FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA OF GREATER CHARLOTTE

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Our Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

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Dear Prospective YMCA Volunteer:

Thank you for committing your time and special talents to the YMCA of Greater Charlotte. At the Y, we believe that when people come together for a common cause, the whole community is strengthened. When you become a volunteer, you can share your blessings with those who need it most. Whether you mentor a student on the verge of dropping out, coaching a team to their personal best or become a friend to an isolated senior, your time and talent changes lives. When you help a neighbor, you make a difference in their life...and yours.

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte is an association of members who come together with a common understanding of the YMCA mission and a common commitment to the YMCA's vision of building strong kids, strong families and strong communities. Whatever the facility, whatever the program, what doesn't change are the people. Each YMCA is different, reflecting the needs of its Y community. What every Y has in common is a dedicated group of people: volunteers, staff, members and donors, all of whom are committed to our mission. It is the **people of the YMCA** who build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities- and **you** can help.

Thank you for helping the Y to achieve excellence in all of our undertakings, and to put clear Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. We hope you enjoy your time at the YMCA and be assured that you are valuable to the YMCA and greatly appreciated by staff and members. For more information about the volunteer program at the Y please contact your center's volunteer coordinator.

Sincerely,

YMCA of Greater Charlotte
Volunteer Program Managers

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"At the heart of this organization, at the heart of its heritage of mind, spirit, and body, there is that little element of love that transforms routing work into meaningful activity that makes a person feel important even when they don't think they are. That's the business of the YMCA. That's what you do when you give your skills and your talents to another generation."

Andrew Young
YMCA's Seven R's of Volunteer Development

Welcome to the YMCA

Welcome to the YMCA of Greater Charlotte. We're glad you are volunteering with us! We've designed this handbook to provide you and other volunteers with a general source of information about the YMCA of Greater Charlotte.

About the YMCA

Our YMCA Mission

The YMCA is a worldwide organization that is committed to providing programs that help members and participants develop spirit, mind, and body.

Our Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Our YMCA Purpose

To love, serve and transform lives.

Our YMCA Vision

Thriving, inclusive and connected communities dedicated to the well-being of all.

YMCA History

The YMCA was founded in London England, in 1844, as the Young Men's Christian Association, to help people develop character in their daily lives. The movement spread quickly and reached the United Stared by 1851. In 1874 the YMCA of Greater Charlotte was founded. By the early 1900s, the YMCA began serving boys and older men, as well as women.

After World War I, women and girls became an active part of the YMCA movement. In the 1960s and 1970s, families became a major focus. Today, more than half of all YMCA members and staff

Members are women and girls. Simply put, the YMCA is a place where all are welcomed and strong values prevail. Today, YMCAs are alive and well in more than 140 countries across the globe.

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Volunteering

Volunteerism

Volunteers are the backbone of the YMCA. Volunteers not only founded the YMCA but also operated it in its entirety in the early days. The involvement today of thousands of talented, committed individuals greatly extends the range, quality and variety of YMCA programs.

The YMCA defines a "volunteer" as anyone who, without financial compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of out- of- pocket expenses, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the YMCA of Greater Charlotte.

We do want you to know that during your volunteer work with the YMCA, any photos taken of you may be used in future promotional materials.

Age Restrictions

Child Aged Volunteers:

- Program Volunteers under the age of 12
- Must complete all volunteer responsibilities while under supervision of parent or legal guardian (parent or legal guardian must be a cleared volunteer with the YMCA and attend the activity as a volunteer alongside the child-aged volunteer)

Teenage Volunteers:

- Program Volunteers between ages of 12 years and 17 years
- Must complete all volunteer responsibilities while under the supervision of a YMCA staff person
- May not serve in a volunteer capacity for more than 4 hours in one day without a valid workers permit
- All volunteers must complete the YMCA Background Screening and Child Abuse Prevention online training, which contains sensitive materials. It is recommended youth volunteers take this training at home with a parent/guardian.
- Volunteer Head Coaches for any program must be 18 years of age or older. Volunteer Assistant Coaches for any program must be 16 years of age or older.

Adult-Aged Volunteers:

- Program Volunteers 18 years of age and older
- Must complete volunteer responsibilities during which children are present under the supervision of a YMCA staff person
- Volunteer Head Coaches for any program must be 18 years of age or older. Volunteer Assistant Coaches for any program must be 16 years of age or older.

Volunteer Records
To keep your volunteer records current, we ask that you please update your profile in our volunteer system with any changes to your name, address, phone number, email address, or emergency contact information.

Benefits
The YMCA does not provide insurance and/or related benefits to volunteers. As an example, there are no insurance plans for volunteers, including no medical, accident, dental, workers compensation, disability, or other coverage. 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, this provides subsidies based on income and individual needs. Applications are available at member services or online at **www.ymcacharlotte.org.**

Use of Supplies and Equipment
YMCA supplies and equipment, including copy machines and postage meters, are for YMCA business use only. Equipment and supplies purchased by, or donated, to the YMCA belong to the YMCA, and not to individuals.

Security of personal belongings
We encourage you to lock valuable personal belongings in a locker or in the trunk of your vehicle during your time of volunteer service at the YMCA. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Unable to Volunteer
If you are unable to make a scheduled volunteer task time, please visit your volunteer profile and update your schedule accordingly. This allows for that volunteer opening to be available for another volunteer to participate. Please also email your center volunteer coordinator to let them know you will be absent.

Dress Code
Dress code for volunteers varies for each YMCA center and from department to department within a center. Please make sure that you are aware of the volunteer dress code in the department for which you are volunteering. If you have any questions concerning dress code, please contact the volunteer director in your center.

Tracking of Volunteer hours of service
For us to have an accurate record of your volunteer time of service, we ask that you sign in and out each time you volunteer. Check with the Volunteer Director or department director at the location you are volunteering to be sure your hours get recorded. The YMCA will honor and add any missing hours for up to six months after the date of service and not after.

Safety

Safety and Health Rules

Volunteers are to observe all safety and health rules and use care to prevent accidents. Some of our safety and health rules include, but are not limited to:

- Observe all hazard warning and no smoking signs.
- Use all safety equipment required for your assignment, including wearing appropriate personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head, hands, and other extremities.
- Know the location of fire/safety exits and evacuation procedures.
- Keep all aisles, walkways, working areas, and emergency equipment free of obstacles
- Refrain from running, fighting, horseplay, or distracting others.
- Please report any unsafe items to the closest YMCA staff person immediately.

Blood borne Pathogens

The YMCA subscribes to the concept of "universal precautions," which means that all human blood or other body fluids must be treated as if they are contagious. Universal precautions mean that you are expected to use certain procedures and to use personal protective equipment when necessary. (Dependent on the length of time you are volunteering for, you may or may not have to attend these training courses.)

Child Abuse Prevention Guidelines

A principal endeavor of the YMCA is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of children. Thus, the mistreatment or neglect of children, and the resulting severe effects, is of primary concern to the YMCA. 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. Because of our concern for the welfare of children, the YMCA has developed policies, procedures and training to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse.
Volunteers are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, reporting, and documenting child abuse. Some of the guidelines you are expected to follow are:

- At all times avoid being alone with a single child where staff or other adults cannot observe you.
- Dating a program participant under age 18 is not allowed.
- Children may not be disciplined by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide necessity of care.
- Verbally, physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing or punishing children is not permitted.
- Children may be informed in a manner that is age- appropriate to the group of their right to set their own "touching" limits.

- Children should be released only to authorized persons. Volunteers will not be responsible for the release of children, only to keep watch for anything out of the ordinary.
- Any information regarding abuse or potential abuse should be documented in writing.
- At the first reasonable cause to believe that child abuse exists, it must be reported to your YMCA supervisor or center executive.
- If the YMCA has reason to believe that a volunteer abused a child, his or her conduct will be reported to the appropriate authorities, and the volunteer's YMCA involvement will be immediately terminated.
- If you need to report suspected Child Abuse and don't feel comfortable doing so in person, please call the YMCA's reporting hotline at 704-716-7556 to report any violation of a policy.

To avoid being suspected of abuse, please observe the following guidelines:

- Staff will follow the "rule of three" in taking children to the bathrooms, locker rooms, and shower areas. Volunteers are not responsible for restroom breaks but may be asked to assist to stay in compliance with the rule of three.
- If a child is injured and requires first aid, he/she will be examined in the presence of at least 2 adults.
- Children may not be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by swimming suits.
- Position yourselves on playgrounds and during nap times where staff can see you at all times.
- Program volunteers should be alert to the physical and emotional state of all children each time they report for a program and indicate in writing any signs of injury or suspected abuse.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Misconduct

Volunteers are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the YMCA mission, values and goals. The YMCA does not tolerate misconduct. Some examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Volunteers will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact and maturity.
- Discriminatory behavior or harassment.
- Child abuse, molestation, or indecent exposure.
- Failure to report arrest or criminal conviction.
- Mistreatment or neglect of members, guests or YMCA participants.
- Falsification of any YMCA records.

- Theft of or willful damage to YMCA property or to the property of others.
- Dishonesty in any form.
- Abusive or profane language.
- Fighting or threatening to harm another person.
- Possession of a weapon.
- Horseplay, unsafe or dangerous behavior.
- Violation of any stated rules or commonly accepted rules of responsible personal conduct.
- Conduct that does not support the stated purpose of the YMCA.
- Volunteers will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, and other volunteers while on YMCA property or during a YMCA activity.
- Volunteers must appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired.
- Use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
- Being under the influence or in possession of drugs or alcohol on YMCA property or while representing the YMCA as a volunteer.
- Possessing, distributing or manufacturing controlled substances.
- Volunteers must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health.
- Volunteers are not to transport children in their own vehicle.
- Volunteers are discouraged from being alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to your home.
- Volunteers should not engage in activities through social media platforms with children they meet in YMCA programs. This includes (but not limited to), friend requests, messaging, taking/posting pictures, etc.
- Volunteers will refrain from using their cell phone during their time as a volunteer.
- Volunteers that breach the code of conduct will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

YMCA Information

Information regarding membership lists, participation fees, donors, financial aid, planning, medical conditions and other information is confidential and should be kept within the YMCA and should be shared within the YMCA only with those who have a legitimate need to know, as determined by management.

Arrest & Criminal Conviction of a Volunteer

A volunteer is required to report an arrest or criminal conviction to the YMCA. The report should be made promptly, within 5 days of when the arrest or conviction occurred or prior to any additional volunteering, whichever comes first. The report should be made in writing to the YMCA center executive and the volunteer director/coordinator, and include the exact charge or conviction, the location or court and the date of the arrest or conviction. Failure to report arrests or conviction as required will be considered misconduct and ground for dismissal.

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte has chosen not to accept court ordered community service. If you need hours to satisfy a judgment due to criminal offense, please seek opportunities elsewhere.

Alcohol and Drugs

The YMCA is committed to maintaining an alcohol and drug- free environment. This is particularly important since many volunteers are responsible for the safety and welfare of children and youth. Therefore, the YMCA 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 any volunteer while volunteering for the YMCA, and/or while in any YMCA facility or vehicle.

Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities

Volunteer Rights

- To be treated as a partner and friend.
- To have a meaningful assignment with consideration for your individual interests, skills and life experiences.
- To be kept in the know about YMCA programs, policies, and people through frequent communications that may include conversations, meetings, memos, emails and newsletters.
- To receive thoughtfully planned and effectively presented orientation and training for your volunteer position.
- To continued education and training, including information about new developments and training for greater responsibility.
- To receive sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, well informed, patient and thoughtful and has time to invest in you as a volunteer.
- To be treated respectfully and to be given equal consideration for all volunteer assignments, regardless of age, income, disability, sex, background, religion or other protected personal characteristics.
- To being offered a variety of experiences through promotions and or 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 be recognized in the form of promotion, awards, and simple day to day expressions of appreciation.
- To enjoy a work environment that is energetic and conducive to work and fun.

Volunteer Responsibilities

- To have a heart and mindset in the interest of having a positive effect on the kids, families, and communities the YMCA serves.
- To understand the YMCA mission and goals.

- To abide by the commitment that you make.
- To speak up, ask questions, and share ideas.
- To accept supervision, knowing that everyone is accountable to someone.
- To offer criticism constructively, seeking to understand before judging.
- To continue to grow and learn more about your volunteer task, the YMCA, and the YMCA way.
- To treat people with loving kindness and open communication, regardless of age, income, ability, background, sex, religion or other protected personal characteristics.
- To act as a responsible member of our YMCA family, learning the give and take necessary for the common good.
- To be a voice for the YMCA in your community and a voice for your community in the YMCA.

COMMUNICATION

Complaints

If you have a complaint or problem at the YMCA, in most circumstances, the best course of action is to discuss the matter with the volunteer director/coordinator at the YMCA location where you are serving. If the volunteer director/coordinator is unable to resolve the matter to your satisfaction, you should discuss the matter with the Executive Director for that YMCA location. Contact volunteer@ymcacharlotte.org to report any complaints or issues with your volunteer role.

Computer Software and Data Use

Laws about use of software are very strict. You may not copy YMCA software or bring a copy of software from home or another place of business and place the software on a YMCA computer.

All data stored on YMCA hardware and drives, purchased by the YMCA of Greater Charlotte are the property of the YMCA and may not be used for personal reasons.

Voice Mail, E-mail, and Internet

Use of data sent and stored on YMCA computer and communications systems is the property of the YMCA. These systems include telephone, voice mail, electronic mail, and internet systems. Messages sent, stored or printed on YMCA equipment is also the property of the YMCA. There can be no exceptions of privacy using these systems.

These systems are for business use. Examples of inappropriate use of these systems include the use of ethnic slurs, racial epithets, sexually explicit images, jokes, cartoons or anything that may be considered harassment. It is also inappropriate to use these systems for non-business information such as soliciting or proselytizing for commercial ventures, religious or political causes or other outside concerns.

Conflict of Interest

Volunteers are expected to refrain from giving the impression that the personal views and positions they express regarding economic, political or religious issues are those of the YMCA.

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VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Training Programs

Many YMCA trainings, such as Child Abuse Prevention training, are required annually for volunteers, provided they are volunteering within the center or a center program or deemed necessary by the YMCA staff as necessary to the volunteers' YMCA responsibilities. Dependent on the length of time you are volunteering for, you may or may not be required to attend these certifications, please see your volunteer director for clarification.

VOLUNTEER SCREENINGS & REFERENCE CHECKS

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte strives to provide a safe environment for children and youth, therefore YMCA will require volunteers 12 and older to submit a background check and references for a reference check.

Screening

Each program, administrative and support volunteer who is 16 years old or older is required to complete a YMCA background screening every two years and volunteer orientation prior to beginning their volunteer service with the YMCA. Our background screening includes a minimum of a criminal history check, social security trace and national sex offender search. The background screening is to be submitted online through our volunteer portal when signing up for a volunteer position that requires it.

Reference Checks

Each program, administrative and support volunteers who are 12 years old or older are required to complete a volunteer reference check on a one-time basis, prior to beginning their volunteer service with the YMCA. Our reference check requires three submitted references and two returned references to be in their favor including at least one personal or family reference, designed to assess employees and high-access volunteer applicants for abuse risk. These references are to be submitted online through our volunteer matters portal when signing up for a volunteer position that requires it.

To view all our current volunteer opportunities, visit us online at
www.ymcacharlotte.org/volunteer.
For any questions, comments or concerns; please email volunteer@ymcacharlotte.org.