



Hunterdon County YMCA Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to the Hunterdon County YMCA!

At the Hunterdon County YMCA, we couldn't serve thousands of children and families if it were not for our dedicated volunteers. Our association was founded in 1903 by a committed group of volunteers, and their spirit lives on, thanks to individuals like you who give gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Our community is better because of you. Thank you.



Bruce B. Black
President & CEO
Hunterdon County YMCA

About the YMCA

The Hunterdon County YMCA is committed to helping people grow in spirit, mind, and body. We are a community service organization founded upon Christian values, which today embraces all faiths, serving individuals regardless of age, race, or economic means. The YMCA is guided by our core principles of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Today, the YMCA delivers programs and services to more than 10,000 residents of Hunterdon County annually. Committed to serving all who wish to participate regardless of their ability to pay, the Hunterdon County YMCA provides scholarships and program subsidies that benefit more than 1,000 low-income youth, families, and individuals each year.

Currently, the YMCA operates two wellness and fitness centers, youth sports, adult fitness, youth and adult aquatics, three day camps, family programs, teen leadership and senior recreation and fitness programs.

The History of the YMCA

The Young Men's Christian Association was founded in London, England, in 1844 to address the deteriorating social conditions of the time. The YMCA offered positive alternatives to street activities. Today, there are YMCAs in more than 120 countries, serving an estimated 45 million people. The 2,686 YMCAs in America serve 10,000 U.S. communities, uniting 21 million children and adults of all ages, races, faiths, backgrounds, abilities and income levels. Our reach and impact can be seen in the millions of lives we touch every year.

Rights & Responsibilities of a YMCA Volunteer

As a YMCA volunteer, you have a right:

- To be treated as a partner and coworker, not as free help.
- To a meaningful assignment, with consideration for your individual interests, skills, and life experience.
- To be kept in the know about the YMCA's programs, policies, and people through frequent communications that may include conversations, meetings, and newsletters.
- To orientation and training for your volunteer position that is thoughtfully planned and effectively presented.
- To continuing education and training, including information about new developments and training for greater responsibility.
- To sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, well informed, patient, and thoughtful, and who has the time to invest.
- To accurate recordkeeping that includes hours of service, recognitions received, and contributions and accomplishments.
- To be treated respectfully and to be given equal consideration for all volunteer assignments, regardless of age, income, disabilities, sex, background, or religion.
- To a variety of experiences through promotion to assignments of more responsibility, through transfer from one assignment to another, and through special assignments.
- To be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, and to have respect shown for an honest opinion.
- To recognition in the form of promotion, awards, and simple day-by-day expressions of appreciation and respect from Y staff.
- To a work environment that is energetic, conducive to work, and fun!

As a YMCA volunteer, you have a responsibility:

- To have at heart the interests of the kids, families, adults, and communities the YMCA serves.
- To understand the YMCA's mission and goals, realizing that the association has accepted your voluntary service and participation in order to achieve those goals.
- To abide by the commitments you make, doing what you say you will, when you say you will.
- To speak up, ask questions and share your ideas, enthusiasm, and concerns.
- To accept supervision, knowing that everyone is accountable to someone: the staff to the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Executive Officer to the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Trustees to the community.
- To offer criticism constructively, seeking to understand before judging.
- To continue to grow and to learn more about the volunteer position and the YMCA.
- To recognize that non-profit does not mean non-competent; both YMCA paid staff members and volunteers have talents and gifts to exchange with each other.
- To treat all people with loving kindness and open communication, regardless of age, income, ability, background, sex, or religion.
- To act as a responsible member of our YMCA family, learning the give and take necessary for the common good.
- To become a voice for the community in the Y and a voice for the Y in the community.
- To seek joy in your volunteer service; having fun is an essential part of volunteering at the YMCA!

At the Y

- **Attendance & Punctuality**

Attendance and punctuality are important factors for your success within our association. We work as a team, and this requires that each person be in the right place at the right time. If you are going to be late or absent for your volunteer position, you must notify your supervisor, ideally at least two hours before the start of the workday.

- **Recording Your Volunteer Time**

The Y values your time! While many of your contributions of talent and enthusiasm are immeasurable, your time can be measured! We use reports of volunteer hours for many purposes, including using them as a means to recognize you for your service and for demonstrating our non-profit status to funders. In order to accurately track your volunteer hours, we need your help. Volunteers are asked to record their hours on a monthly volunteer timesheet. Please speak with your supervisor about where to find your timesheet.

- **Supervision**

Your site supervisor is responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of your work, and will be available for consultation, assistance, and on-going feedback. Please ask any questions of this person, or report any problems or concerns. Should you have additional concerns, please feel welcome to contact the Director of Mission Advancement at any time.

- **Confidentiality**

Protecting our association's confidential information is the responsibility of every employee and volunteer. Volunteers who have access to confidential or proprietary information are prohibited from disclosing that information to others.

- **Dress Code**

Volunteers are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal cleanliness and present a neat, professional appearance at all times while on YMCA property or in YMCA programs. Radical departures from conventional dress or personal grooming and hygiene standards are not permitted. All volunteers are prohibited from wearing extreme or eccentric hairstyles, clothing, or jewelry that does not present a professional appearance. In addition, volunteers must remove facial and other visible body piercings, and may not have visible, offensive tattoos. Volunteer t-shirts are required for most departments. All approved clothing should always be clean and in good repair.

- **Non-Fraternization Policy**

The association strongly believes that an environment where employees maintain clear boundaries between employee and volunteer personal and business interactions is most effective for conducting business. In order to promote the efficient operation of the Hunterdon County YMCA and to avoid any misunderstandings, complaints of favoritism, other problems of supervision, security and morale, supervisors and directors are not permitted to date, engage in romantic relationships or participate in sexual relationships with employees or volunteers who report to them, either directly or indirectly. Due to our policies and applicable law regarding child abuse, at no time shall an adult employee or volunteer engage in more than a platonic friendship with any minor (under the age of 18)

employee, volunteer, member or program participant. Dating, engaging in romantic relationships or participating in sexual relationships with minors is prohibited. Violations may be grounds for immediate dismissal.

- **Out of Program Contact**

The Hunterdon County YMCA forbids contact between program participants and volunteers outside of YMCA programs. Volunteers may not be alone with children they meet in Y programs outside of the Y. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to your home unless one of the following conditions exists:

- You and the child's family or guardians have a relationship that predates your employment or volunteer position at the Y.
- You and the child's family or guardians have a relationship which predates the child's enrollment in a Y program.
- You and the child, or the child's family or guardians are related

If you have a pre-existing relationship with a child who is a participant in a Y program, please speak with your supervisor immediately to complete a signed release form. Outside contact that does not meet one of the above conditions may result in your termination.

- **Parking**

Free parking facilities are available to volunteers at the Deer Path and Round Valley facilities. At Deer Path, we ask that you park within designated areas located in the far left section or in the rear of the lot. At Round Valley, we ask that you park towards the back of the lot or near the Administrative offices leaving the spaces directly in front of the Fitness and Child Learning Centers for our members. The Association is not responsible for loss, damage or theft of your vehicle. Therefore, we suggest that you lock your car doors.

- **Personal Property**

Do not leave your belongings unattended. If you must bring valuables with you, please ask your supervisor where you may store them. The YMCA does not assume any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any personal property.

- **Telephone Calls**

It is important to keep our telephone lines free for member and program participant calls. Although the occasional use of the association's telephones for a personal emergency may be necessary, making and receiving of routine personal calls is discouraged.

Volunteers should consult with a supervisor on days when access to a personal cell phone is needed to manage a home emergency. Flexibility may be provided in circumstances demanding immediate attention. In most cases, volunteers are prohibited from using a personal cell phone while on volunteering and may be required to leave such devices locked in a secure place, except during break times.

- **Photography/Visual Recording**

Volunteers are strictly prohibited from using video recorders, cameras, the camera functions of cell phones or other recording devices for the purpose of taking pictures while on YMCA property or at offsite YMCA programs. Videos, photographs, or any other visual recordings of YMCA facilities, programs, members, employees, volunteers or program

participants may not be used by staff for personal purposes. The use of a digital recording device or camera for inappropriate activities may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- **Babysitting Benefit**

Volunteers who volunteer in the Deer Path or Round Valley facilities are entitled to use our babysitting service for their children (age 8 weeks+) while volunteering in those facilities for a maximum of 3 hours per day. This service is available according to space availability and the babysitting schedule. The babysitting hours of operation can be found on our website at www.hcymca.com or in the program guide.

- **Membership & Program Fees**

The YMCA does not offer free memberships to volunteers. Volunteers may not trade their time for free or reduced cost in program participation. Financial assistance is available for those who may find it difficult to pay the standard membership and program fees. Applications are available at the welcome center or online at hcymca.org. Volunteers and staff raise funds each year through our Annual Campaign to make this subsidy possible.

- **Harassment**

All individuals at the Y 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 that you have experienced or witnessed harassment, you are to immediately notify your supervisor or any manager of the organization.

- **Complaints**

If you have a complaint or problem at the Y, in most circumstances, the best course of action is to discuss the matter with your immediate supervisor. If your supervisor is unable to resolve the matter to your satisfaction, or you feel uncomfortable speaking with your supervisor, you should contact the Director of Mission Advancement or the Human Resources Director.

Safety

- **Criminal Background Checks**

- **Authorization**

Criminal Background Checks will be conducted on all adult program and policy volunteers, or returning volunteers who have been separated from the association for 90 days or more. The YMCA reserves the right to order additional background check reports on you at any time during your volunteer stay without obtaining additional consent, where permissible by law.

- **Reporting Agencies**

Criminal background checks may be conducted through an outside reporting agency or state or local law enforcement agencies. If the services of an outside reporting agency as defined by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) are utilized, the YMCA will comply with the provisions of the FCRA regarding usage of information uncovered and notification procedures.

- Criminal History Uncovered

The admission or discovery of any pending charges or prior criminal convictions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- **Arrest Policy**

It is HYMCA's policy to ensure the safety of all persons who do business with the association including employees, volunteers, clients, vendors, and contractors. The association must also protect its reputation in the community. To further these goals, the association has adopted this policy to handle incidents where a volunteer is arrested or becomes involved in a criminal matter. Any action taken with regard to the volunteer will be based strictly on the situation and the potential impact to the association's operations and standing in the community.

- Procedure

Volunteers who are arrested or subject to an investigation that may lead to a criminal charge or indictment are required to report immediately to the Director of Human Resources. The report of the arrest or conviction should be made in writing and include the exact charge or conviction, the location or court and the date of the arrest or conviction.

- Definition of "Criminal Offense"

A criminal offense is defined as any crime or charge which is a violation, misdemeanor, or felony under local, state or federal law. A criminal offense shall not include minor traffic violations.

- Investigation

When a volunteer has been arrested or becomes the subject of a criminal investigation, the Director of Human Resources will meet with the volunteer to discuss the particular circumstances. In determining whether the circumstances warrant a volunteer's suspension, transfer to another position or action up to and including termination, the association will consider the nature and gravity of the alleged offense(s) and how the charges may be perceived by the community. Given the nature of the situation, the affected volunteer has the right to refuse to meet with the Human Resources Director. However, if the volunteer refuses to meet, then the Human Resources Director will make a determination on the proper course of action without the volunteer's input. Volunteers who fail to disclose the fact that they were arrested or targeted in a criminal investigation will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. It is the obligation of the volunteer to notify the Association of the final disposition of the matter. Upon receipt of the dispositive information, the Association will review the situation to determine whether further action is warranted.

- **Drug Free & Smoke Free Workplace**

The Y is committed to maintaining an alcohol, smoke, and drug-free environment. This is particularly important since many employees and volunteers are responsible for the safety

and welfare of children and youth. Therefore, the Y 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 an employee or volunteer while on YMCA premises, during work hours or while conducting YMCA business. In addition, smoking is not permitted in the Deer Path or Round Valley facilities or at any other program site during program hours.

- **Workplace Violence**

Violence by an employee or anyone else against an employee, supervisor, volunteer, or member of the association or program participant will not be tolerated. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the potential risk of personal injuries to employees and volunteers at the Y and to reduce the possibility of damage of association property. If you receive or overhear any threatening communications from an employee or outside third party, report it to your supervisor at once. Do not engage in either physical or verbal confrontation with a potentially violent individual. If you encounter an individual who is threatening immediate harm to an employee, volunteer, or visitor to our premises, contact an emergency agency (such as 911) immediately. All reports of work-related threats will be kept confidential to the extent possible, investigated and documented. Volunteers are required to report and participate in an investigation of any suspected or actual cases of workplace violence. Your failure to report or fully cooperate in the association's investigation could result in disciplinary action, including discharge from service.

- **Bloodborne Pathogens**

The Y seeks to minimize the risk of exposure by periodically training individuals who may encounter bloodborne pathogens in the course of their volunteer assignment. The Y 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 personal protective equipment when necessary. Please see your supervisor for further information on procedures used in your particular area/assignment.

- **Child Abuse Prevention**

Because of its concern for the welfare of children and youth, the Y has developed policies, standards, guidelines, and training to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse. 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. This is also why volunteers are screened, and undergo criminal background checks upon engagement or reengagement of volunteering at the Y. The Y also provides a mandatory training in recognizing, reporting, and preventing child abuse.



Receipt of Volunteer Handbook

I hereby acknowledge the following:

- I have received a copy of the Hunterdon County YMCA volunteer handbook, and I understand that I am responsible for reading and understanding the policies and practices described within it.
- I understand that the policies and benefits contained in this volunteer handbook are guidelines and may be added to, deleted or changed by the Association at any time.
- If I have questions regarding the content or interpretation of this handbook, I will bring them to the attention of my supervisor or the Director of Mission Advancement.
- I understand and agree that I will read and comply with the policies and information contained in this handbook and that my role as a volunteer is contingent on my following these policies.

Print Volunteer Name

Volunteer Signature

Date

Parent or Guardian Name (if under age 18)

Parent or Guardian signature

Date