

Guidelines for a Positive Volunteer Experience



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How it Works

Here are some simple guidelines for a positive volunteer experience:

- 1. Volunteers at Dallas Hope Charities are to register before volunteering.** This is done by completing volunteer paperwork and meeting with the director. **NOTE:** Any and all work involving youth or children will require a background check, and you will need to sign a release for this background check to be conducted. Our goal is to have the very best and safest environment for our children, young people and our volunteers. Persons not meeting these minimum requirements may not serve in work involving youth or children.
- 2. Volunteers at Dallas Hope Charities are important to the success of our mission.** This means that, just like staff members, you will need to be on time, and always show up for assignments for which you have made a commitment. If, for any reason, you will **not** be reporting to your assigned area of service on your scheduled day, please contact your volunteer service leader. In this way, she/he can reschedule you or find a replacement, if appropriate. In some cases, you will be given a list of other volunteers on your team, and asked to find a replacement for yourself. You may be able to trade with another person.
- 3. At no time does Dallas Hope Charities promise paid employment as a result of, or in conjunction with, volunteer service assignments.**
- 4. As a volunteer, you can expect a volunteer service position description, an orientation and proper training to accomplish your assignment.** It is our goal to approach you, as a volunteer, with a professional attitude. You are important to us and so is the service you provide.
- 5. When performing your duties as a volunteer, please respect the privacy of others with whom you are working or around whom you are working.** Please do not assume you may enter into someone's office or workspace simply because the door is open or enter into an ongoing conversation because you are within hearing distance. Also, you are to treat as confidential, private and given only in trust, any information of which you become aware of or gain knowledge of in the course of your volunteer duties.

6. **Sexual Exploitation and Harassment.** All persons associated with Dallas Hope Charities should be aware that the organization is strongly opposed to sexual exploitation and harassment and that such behavior is prohibited. It is the intention and responsibility of Dallas Hope Charities to take whatever action may be needed to prevent and correct behavior which is contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.
7. **If at any time, you encounter a problem during your assignment, here are the steps to take:** Notify the volunteer service leader or the staff person overseeing the particular service with which you are involved. She/he will take the necessary steps to correct the problem. If the volunteer service leader or the staff person is not available or unable to resolve the situation, contact the director for help.
8. **If for any reason a volunteer service assignment is not working out for you, let someone know.** Please do not give up on the assignment by not returning. This is disruptive to the service and to those you serve. Instead, please contact your volunteer service leader or the Dallas Hope Charities office before leaving an assignment, as there are other people who are likely counting on you. A smooth transition can be made when all parties work together.
9. **A volunteer may be asked to leave an assignment at any time at the discretion of the pastors of Cathedral of Hope, directors, staff members or volunteer service leaders.** Happily, we seldom have to ask a volunteer to leave an assignment. However, in the event that a volunteer becomes disruptive, argumentative and/or refuses to follow instructions given by the volunteer service leader or staff person in charge, she/he will be asked to leave the assignment and seek a new assignment with the help of the director.
10. **New assignments can be given as soon as your current tasks have been completed.** The director is your personal volunteer service consultant, and is here to serve you in finding the best and most enjoyable service opportunities for you.
11. **All information about you as a volunteer will be kept in the Dallas Hope Charities database records.** By having all of your records in the computer, we can best serve you by letting you know about other exciting service opportunities, as well as certain "fun events" that fall within the realm of **your interest**.
12. **Volunteers are asked to record and report their time spent in service.** We ask volunteers to report their time to the volunteer service leader or staff person for their service area. This is extremely important because your volunteer time matters when outside funding entities consider providing financial assistance to help Dallas Hope Charities further its mission and its reach. Volunteer time is recorded in the Dallas Hope Charities database.

FAQ



1. How will I know my service position description?

You should receive a service position description outlining your duties from your staff person or volunteer service leader. If you would like a service position description prior to beginning your assignment, this can be obtained through the Dallas Hope Charities office.

2. How should I dress for my service assignment?

The best rule of thumb is to dress appropriately for the job you are doing. For example, if you will be working in an office setting, at a minimum, business casual attire would be appropriate. Shorts and tank tops are not appropriate for office work. We always want to represent the service opportunity well.

3. Does Dallas Hope Charities provide transportation?

No. To date we have no way to provide transportation for volunteers. We have several volunteers who use public transportation and are able to participate regularly.

4. Can I still participate if I work during daytime hours?

Yes, we are happy to find flexible service opportunities. There are some opportunities that need to be filled during the day, but most opportunities are available after daytime hours and on weekends. On occasion, there are even some opportunities that can be fulfilled at home.

5. How long will I have to commit to any given assignment?

This varies according to the area of service. Our general rule of thumb is to ask for no more than one year of service in any given position. This is followed by a time of evaluation when the volunteer and the volunteer service leader collaborate to determine if the volunteer will continue in the service opportunity or will seek a new service experience. Please feel comfortable in acknowledging that it's perfectly okay - and even encouraged - to take a break from volunteering for any given position. We want the volunteer experience to stay rewarding and fulfilling for all of our volunteers.

