

New Volunteer Orientation



"The Price of Freedom is Seen Here"

Expectations

- Our program requires 100 hours minimum commitment. If you cannot make this commitment, please STOP now and call or email us to talk about short-term needs.
- Talk to us if:
 - Your personal/work schedule changes and you need to change your assignment schedule.
 - You aren't enjoying your assignment. We are happy to try to find something different.
- Follow the rules! Note most of what you'll find here are health care rules, which are designed for patient safety.

VA Structure

**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

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graph TD; DVA[Department of Veterans Affairs] --- VBA[Veterans Benefits Administration]; DVA --- VHA[Veterans Health Administration]; DVA --- NCA([National Cemetery Administration]);
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Veterans
Benefits
Administration

Veterans
Health
Administration

National
Cemetery
Administration

"The Price of Freedom is Visible Here"

Louis A. Johnson VAMC Leadership

- Dr. Glenn R. Snider Jr., Medical Center Director
- Terry Massey, Associate Director
- Dr. Pramoda Devabhaktuni, Chief of Staff
- Paul Carter, Associate Director, Patient Care Services

Voluntary Service Staff

- Wesley R. Walls, Chief, Public Affairs and Community Relations
- Kasie McIntyre, Voluntary Service Specialist
- Krieg Pruett, Program Support Assistant

What does VA Voluntary Service Do?

- Recruiting, orienting and placing volunteers within the VA.
- Handles Volunteer human resource issues.
- Ensures Volunteer hours are logged into a timekeeping system.
- Coordinates group visits to inpatients.
- Hosts award ceremonies for active Volunteers.
- Accepts and records donations that directly benefit the Veteran patients and families.

Types of Volunteers

- Volunteers accepted into the VAVS Program are considered Without Compensation (WOC) employees. WOC precludes monetary payment or any form of compensation by VA not authorized by policy
- Regularly Scheduled Volunteers
- Occasional Volunteers
- Youth Volunteers (12-18)

Benefits of VA Volunteering

- An \$8.00 meal is provided when volunteering four or more hours a day when and where available
- Tax free shopping at the Canteen Service
- Free flu shots, screenings and other benefits as announced.
- Free use of medical library
- Personal satisfaction from serving those who served
- Free on-site training opportunities
- Social interaction with Veterans and other Volunteers
- Recognition and award opportunities
- Annual Volunteer Banquet includes:
meal/award/entertainment

Volunteer Assignments

- Many Volunteer assignments are available based on interests and the needs of the medical center.
- Factors such as age, background check results and driving record may be disqualifiers for some assignments.
- We work hard to find assignments to fit your interests and our needs.

Happy Volunteers keep volunteering!

Tracking Hours

- Volunteers must sign-in before their tour on the Voluntary Service computer kiosk to record their hours.
- If you volunteer for four (4) hours or more, your meal ticket will print.
- If you cannot sign in or receive a meal ticket, please contact Voluntary Service at Ext: 7621.

Timekeeping Reminders

- There is only a sign-in, not a sign-out.
- Estimate your service, rounding up your hours to the next whole hour.
- If your estimate differs from actual, please inform Voluntary Service Ext: 7621.
- Your Volunteer hours are tracked for awards/recognition and also to quantify the value of volunteer contributions. You must always sign in.
- If you are a member of more than one organization, please specify/select the organization to receive credit.

Parking

- You may utilize the complimentary valet parking. Be mindful tips are not accepted by valet staff.
- You may also obtain a Centra Bus Pass, free of charge, for VA use only and park at the Armory. Please see a Voluntary Service staff member for a pass.

Meals

- Meals are available for volunteers at the VA Medical Center who volunteer four (4) or more hours a day.
- You must sign in at the kiosk to receive your ticket.
- Ticket must be presented to the cashier in the café upon check –out.
- Meal tickets are good for up to \$8.00 at the Canteen or the coffee shop. No change will be given and it is the responsibility of the Volunteer to pay the overage.
- Meal tickets can only be used for food and are good for one use only.

Background Investigations

- Background investigations are performed on all adult Volunteers.
- Volunteers under the age of 18 will not have background investigations performed.
- Results are reviewed case by case.

Volunteer ID Cards

- Approved Volunteers have ID cards issued by the PIV office once your background has cleared.
- Volunteer ID's must be worn at all times while volunteering at the VA Medical Center.
- ID badges must not be worn when off duty.
- ID badges are the property of the US Government. You must return your badge to Voluntary Service if you stop volunteering or upon request.

Infection Control

- Infection Control practices include:
- Sneezing or coughing into a tissue or upper sleeve, rather than into your hands, discard the tissue into the wastebasket and then wash your hands.
- Avoiding patient contact when you have a respiratory infection or cold.
- Stay home when you have symptoms such as vomiting, fever, skin rash, the flu or any other symptoms.
- Keeping appropriate vaccinations current (influenza, tetanus, etc.)

Hand Hygiene

- Hand hygiene is the most effective way to prevent the spread of germs and infections.
- Handwashing techniques include;
- Wet Hands
- Apply Soap
- Work up a lather for 15 seconds
- Rinse hands
- Dry hands with paper towel
- Turn off water faucet with paper towel

Hand Hygiene

- You must wash your hands:
- Before and after work shifts
- Before and after each contact with a patient or objects used by the patient (i.e. wheelchairs)
- Before eating, drinking or handling food
- After restroom use, smoking, eating, grooming, touching face, hair and money

Hand Hygiene

- Alcohol sanitizers are effective and may be used instead of soap and water unless your hands are dirty or contaminated.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers are located outside of each inpatient area and room as well as other common locations.

Isolation Precaution

- Isolation precaution prevents the spread of infection among patients, hospital personnel, volunteers and visitors.
- Volunteers will not enter any patient's room marked with a precaution sign. Ask nursing staff for assistance if you have any questions.

Confidentiality and Privacy

- What is Patient Confidentiality?
 - The obligation of others to keep an individual's personal information protected, disclosing it only within the bounds of professional and legal standard.

Confidentiality and Privacy

- What is Patient Privacy?
 - Freedom from unjustified intrusion into one's personal life

What is the Difference? Looking into records without a “need to know” is a privacy violation. Sharing protected information, whether or not you have a need to know it, is a confidentiality violation.

What are your responsibilities?

- “Volunteers, as WOC employees, are subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a and 38 U.S.C. Sections 5701/7332) and all VA regulations implementing that statute. Accordingly, volunteers must assist VA staff in safeguarding the privacy of patient information accessed during the course of their duties at the VA facility. Volunteers are not exempt from prosecution or fine in the case of an unlawful release of patient information”. – VHA Handbook Section 7a
- Unauthorized request for or release of confidential patient information is considered a misdemeanor and subject to up to \$5,000 fine.

What are Your Responsibilities?

- As a VA Volunteer, you are required to protect information from release and to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and security of health information.
- If you accidentally obtain confidential information, do not release, return to sender.
- If you have a volunteer assignment requiring computer access, you are agreeing and accepting the responsibility of protecting VA information when you are to the Rules of Behavior.
- If you see a security breach (unauthorized use, suspect, fraud or see/find PHI) report it immediately to the Privacy Officer.

Cameras, Video Equipment, etc.

- Patient privacy includes the right to not be photographed without consent. Please respect our Veteran's privacy by refraining from taking any pictures.
- Public Affairs and Community Relations staff have forms to be filled out by a Veteran giving their authorization to be photographed. Photographs of Veterans are never to be taken unless these forms are signed.

Patient Abuse

- Patient abuse or neglect is any action or failure to act which causes unreasonable suffering or harm to the patient.
- It is the policy of the VA no patient is to be mistreated or abused in any way: physically, psychologically, sexually or verbally by any employee, volunteer, student or visitor.
- Volunteers who witness any kind of abuse toward a patient must promptly report it to their immediate supervisor or the VAVS staff and be prepared to write a statement.

Doing What's Right

- Be respectful to everyone you work with including patients, co-workers, supervisors, staff members and affiliates.
- Provide constructive feedback sensitively; be empathetic.
- Compose yourself professionally.
- Be reliable. Keep your word with your assignments.
- Contribute your best to enhance and maintain the integrity of the VA.
- Demonstrate courteous, warm and kind behaviors in every interaction
- Use appropriate language and avoid vulgar behavior.

Politics, Religion and Money

- Because VA facilities are voter registration stations, no material (including clothing) can be brought into the facility by VA staff/volunteers promoting a party or candidate.
- Only VA Chaplains can provide spiritual guidance.
- Volunteers cannot engage in any financial transaction with a Veteran patient to include sales, loans, gifts, check cashing and money handling. Gratuities are prohibited.
- **Only VA Voluntary Service can accept donations.**
- If you see a compliance issue, inform Voluntary Service or our Compliance Officer.

What is Sexual Harassment?

- Sexually-oriented verbal kidding, teasing or jokes.
- Repeated sexual flirtations, advances or propositions.
- Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature.
- Graphic or degrading comments about an individual or the individual's appearance.
- Display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity.
- Unwanted physical contact such as patting, hugging, pinching or bruising against another's body.

What To Do If You Experience Sexual Harassment

- Tell the person the behavior is unwanted, unwelcomed or unsolicited and to stop.
- Keep a record
- Ask co-workers if they observed the behavior
- Contact supervisor or Voluntary Service staff immediately.

Facility Safety

- Weapons and alcohol of any kind are prohibited on VA property
- Wear appropriate clothing and shoes
- This is a non-smoking facility ~ smoking is restricted to designated areas
- For safety reasons, food prepared in a private home may not be given to patients
- Only food prepared by a commercial licensed/inspected food establishment may be received and served to groups
- Report all injuries to your supervisor, no matter how small

Suspicious Bags or Boxes

- Is the bag or box unattended?
- Do you see an unknown substance?
- Do you smell a strange odor?
- Do not touch the bag
- Call VA Police Department, Dial 911 from VA phone
- Keep your eyes in the bag until police arrive to ensure no one takes it by mistake

Hazardous Material

- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) developed the Hazard Communication Standard (also known as the Right-To-Know standard) to protect workers from chemical hazards. As a volunteer, you won't be required to handle any hazardous materials.
- DO NOT handle needles, syringes or other sharps. Request Nursing or other technical personnel to dispose of such equipment.
- DO NOT attempt to clean up any spills, vomitus or expectoration. Contact Environmental Management Service (EMS) to decontaminate the area.

Fire Equipment

- Fire alarm systems in the hallways
- Sprinkler systems in the buildings
- Fire extinguisher throughout the facility

Responding to a Fire ~ RACE

- Rescue ~ Get patients and those unable to escape fire, clear of danger
- Alarm ~ Pull fire alarm or call 911
- Confine ~ Close doors to inhibit spread of fire
- Extinguish and Evacuate ~ In the case of small, isolated fires, extinguish IF you are able. In case of large fires, evacuate yourself and those unable to evacuate themselves.

Fire Extinguishers

- When using fire extinguishers ~ PASS
- Pull the pin
- Aim the nozzle at the base of the flames
- Squeeze the handle
- Sweep the extinguisher back and forth across the fire until the fire is extinguished

Backup Power

- Disruption of Utility Systems: The Medical Centers are on back-up generators. DO NOT use the elevators during periods of sporadic power outages, in the event of a fire, or any other occurrence which may cause you to be trapped in the elevator.

Mobility Issues

- When assisting Veteran patients, communication is key
- Always ask if they need or want assistance with mobility or pushing a wheelchair before lending assistance
- Do not attempt to assist the Veteran once they have indicated they do not want or need assistance

Dress Code

- Clothing with offensive or potentially inflammatory messages are not permitted
- Open-toed shoes are not appropriate
- You are a reflection of the VA staff, dress appropriately.

Code of Conduct

- Professional boundaries must be maintained between staff (including volunteers and patients).
- No money transactions of any kind can be done between Volunteers, Employees and Veterans. This includes tips, donations, payment of meals, canteen transactions, gift, etc.
- Voluntary Services cannot be used to promote an agenda from a religious, social or personal area to include politics, membership of private organizations or fundraising.

Thank You

- On behalf of the 22,000 Veterans served annually by the Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center, we thank you for your interest in serving those who served. Without volunteers like you, we would be unable to provide the exceptional level of care our Veterans deserve.
- Please return to the home page to complete the application packet.
- E-mail any questions to: vhaclavolunteer@va.gov
- Mail completed packet to:

Voluntary Service 00-P
One Medical Center Drive
Clarksburg, WV 26301

Or Drop off at the Voluntary Service office