer not making a commitment for an entire college or High School Semester or an entire sports season will be asked to pay for the background check which will cost approximately \$25.

Evaluations

All Club volunteers assigned to a position will be provided with the opportunity for an objective review of their performance measured against the position description to help them reach their potential. A position evaluation of each volunteer will be completed annually, or when a position assignment occurs. Recommendations based on a volunteer's performance will be made in writing by the supervisor and placed in the volunteer's personnel file.

Grievance Procedures

Any volunteer who has a complaint concerning the application or interpretation of any volunteer personnel policy should discuss the matter with his/her immediate supervisor. If the volunteer and the immediate supervisor cannot reach a mutually satisfactory solution to the grievance, it may be reviewed by the Program Director, Vice President of Operations and/or CEO.

Orientation

All new volunteers must attend a mandatory orientation to the Club covering issues such as Club philosophy and the core programs.

Personnel Record

Individual volunteer records are maintained and kept confidential.

Position Description

Written position descriptions are maintained for all volunteer staff positions. Position descriptions are the responsibility of the Program Director and will be updated as needed.

Recording Hours

All volunteers must record their hours of service. This should be done at the site where they volunteer. The Unit Director or Program Director will train the volunteer in the process.

Resignations

Resignation is defined as a separation from the Club initiated by the volunteer. A few weeks' notice of intent to resign would be appreciated and should be given in writing to the volunteer's immediate supervisor. Volunteers who resign are required to schedule an exit interview with the Unit Director or Program Director. This interview can be conducted by phone or in person.

The purpose of the exit interview is:

- Review reasons for the resignation.
- Discuss possible changes that might be needed in the position description.
- Express our appreciation for the volunteer's involvement with the Club.
- Verify the return of all documents and property of the Club.

Supervision

Each volunteer will be assigned an immediate supervisor. All concerns, problems, criticisms and suggestions should be brought to your immediate supervisor. Please feel free to express yourself. Volunteers often offer a fresh perspective, so your suggestions are welcome. If you are troubled by something, it is best to address the situation at the onset. Resolving concerns as early as possible avoids stressful situations and hurt feelings. Please feel free to express your concerns.

Trial Period and Transfers

It is greatly accepted that new volunteers are on a "trial period" for the first three months of service. If service is satisfactory and interest level remains high, volunteers will automatically be placed on a regular status. Where the frequency of the volunteer work has not been adequate for the supervisor or the volunteer to determine whether or not the placement is satisfactory for both parties, the initial trial period may be extended.

Termination

All volunteerism with the Club is at-will and may be terminated at any time, with or without cause and without prior notice by the Club. All terminations will be documented in writing and a copy will be placed in the volunteer's personnel file.

Training

All training will be conducted by the volunteer's immediate supervisor or other Club paid staff. There will be continuous training of all Club workers, under the direction of the Unit Director or Program Director, through regular staff meetings and other Club trainings.

Chapter 4: Your Relationship with Members

Guidelines to follow:

- Introduce yourself to the members.
- Treat members with respect and dignity.
- Be dependable and keep your promises.
- Leave your personal problems at home.
- Pass along any member concerns which you feel need further attention to the Unit or Program Director.
- Do not accept money, goods or gifts from members (except items such as handmade crafts, cards, etc.).

The safety and security of Club Members is of utmost concern. Inappropriate touching or contact with youth by volunteers is prohibited. **You are not allowed to be alone with a child under any circumstances.** If a volunteer has any knowledge of or becomes aware of any circumstances which may endanger the health, safety or well-being of Club Members, the matter must be brought to the attention of the Unit Director or Program Director.

Volunteers should not have contact with Club Members outside of regular Club activities. If there is evidence of inappropriate, non-Club interaction between a volunteer and a Club Member(s), the following steps may be taken:

- The volunteer will be suspended
 - Meetings will be held with the volunteer and Club Member to gather facts. Staff or other members will be consulted as needed.

- The Unit Director or Program Director will review the facts to determine if a policy violation has occurred.
- If a violation is established, the volunteer-Club relationship will be terminated.

Chapter 5: General Information

Confidentiality

Information regarding Club Members, paid staff and volunteers, both verbal and written, is often privileged and confidential. Personal information is not to be released without written consent of the individual (or parent/legal guardian if a Club Member) involved.

Grooming and Dress

All volunteer staff should be dressed and groomed in an appropriate manner.

The following guidelines are to be followed at all times:

- No clothing can advertise or have references to tobacco products, drugs, profanity, alcohol, racism, gang affiliation or any other inappropriate image.
- Shorts are permitted, but must be of an appropriate length and cannot be “skintight.”
- All shirts must have sleeves (tank tops, halter tops, etc. are not permitted).
- Shoes appropriate for the workplace must be worn at all times. No “flip-flops” unless appropriate for the activity (i.e. swimming, boating, etc.).
- No hats of any kind should be worn indoors unless for medical reasons or the day has been designated as “Hat Day” for the entire Club.
- No cutoff jeans or sweatpants are to be worn.
- Any visible tattoo’s cannot be related to or endorse tobacco products, drugs, profanity, alcohol, racism, gang activity or any other appropriate image.

Personal appearance should be a matter of concern for each volunteer. If your supervisor feels your attire and/or grooming is out of place, you may be asked to leave your workplace until you are properly attired and/or groomed.

Drug-Free Workplace

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas are a drug-free workplace. The possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs and/or alcohol is prohibited within our workplace environment. All volunteers and staff are prohibited from entering the workplace under the influence of illegal substances and/or alcohol and are required to abide by the policy. All volunteers, staff and consultants are required to inform appropriate supervisors of policy violations. Persons violating this policy will be subjected to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.

Holidays

The following holidays are observed by the Club:

New Year's Eve	Labor Day	Christmas Eve
New Year's Day	Thanksgiving & day after	Christmas Day
Independence Day	Memorial Day	Martin Luther King Day

Clubs may also be closed when schools are closed such as:

Spring Break	Thanksgiving Week	Christmas Week
New Year's Week	Teacher In-service Days	Bad Weather Days

Hours of Operation

Normal Club program hours are generally after school Monday – Friday from either 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. depending on the Club location. During the summer program, Clubs are open Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Accidents/Injuries

All injuries or accidents must be reported to the Unit Director or Program Director at once. Forms are available for accidents or incidents involving members and volunteers.

Media Relations

Written or verbal statements for publications regarding the Club shall be released *only* by the CEO or authorized Unit Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas.

Personal Belongings

The Club cannot be responsible for the loss of personal belongings, nor is it covered by insurance for such loss. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each volunteer to adequately safeguard personal belongings.

Smoking and Tobacco Use

Use of tobacco products is prohibited in Club vehicles and on Club property and while engaging in Club activities. Tobacco use is prohibited in Club parking lots and while volunteers are on breaks. If you must smoke on your break we ask that you do so out of view from the Club and that you remove your volunteer badge.

Telephone Usage

Program phones are restricted to the business of the organization. Volunteers should inform their friends and relatives that they are to restrict personal calls except in the case of emergency. Likewise, volunteers are asked to make calls of a personal nature only when absolutely necessary. Text messaging is also prohibited while volunteering. Cell phone use is not allowed while interacting with Club Members.

Transportation

Volunteer staff are forbidden to transport Club members for Club activities in their personal vehicles.

Work Conditions

The physical working conditions in the Club must comply with legal requirements of safety and sanitation. It is the responsibility of all volunteer staff to immediately report and correct, if possible, hazards which may come to their attention.

Chapter 6: Standards of Conduct

Members of the Club deserve the best possible examples of conduct, decorum and good citizenship. The behavior of volunteers sets an example for our youth to follow. It is expected that all volunteers will conduct themselves in an appropriate manner that reflects the goals and mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas.

The Club tries to keep rules to a minimum. However, a few regulations are always needed to provide clear understanding for all volunteers. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive or to cover every situation. If a volunteer violates any rules established by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas, including the following rules, that person may be subject to discipline up to, and including immediate discharge. Notwithstanding, volunteerism is considered to be at-will and the volunteer may be terminated with or without cause.

Disciplinary action may include the following oral and/or written reprimands, a probationary period or termination:

The following violations are subject to disciplinary action:

- Inappropriate contact with youth
- Unsatisfactory work performance
- Excessive tardiness or absenteeism
- Absence without notice
- Creating or contributing to a disturbance
- Insubordination
- Lying, cheating or stealing
- Use of Club facility and/or equipment without permission
- Malicious damage to Club property
- Illegal conduct of any kind

Volunteer Clubhouse Site Orientation Checklist

During your first visit to the Clubhouse site you are assigned to, following your formal volunteer orientation, we'd like you to make sure that you meet the following folks and are informed of the following Clubhouse practices...

- Meeting with the Unit Director to learn more about the specific Club.
- Introduction to all the Club's Program Coordinators.
- Tour of the Club site.
- Introductions to other volunteers at the Club site.
- Learn where adults use bathrooms at the Club. If adults and kids use the same bathrooms, what is the process for ensuring kid/adult privacy?
- Learn what the most popular activities and programs are at the Club site.
- Become matched up with a specific staff person to shadow them.
- Introduction to all of the Club Members during the daily Club Meeting or after snack.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas

Volunteer Application

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

DRIVER'S LICENSE No.: _____

SIGNATURE _____ **DATE:** _____

Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas will conduct criminal background checks of all employees and volunteers, including minors, who have direct, repetitive contact with children. Name-based or fingerprint based record searches may be used in any combination but shall, at a minimum, (a) verify the person's identity and legal aliases, (b) provide a national Sex Offender Registry search, and (c) provide a national criminal record search. Such checks shall be conducted prior to employment and at regular intervals not to exceed twelve (12) months.

All background check findings shall be considered when making employment or volunteer decisions. It is the policy of Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas that an employee or volunteer will be automatically **ineligible** for volunteer service, if such individual:

- (a) refuses to consent to a criminal background check,
- (b) makes a false statement in connection with such criminal background check,
- (c) is registered, or is required to be registered on a State or National sex offender registry,
- (d) has been convicted of a felony consisting of:
 1. murder,
 2. child abuse,
 3. a crime against children, including child pornography,
 4. spousal abuse,
 5. a crime involving rape or sexual assault,
 6. arson or
 7. physical assault, battery,
- (e) has been convicted of a drug related offense committed within the last five years.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas

I have received a copy of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas Volunteer Handbook and have been afforded the opportunity to ask questions regarding its content. I agree to comply with the organizations policies and procedures detailed in this handbook

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Unit/Program Director Signature

Date

Volunteer's Copy

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Date

Unit/Program Director Signature

Date

Boys & Girls Clubs of Deep East Texas Copy
to be kept in Volunteer's personnel file