



Volunteer Handbook



Winnipeg Regional Health Authority Office régional de la santé de Winnipeg

The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority acknowledges that it provides health services in facilities located in Treaty One and Treaty Five territories, the homelands of the Métis Nation and the original lands of the Inuit people. The WRHA respects and acknowledges harms and mistakes, and we dedicate ourselves to collaborate in partnership with First Nation, Métis and Inuit people in the spirit of reconciliation.



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“The best way to find
yourself, is to lose yourself
in the service of others.”

Ghandi

WELCOME

Volunteers play an important role in supporting the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's (WRHA) values of meaningful community participation and improved health and well being of individuals, families and communities. WRHA volunteers support a wide range of health programs and services, which vary from direct client service to community and staff support. Whether you work directly with people receiving health services or contribute your time and talents in other areas, you are part of the health care team who are working to deliver and strengthen health services in Winnipeg. By volunteering with the WRHA, you can make a real difference.

WRHA Volunteer Services and Its Volunteers

- Complement and enhance the provision of health services
- Provide opportunities for citizen participation
- Encourage public involvement and awareness of WRHA services
- Support communication between the WRHA and Winnipeg residents
- Support community development
- Support collaborative community action by both the community at large and individual citizens
- Bring new ideas, skills, insights, energy and fresh perspectives

WRHA values compassion, trust and exceptional service. Staff and volunteers are proud of their work and are recognized, respected and rewarded. The staff of WRHA Volunteer Services is committed to providing you with the support you require for a rewarding volunteer experience.

You may have chosen the WRHA for a variety of reasons - to help others and strengthen your community, to explore a career in healthcare or to meet new people. Whatever your motivations, our aim is to meet the needs of the people who receive health services from the WRHA and its staff while helping you fulfill your personal goals.



WRHA MISSION, VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mission

To coordinate and deliver quality, caring services that promote health and well-being.

Vision

Healthy people. Vibrant Communities. Equitable Care for All.

Values

Dignity – as a reflection of the self-worth of every person

Care – as an unwavering expectation of every person

Respect – as a measure of the importance of every person

Equity – promote conditions in which every person can achieve their full health potential

Accountability – as being held responsible for the decisions we make



WRHA Volunteer Services' Role Statement

In meeting WRHA's mission and vision, WRHA Volunteer Services will, through meaningful public engagement, develop effective partnerships, mobilize appropriate volunteer and community resources, support a positive working environment and enhance the WRHA's capacity to support and deliver quality services.

WRHA Volunteer Services' Guiding Principles

- Volunteers will assist WRHA staff in providing quality services to clients and communities by sharing their skills and talents.
- Volunteer engagement at the WRHA supports meaningful public participation.
- The WRHA Volunteer Program works collaboratively and cooperatively with staff, volunteers and other organizations, thus ensuring that services are not duplicated.
- The WRHA is committed to building capacity in communities and achieving service excellence.
- Volunteering is a learning experience for both the volunteer and WRHA staff.



DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES IN WINNIPEG

The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) co-ordinates and delivers health services and promotes well-being within the Winnipeg and Churchill geographical areas.

WRHA encompasses many health services, facilities and programs including: three acute care hospitals, three community hospitals, five health centres, 38 personal care homes, 10 community health offices and a variety of community health agencies. Health services include long term care, public health, primary care, home care, palliative care, mental health, and acute care.

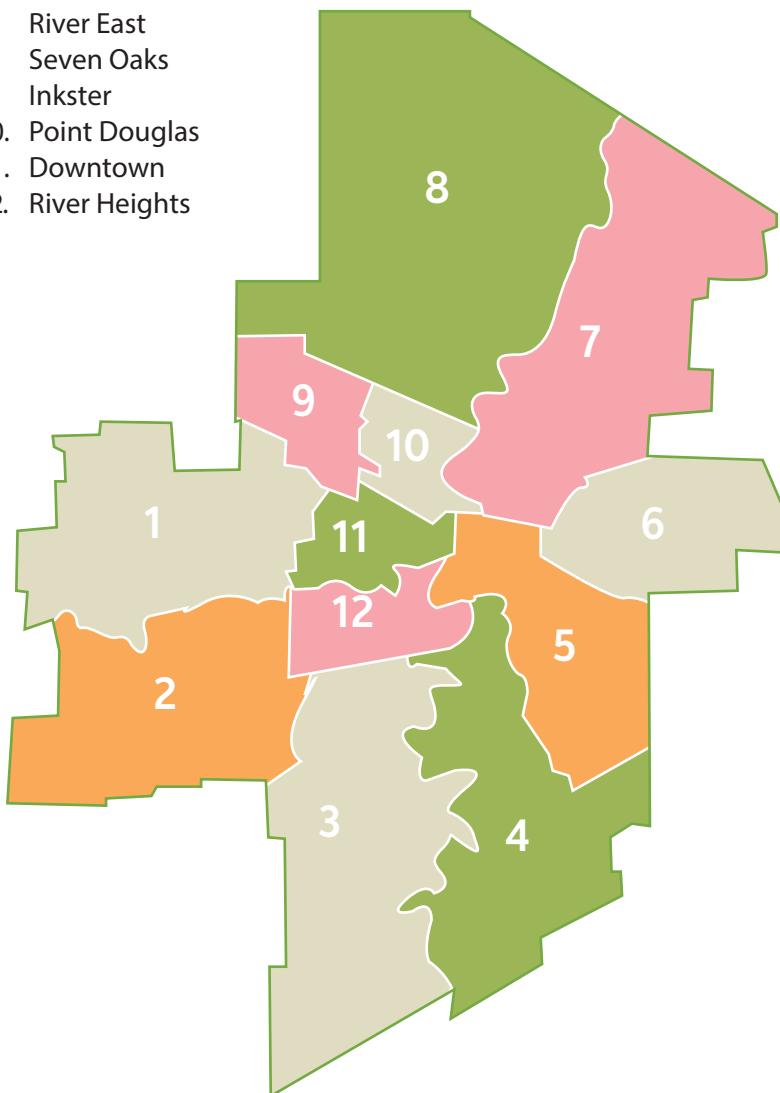
In relation to community health services, the WRHA divides the Winnipeg Health Region into 12 community areas. The purpose of dividing the region into 12 community areas is to aid in the delivery of community health services by bringing services closer to the citizens of Winnipeg. Through the Community Health Assessment process (a means of gathering on-going data about the Winnipeg Health Region) the WRHA is able to determine which health services best meet the needs of the people in a particular community area.

For more information about the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, visit our website at www.wrha.mb.ca. We can also be reached at 204-926-7000.



Map of Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's Community Areas

1. St. James – Assiniboia
2. Assiniboine South
3. Fort Garry
4. St. Vital
5. St. Boniface
6. Transcona
7. River East
8. Seven Oaks
9. Inkster
10. Point Douglas
11. Downtown
12. River Heights



WRHA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community development strengthens the connections and relationships between individuals and with organizations that will result in an increased capacity within communities to work towards common goals. It is about encouraging community and public participation, focusing on creating healthier communities, and understanding that the social determinants of health have health impacts on individual and population health. Community development is an approach to support health and well-being that can integrate with and complement health service delivery.

Volunteers play an important role in supporting the WRHA's values of meaningful community participation and improved health and well being of individuals, families and communities. Your involvement as a WRHA volunteer strengthens and builds a healthier community!

For more information on Community Development please visit our website at: <https://wrha.mb.ca/community-development/>



UNDERSTANDING POPULATION HEALTH

When volunteering in healthcare and community health settings you gain an understanding that health is much more than illness and disease. There are many factors that impact our health and wellbeing. The determinants of health are the broad range of social, economic and environmental factors that determine individual and population health. They include the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.

The Public Health Agency of Canada has identified the following determinants:

- Income and Social Status
- Social Support Networks
- Education & Literacy
- Employment & Working Conditions
- Social Environments
- Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills
- Biology & Genetic Endowment
- Physical Environments
- Healthy Child Development
- Health Services
- Gender
- Culture

The WRHA recognizes the importance of the determinants of health and partners with organizations and communities to promote conditions in which every person can achieve their full health potential.



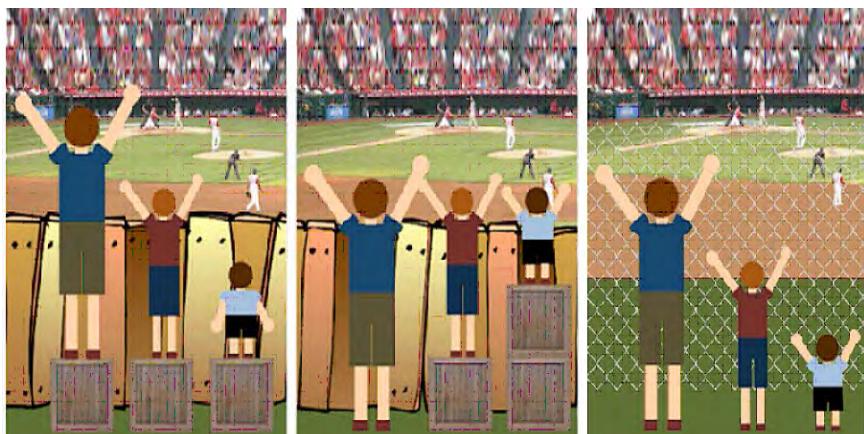
Health Equity

In Winnipeg we have large, preventable differences in health outcomes between populations and neighborhoods. Some populations experience a disproportionate burden of poor health. These populations include Indigenous peoples, newcomers and refugees, visible minorities, people living in poverty, persons with disabilities and people experiencing long-term unemployment, homelessness or other types of economic and social marginalization.

The WRHA has made a commitment to promote health equity and reduce the differences in health outcomes.

What is health equity? Health equity means that all people achieve their best possible health and should not be disadvantaged from attaining it because of social and economic status, social class, racism, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other socially determined circumstance.

For more information on Health Equity please visit our website at:
<https://wrha.mb.ca/health-equity/>



This graphic illustrates the difference between equality and equity. The first picture shows offering the **same** services to everyone regardless of needs. The second picture shows how services are offered **differently** to meet needs. The third diagram describes removing systemic barriers. The Manitoba Accessibility Legislation highlights how and when barriers are removed, we can improve customer service delivery for everyone.

Indigenous Health

As of 2011, Manitoba had an Aboriginal* population of over 195,000 people, representing 16.7 per cent of all Manitobans. Winnipeg has the largest population of Aboriginal people in Canada with over 72,000 Aboriginal people residing within the city and making up 11 per cent of the city's population. (NHS, 2011)

*Aboriginal as used in the National Household Survey is defined under the Constitution Act as First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples

In Canada, Indigenous peoples disproportionately experience disparities related to the social determinants of health. A key to addressing disparities such as these is to ensure universal coverage of adequate health services and related programs. Addressing gaps in the health-care system is necessary to ensure that appropriate coverage is achieved.

Social determinants of health in an Indigenous context are often related to underlying causes of illness and disease, such as poverty, substandard housing, and barriers to education.

For more information on Indigenous Health please visit our website at:
<https://wrha.mb.ca/indigenous-health/>

Cultural Safety

The Winnipeg Health Region is working to become a culturally competent organization and achieving cultural safety. Cultural safety means providing services that show respect for culture and identity, incorporate a person's needs and rights, and are free of discrimination. It requires us to examine our history, policies and processes that create power imbalances and health inequities. Volunteers and healthcare providers are encouraged to use self-reflection while working to rebuild trust in our healthcare system.

Language that Promotes Equity and Dignity

Language is important. It can stigmatize or it can open safe spaces for communication. When volunteering, consider how your language demonstrates respect for the people about/to whom we are speaking. Try avoiding terms that define people rather than describing their circumstances. For example, "people who use drugs" or "people with disabilities" are more respectful terms than "drug users" or "disabled people". Inclusive language requires careful listening to hear the terms people use to describe themselves.

For more information on Language that Promotes Equity and Dignity please visit our website: <https://wrha.mb.ca/files/health-equity-wrha-language-suggestions.pdf>

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Placement Supervisors

Your placement supervisor is the staff person who provides you with guidance and support while you are volunteering with the WRHA. They are also responsible for:

1. Assisting with interviewing and screening prospective volunteers for the placement(s) they supervise in conjunction with Volunteer Services, where required.
2. Providing you with training, orientation, guidance and supervision in your specific placement.
3. Ensuring that you have a position description for your placement.
4. Explaining the purpose of your volunteer work and how it fits into a program or service.
5. Showing you the workspace and where to find things.
6. Introducing you to staff, fellow volunteers and persons receiving health services as appropriate.
7. Answering any questions you might have about your placement responsibilities.
8. Scheduling your shifts. It is important to notify the placement supervisor of your schedule changes.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

In addition to performing the duties outlined in the assignment description you received, you also have the following responsibilities:

1. By thoroughly reading the Volunteer Handbook, become acquainted with, and abide by the policies and procedures of the WRHA and Volunteer Services.
2. Accept guidance and direction from your placement supervisor and seek assistance from staff in any situation you are unsure of.
3. If you are asked to do anything that is not included in your duties please inform the placement supervisor that, although you would like to help, their request is not a volunteer responsibility. If they persist, suggest that they call the Manager of Volunteer Services for clarification.
4. Be reliable, committed, and mature in attitude. Fulfill your volunteer commitment as agreed upon.
5. Be well groomed at all times and comply with dress code.
6. Be a goodwill ambassador. Present a positive image of the WRHA and Volunteer Services at all times through your courteousness, co-operation, sensitivity, pleasantness and caring demeanour.
7. Be sensitive to the needs of people receiving care and their families.
8. Abide and respect WRHA policies regarding the *Personal Health Information Act* (PHIA) and the *Pledge of Confidentiality* at all times.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW WHILE VOLUNTEERING

Recording Volunteer Hours of Service

Volunteers must report their hours of service. If you have access to a computer you will be requested to post your hours using the Volunteer Information Centre (Vic Net) through the WRHA website. Log onto www.wrha.mb.ca and go to the "Volunteer's Area" in the Volunteer Services' section of the website. You will need a user name and password to access Vic Net, which will be given to you at orientation.

If you do not have access to the Internet, you will be asked to report your hours manually on a time sheet. Time sheets can also be accessed in the "Volunteer's Area" of the WRHA website.

Volunteer hours are recorded for accountability purposes, future program development, volunteer recognition and for gathering information for references.

Cancellation of Your Volunteer Shift

If you are unable to fulfill your scheduled shift please notify your placement supervisor at least 24 hours in advance. Remember: it is difficult to get last minute replacements, so please let us know as soon as possible if you will be absent or late. Please notify your placement supervisor two weeks in advance if you are planning to be away for an extended period of time.

Statutory Holidays

During statutory holidays, such as long weekends, the Volunteer Services office and some WRHA offices and services may be closed. If so, you will not be scheduled to volunteer but please confirm with your placement supervisor.

Adverse Weather Conditions

During the winter months, blizzards may prevent volunteers and staff from making their way to WRHA offices or service locations. In case of a blizzard, please call your placement supervisor to ensure the office is open and services are operating and to inform staff of your availability.

Leave of Absence

Should you need to take an extended leave of absence, please notify your placement supervisor so arrangements can be made to cover your absence.

Parking, Mileage or Bus Ticket Benefits

Volunteer Services will reimburse volunteers for the cost of bus tickets, parking or mileage incurred as a result of your volunteer activities with the WRHA. This does not include travel to and from your home. However, as this benefit is costly, we ask you to help us by car-pooling or using your own bus pass. Reimbursement forms are available from Volunteer Services, or online at www.wrha.mb.ca. Go to the "Volunteer's Area" in the Volunteer Services' section of the website. You must provide original receipt(s) for reimbursement of these expenses.

Personal Belongings

The WRHA cannot assume responsibility for any personal items that are lost or stolen on any WRHA property. Please do not bring large sums of money or valuables. Wherever possible, your placement supervisor will make arrangements for the secure storage of your personal items while you are on your volunteer shift.

Volunteer Identification

On your start date, you will be provided with a WRHA Volunteer Services identification badge. This is to ensure that volunteers are identifiable to staff, security, and persons who receive health services. When you no longer volunteer for WRHA, you must return your identification badge to your placement supervisor. Name badges are the property of the WRHA.

Dress Code/Personal Hygiene

Volunteers must be clean, well groomed and appropriately dressed for their volunteer placement. This includes:

- Wearing your volunteer identification badge
- Clothing and footwear that is clean, neat, comfortable, and in good condition
- No perfume, cologne or scented products
- Hands must be clean and washed frequently
- Fingernails must be neat and clean
- Preferably, long hair should be tied back at all times
- Moustaches, beards and sideburns should be neat and well trimmed

Apparel that is not appropriate:

- Short shorts, short shirts that reveal your midriff, halter tops, backless sundresses, sun/sport attire
- Long dangling jewellery, bracelets, or large rings
- Clothing with inappropriate slogans

Your Privacy

Manitoba has *The Freedom of Information and Protections of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) to protect information that is collected about you.

FIPPA controls how much information the WRHA collects about you and who we are permitted to share it with.

If you have any questions about the information collected about you and how it may be shared, contact the Manager of Volunteer Services at 204-787-7247.

Changes to Your Personal Information

Please help Volunteer Services keep our records current by telling us of any changes to your name, address, telephone and/or email address. Call the Volunteer Services office at 204-787-5078 and our staff will ensure your information is updated.

Confidentiality of Personal Health Information

The *Personal Health Information Act of Manitoba* (PHIA) sets clear and certain rules for the collection, use and disclosure of personal health information.

These rules include when the WRHA is permitted to use and disclose information, when we must obtain consent, and how we are required to safeguard the information we maintain on patients/clients/residents.

WRHA Volunteer Services will provide you with a PHIA orientation including information on our privacy policies and procedures. You will be required to sign a *Pledge of Confidentiality* as required by the Act.

Personal Health Information includes all information that could identify an individual and includes:

- Name
- Health or health history
- Behavior from illness or treatment
- Type of care or treatment provided
- Numbers or symbols, i.e., personal health information number
- Financial situation, home conditions or difficulties
- Other private matters such as age or sexual orientation

Personal health information is not to be discussed in public places (i.e., cafeteria, elevators, reception waiting areas, and off premises).



Any personal health information that you obtain, handle, learn, hear or view as part of your volunteer activities with the WRHA is protected by the legislation and must remain confidential.

If you are not sure what the right thing is to do in a specific situation, discuss this with your placement supervisor, the Manager of Volunteer Services or the site Privacy Officer.

Workplace Safety

When your placement supervisor discusses your volunteer assignment description with you, he/she will review safe work habits for that assignment. We expect our volunteers to be accountable for their own personal safety and follow all recommended workplace safety procedures.

Sharps/Dangerous Objects/Spills

Never under any circumstances, pick up a needle, syringe, or item that has sharp edges. Should you accidentally become poked with a needle stick or exposed to blood or body fluids from a blood spill/splash, you must seek medical attention as soon as possible, within 2-4 hours. Notify your placement supervisor immediately and request first aid. Your placement supervisor will arrange for you to complete an incident report prior to the end of your shift in which the incident occurred. Never under any circumstances, touch or attempt to clean up any type of spill. Immediately inform your placement supervisor or staff in the area.

In Case of Emergency

While you are on duty, WRHA staff should be notified immediately if an emergency arises. If a staff member is not available, pick up the nearest phone and dial 911. Remember to speak clearly and concisely and remain on the line until the operator has all the required information.

Fire and Disaster Plan

Your volunteer placement supervisor will orient you to the fire plan for the location where you are volunteering.

The WRHA also has a plan in place in case of a disaster such as adverse weather.

Volunteers may be needed to assist in some circumstances, depending on the event. If you are willing to assist, please inform the Manager of Volunteer Services.

Illness/Accidents While Volunteering

Volunteers are required to report all types of occurrences involving clients and/or volunteers in accordance with WRHA occurrence and reporting management policy.

If you or a client become ill or injured while on duty, please stay calm and reassure the client if the injury involves them. Get assistance from a staff member who will provide the necessary treatment. Once this is done, notify your placement supervisor immediately. He/she will assist you in completing an incident and/or occurrence report form. All incidents must be reported to the WRHA Manager of Volunteer Services at the end of your shift or by telephone the next working day.



Infection Control

HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION

To protect persons receiving health services, cancel your shift if you have:

- Skin infections of any sort
- A bad sore throat, severe cold or flu-like symptoms
- Fever
- Diarrhea, shingles, rashes
- Been exposed to any communicable diseases such as chicken pox

If you are unsure about exposure to a communicable disease, please speak to your placement supervisor, who will consult with a WRHA Infection Control Specialist.

Hand hygiene is the most important thing *anyone* can do to protect themselves and others from harmful germs. Hand hygiene is cleaning your hands with alcohol based hand rub (ABHR) or washing your hands with soap and water. *Both are equally effective when hands are not visibly soiled.* If hands are visibly soiled you must use soap and water.

In health care there are **Four Moments of Hand Hygiene** which all volunteers are expected to follow:

1. **BEFORE** contact with a patient/client or their environment
Don't bring outside germs in with you.
2. **BEFORE** aseptic or clean task
Don't add germs to a clean task.
3. **AFTER** body fluid exposure risk
Protect yourself - don't take germs away with you after being exposed to blood or body fluids (yours or other's).
4. **AFTER** contact with patient/client or their environment
Leave germs from your visit behind; don't take them away with you!

Examples of times to perform hand hygiene are:

BEFORE:

- Smoking a cigarette
- Taking or giving out medication
- Doing first aid
- Putting creams, lotions or make-up on your face
- Handling contact lenses
- Putting on gloves

And AFTER:

- Using the toilet
- Coughing or sneezing into your hand
- Using a tissue
- Preparing, serving or eating food/drinking drinks
- Smoking a cigarette
- Petting, feeding or caring for an animal
- Removing gloves

How to perform hand hygiene with alcohol based hand rub (ABHR):

- Apply a dime to nickel-sized amount (or 1-2 pumps) of hand rub into palms of dry hands
- Rub product into hands for 15 seconds, palm to palm, fingertips and thumbs of each hand in opposite palm between and around fingers, back of each palm and wrists
- Rub hands until dry before performing another task
- DO NOT WIPE OFF

How to perform hand hygiene with soap and water:

- Wet hands under warm running water
- Apply soap and distribute over hands
- Rub hands together vigorously for 15 seconds to create a good lather: palm to palm, fingertips and thumbs of each hand in opposite palm, between and around fingers, back of each palm and wrists
- Rinse hands thoroughly under warm running water
- Pat hands dry with a paper towel
- Turn off faucet using a paper towel

Volunteers should follow respiratory hygiene guidelines;

- Cough and/or sneeze into your sleeve
- Or use a tissue to cover your cough or sneeze
- If you do use a tissue, throw it away and perform hand hygiene immediately afterwards

Glove use:

- Only wear gloves if your hands may contact blood, body fluids, mucous membranes or non-intact skin
- Or when touching items or surfaces that could be soiled with blood or body fluids
- Hand hygiene must be done before gloves are put on AND after gloves are removed

Performance and Conduct

Volunteers play important and responsible roles within the WRHA. When a volunteer is unable to fulfill their role or violates WRHA policies or procedures, Volunteer Services staff are authorized to investigate the issue and initiate action as required. The degree of action will depend upon the gravity of the concern, the implications for the client's well being and security of property, and the number of previous incidents. Unless the gravity of the concern dictates otherwise, a volunteer will receive at least one oral/written warning before action is taken to terminate the volunteer's placement.

Volunteer placement supervisors may terminate volunteers for lack of attendance. All other terminations of a volunteer's placement must have the prior approval of the Manager of Volunteer Services.

All corrective measures, including verbal warnings, will be documented the volunteer's file. This may include verbal and written warnings and if necessary, termination of the volunteer's placement(s) with the WRHA.

Examples of the concerns that may lead to an oral or a written warning may include but are not limited to the following:

- Rudeness or unprofessional conduct towards clients/volunteers/staff/general public while on duty
- Use of abusive, offensive or obscene language
- Failure to notify, in a timely manner, and provide valid excuse to supervisory personnel of absence or lateness
- Wasting time or loitering
- Failure to report personal injury or property damage accidents to supervisory personnel within 48 hours of occurrence
- Failure to follow safe working practices
- Contributing to unsanitary conditions or poor housekeeping
- Unauthorized use of WRHA equipment or property
- Unauthorized use of WRHA telephone for personal long distance calls which are not permitted
- Unauthorized entrance on premises outside the normal hours of operation
- Entering the premises at times other than one's regular shift without permission of management or security notification
- Bringing visitors onto the premises during their shift without permission from management
- Does not perform the work as required and coaching/mentoring has not been effective
- Does not work well with other personnel

Disclosure

If you experience changes in your life that may affect your volunteer role, it is important to share this information with your placement supervisor. It could be related to your health, or a criminal charge. Any information that you share is kept confidential.

Cellphones/Communication Devices

Please keep cell phones and any other electronic devices in silent or vibrate mode while volunteering.

If you must make a call or respond to a text, please do so in an appropriate area or during your break.

You may not use your phone, or any other device, to photograph or video the clients we serve. This is a violation of privacy to our clients unless your Placement Supervisor has approved media release and/or the client has given the proper consent.

Visitors

Please meet friends or family in public areas, such as a reception area, before your shift commences or after your shift is completed. Do not invite friends or family members to program/service areas/clinics or to the homes of persons receiving health services.

Respectful Workplace

Volunteers and staff are entitled to a work environment which encourages mutual respect, cooperation and understanding which is free of disrespectful behavior. Types of behavior considered disrespectful include but are not limited to: Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment. WRHA has a Respectful Workplace Policy which can be found on our website at: <http://www.wrha.mb.ca/professionals/respectfulworkplace/>. Volunteers can report any workplace concerns to their placement supervisor and/or the Manager of Volunteer Services.

Drugs and Alcohol

Volunteers may not report for their assignment while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. If you are taking a prescription or over-the-counter medication that affects your ability to perform your duties safely, do not report for your assignment.

Media Inquiries

All media inquiries are handled by WRHA Corporate Communications Department. Should you be approached by the media, please notify your placement supervisor immediately.

No Smoking

All WRHA facilities and grounds are smoke-free.

Accessibility for Manitobans Act

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) became law in December, 2013, and applies to all organizations that provide goods and services, including the WRHA. This legislation is composed of 5 standards to make Manitoba as accessible as possible. All WRHA employees and volunteers must receive education on providing accessible customer service which will be provided to you as part of your volunteer orientation.

You are also encouraged to let your supervisor know if you require accommodation for a disability. This could be temporary or permanent, and could include things like modified duties or a different schedule. We will do our best to ensure you are comfortable and safe in your role.

Conflict of Interest

Volunteers should avoid any situation which might be viewed as a potential or actual conflict of interest. Examples include conducting personal business, asking for personal favours or using your affiliation with the WRHA for personal gain.

Labour Disputes

During a labour dispute, you may or may not choose to continue in your regular volunteer assignment. If you do not feel comfortable crossing a picket line, we respect your decision but ask that you notify us as soon as possible. If the area in which you are assigned does not require volunteer assistance during job action, you will be notified. During job action, you will not be required to provide services outside those performed as part of your usual volunteer commitment.

Personal Gifts

It is inappropriate to receive any gifts that have a significant monetary value from persons receiving care from the WRHA. Sometimes a person may wish to thank volunteers and offer small gifts as their way of saying thank you. Please do not accept a gift that could be considered a form of payment, such as something that has resale or return value. If you wish to give a person a gift, you are encouraged to check with your placement supervisor beforehand.

Religious and Political Information

Please do not distribute unsolicited religious and/or political materials to clients or staff of the WRHA.

Lifting or Transferring

Volunteers should not lift or transfer persons using wheelchairs or other mobility aids. This includes transferring persons in and out of vehicles. If a person requests you to do this, notify the nearest staff member.

Washroom Assistance

Volunteers may escort people to the washroom, but not in the washroom. Should a person request further assistance, staff should be consulted, as this is not a volunteer role.



Wheelchair Safety

Depending on your volunteer role, you may be called upon to assist a person using a manual wheelchair. Here are some guidelines to wheelchair safety:

1. Always introduce yourself. Ask the person if they would like your assistance. Whenever possible, speak to the person at eye level. Try not to feel insulted if the person does not want your help, as they may be able to manage independently.
2. Always check the hand brakes, located on both back wheels. Make sure that the brakes are locked when the wheelchair is not moving.
3. Always make sure that the hand brakes are off when moving the chair.
4. Always ask the person if they are ready before you begin moving the wheelchair. Inform the person where you are taking them.
5. Always ensure that the person's arms are either resting inside or directly over the arm rests, not over the side of the wheelchair.
6. Always ensure that the person's feet are securely placed on footrests. Check for anything, e.g., blankets, sweaters, which may get caught in wheels.
7. Always turn the wheelchair around so that it is descending backwards when going down an incline, entering an elevator or going over a curb.
8. When moving over rough ground, steps or curbs, tilt the chair back onto its two large wheels and proceed. It may seem awkward but the person in the chair is more secure and is less likely to fall out.
9. Avoid quick, short stops as this may jar the person forward.
10. When guiding a person out of their wheelchair always make sure the hand brakes are in place and the foot rests are folded up and out of the way. Allow the person enough time for their body to adjust to the standing position.
11. When proceeding through a door that swings away from you push it open with your seat and pull the chair in backwards. If the door swings in toward you, open the door, hold and push the wheelchair through.



VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

References

A letter of reference can be helpful when applying for paid employment or entrance into educational programs. Once you have established a consistent volunteer history (minimum 3 months of consistently volunteering), or at the end of your commitment, you may ask your placement supervisor or the Manager of Volunteer Services for a reference.

Volunteer Recognition

At various times of the year, we say thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers for their contribution to the WRHA. Volunteer Services plans a thank you event for volunteers and we hope you'll be able to attend.

Staff Appreciation and Recognition (StAR) Program

The WRHA StAR Program is an initiative of WRHA Human Resources. Through this program, WRHA offers staff and volunteer discounts to various services within and around Winnipeg, ranging from fitness facilities and restaurants to car dealerships. To obtain a discount you must present your volunteer identification badge. A complete list of discounts is available on the WRHA web site at www.wrha.mb.ca/professionals/star/discounts.php.

FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

As a volunteer you will receive timely feedback on your performance and have an opportunity to provide your volunteer placement supervisor with feedback. Your placement supervisor will check with you at the end of your first shift to see how your first experience went. Feedback is provided regularly on an informal basis and formally at 1-2 months after your start of volunteering. Once volunteers have completed their commitment, an exit questionnaire is given to them, requesting their feedback and comments. However, volunteers are welcomed to provide feedback and suggestions regarding their role or the volunteer program to the Manager of Volunteer Services at any time throughout their placement.





CONTACT US!

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