

## **AGENCY VOLUNTEER ETHICAL STANDARDS**

The Agency's ethical standards are founded on our commitment to upholding individual worth, dignity, and rights. MWVCAA expects all volunteers to engage in ethical practices in their activities for MWVCAA and the people we serve. The principals outlined below provide guidance to volunteers on how to make sound ethical decisions:

- (A) Volunteers must always maintain professional boundaries with clients.
- (B) Volunteers must maintain and respect the individual rights and personal dignity of all clients by engaging in volunteer activities in a non-discriminatory manner.
- (C) Volunteers must abide by the Confidentiality policy and all program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other volunteers and staff members.
- (D) Volunteers must be aware of their influential position with respect to clients and must never exploit that position, trust, or dependency for private gain.
- (E) Volunteers may not solicit or accept personal gratuities, favors, or anything of significant monetary value from clients or potential clients and may not give gifts to clients. If a client wishes to provide monetary compensation to MWVCAA, the client may make a donation to the Agency.
- (F) Volunteers must avoid relationships with clients that could result in physical, emotional, psychological, financial, social, or any other harm to the client or that would interfere with the exercise of sound professional judgment by the volunteer or client. If a client behaves inappropriately towards a volunteer (i.e. seductive, hostile, dependent, etc.), the volunteer should consult a staff member immediately.
- (G) Volunteers must respect and promote the unique identity of each client and refrain from stereotyping a client on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.
- (H) Volunteers must ensure that no child will be left alone or unsupervised while under their care.
- (I) Volunteers must use positive methods of guidance and must never engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, humiliation, a denial of basic needs, isolation or the use of food as punishment or reward.

The guidelines above do not address every possible ethically challenging situation. Therefore, volunteers are also encouraged to seek advice and counsel from a staff member whenever such situations arise.

## **VIOLENCE POLICY**

The Agency holds in high regard the safety, welfare, and health of our volunteers.

Therefore, the Agency has a policy of zero tolerance for violence. If volunteers display any violence on our premises or threaten violence in our premises, they will be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal from volunteer service. No talk of violence or joking about violence will be tolerated. Threats, threatening behavior, acts of violence, or intimidation against other volunteers, staff members, visitors, or other individuals will not be tolerated by anyone on Agency property.

Weapons are prohibited on Agency property (including parking lots). The Agency reserves the right to inspect all packages, lockers, automobiles, and other items on Agency property. No obscene, racially or ethnically derogatory, or violence-oriented material is allowed on Agency property.

The Agency defines “violence” to include physically harming another, shoving, pushing, harassment, intimidation, coercion, brandishing weapons, and threats or talk of violence. Volunteers found guilty of acts or threats of violence will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination of volunteer services.

Volunteers are required to promptly report any violent incident, whether or not physical injury has occurred. All reports will be investigated immediately and kept confidential, except when there is a legitimate need to know.

#### **POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT**

MWVCAA is committed to providing a work environment free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, the Agency maintains a strict policy prohibiting unlawful harassment in any form (verbal, physical, visual, etc.).

Harassment is prohibited behavior that is unwelcome and personally offensive, weakens morale, and therefore interferes with workplace effectiveness. Such conduct is prohibited when it affects either an individual’s performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Any conduct that could reasonably be viewed as harassment of our clients, vendors, suppliers, or other business visitors by our volunteers is also prohibited.

No volunteer should engage in or be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome conduct in any form if the conduct is based on the person’s sex, race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, religion, disability, service in a uniformed service, veteran status, expunged juvenile record, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law (“Protected Classes”). Conduct which may be considered a violation of this policy includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual assault;
- Unwanted sexual advances;
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- Visual conduct, including leering and making sexual gestures;

- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters;
- Displaying objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters that are degrading to members of a Protected Class;
- Verbal conduct, such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes about a Protected Class;
- Wearing visible insignia supporting racist organizations;
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual;
- Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations; and/or
- Inappropriate physical conduct, including touching, assaulting, impeding, or blocking movements.

In addition, no one may imply or threaten that a volunteer's "cooperation" or refusal of a sexual nature, or toleration of Protected Class discrimination, will have any effect on the volunteer's assignment, advancement, or any other condition of volunteer service. Any such action will bring prompt and certain disciplinary action, including possible termination.

If a volunteer believes they have been harassed by a person they come in contact with during volunteer service, they should promptly report the facts of the incident(s) and the name of the individual(s) involved directly to a supervisor. If, for any reason, a volunteer feels uncomfortable reporting to his or her supervisor, they should promptly contact the Human Resources department.

Complaints of harassment will be investigated appropriately, as determined by the Agency, consistent with the nature of the complaint. Information about the complaint will be kept as confidential as possible under the circumstances required to complete the investigation and implement any corrective action. Prompt and appropriate action will be taken based on the results of the investigation.

Retaliation of any kind directed against a volunteer who reports harassment in good faith or speaks as a witness in a harassment investigation is absolutely prohibited. Retaliation is broadly construed to include, but is not limited to, the "cold shoulder," change of duties or assignments, undesirable tasks, reduction of pay, etc. Reports of retaliation should be made to Human Resources.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

The purpose of this policy is to establish rules pertaining to volunteer conduct. Corrective action for conduct infractions may include oral warnings, written warnings, suspension, or immediate termination of volunteer services at the discretion of the Agency. Volunteers will generally be given the opportunity to correct their behavior before discharge occurs, but the Agency reserves the right to terminate volunteer services upon the first infraction depending on the circumstances of the situation.

Factors to be considered are: gravity, type, number, and frequency of offenses. For serious offenses such as fighting, theft, gross safety violations, insubordination, threats of violence, the sale, possession, or use of drugs or alcohol on MWVCAA property, sexual harassment, etc., termination may be the first and only corrective action taken. Any step or steps of the corrective action process may be skipped at the discretion of the Agency after investigation and analysis of the total situation, past practices, and circumstances.

### **Unacceptable Behavior**

The following is a list of behaviors that MWVCAA considers unacceptable. Any volunteer found engaging in these behaviors will be subject to corrective action.

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to: knowingly falsifying or authorizing the improper altering of any Agency document; habitual tardiness; unexcused absence; conduct that violates the Agency's policies against harassment or violence; intentionally or maliciously preventing others from completing their responsibilities; failure to adhere to any of MWVCAA's Ethical Standards; violations of MWVCAA policies; imperiling the safety of others; knowingly making false statements about a third person with the purpose or intent of harming that person; possession or consumption of controlled substances; using MWVCAA funds to purchase alcohol; reporting for volunteer service in an intoxicated or impaired condition; fighting; dishonesty of any type; removal of another volunteer or staff member's property or MWVCAA property without permission; willful destruction of property; insubordination (the refusal to obey any reasonable order given by a volunteer's supervisor, a staff member, or any member of the management team); intentional misrepresentation in seeking volunteer opportunities; neglecting or abusing MWVCAA equipment or tools; and unauthorized use of MWVCAA property.

MWVCAA reserves the right to determine, at its discretion, what conduct is considered impermissible. The Agency will determine what the facts are, whether corrective action is warranted, how serious the infraction is, and what level of corrective action is appropriate. Notwithstanding all of the above and other oral or written statements, volunteer service may be terminated at the Agency's discretion. The above list merely provides examples of some of the types of conduct that may cause the Agency to exercise this right.

- ☐ I have received and read the agency volunteer conduct policies. I understand that violation of agency conduct policies may result in discontinuation of my volunteer activities with Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action programs.

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Volunteer (print)

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Date

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Volunteer Signature