

# VOLUNTEER MANUAL

5351 Samuell Blvd, Dallas, TX 75228 - 214.818.2600 - [www.dcac.org](http://www.dcac.org)

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# Introduction

Welcome to Dallas Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC). Our mission is to improve the lives of abused children in Dallas County.

Each year, our volunteers give thousands of hours to DCAC, and we are pleased that you have chosen to be one of them. Dallas Children's Advocacy Center cannot do this work alone and we thank you for your service!

As a volunteer who interacts with clients, partners, guests, and members of the community, you are a representative of DCAC. We've created this manual for you to become familiar with DCAC's history, mission policies, and volunteer opportunities. It is important that you read it carefully in its entirety.

Volunteers perform a number of important roles, and our goal is to provide diverse, flexible and meaningful opportunities for those interested in volunteering their time and unique talents to the agency. Your service supports the safe, welcoming environment where families begin to heal.

Welcome to the team—we are incredibly grateful for your willingness to share your support, advocacy, time, and talents with DCAC!

## Mission Statement

**To improve the lives of abused children and provide national leadership on child abuse issues.**

### Volunteer Department Goals

The goal of the Volunteer Department is to help children and families identify and recover from abuse by providing volunteers who are well-trained and committed to DCAC's mission, values, and policies. Volunteers come from every corner of our community to support DCAC's life-changing services and help children heal from abuse.

We are committed to providing clients with a child-friendly and safe environment. We want our families to have both the experience and perception that their child's safety is of utmost importance to us as we know that healing begins when physical safety and emotional safety are prioritized. Our volunteers are essential to our ability to provide the safest environment for kids.

# DCAC History

DCAC is the only agency of its kind in Dallas County. Since opening its doors in January of 1991, DCAC has served more than 100,000 children. DCAC has increased the number of victims and families served annually from 725 in 1991 to over 12,000 in 2024.

Before DCAC opened its doors, child abuse victims and their families were bounced from one agency to another – from the child welfare office to the police department, the hospital, and the prosecutor's office – repeatedly telling their stories of abuse. The criminal justice system, a system primarily designed for adult perpetrators, not child victims, lacked coordination between police, Department of Family and Protective Services, prosecution, mental health, and medical agencies. Duplication of efforts, along with multiple unnecessary and traumatic interviews for the children, had become the norm in child abuse cases.

Transforming the system, DCAC reduces the re-victimization of the child with its distinctive multidisciplinary and united approach to child abuse cases where a skilled team of professionals comes together to investigate child abuse allegations, conduct forensic interviews aiding in the prosecution of offenders, and provide therapy and victim assistance services - always keeping the best interest of the child in mind.

DCAC works in agreement with public and private agencies including Dallas County law enforcement, Department of Family and Protective Services, the District Attorney's Office, and Children's Health (REACH Clinic). Dallas Children's Advocacy Center is recognized internationally for its expertise in the identification, investigation, and prosecution of child abuse cases, for its cutting-edge therapy programs, and for its community education and professional training programs.

## Core Values

- We are child centered, family focused, and community driven.
- We act with dignity and compassion in all that we do.
- We recognize our staff as our greatest asset.
- We work as a seamless team.

# About DCAC

- DCAC provides no-cost therapy services for child abuse victims and eligible family members. Children benefit from individual, group, and family counseling programs designed to help them cope with their trauma and prevent further abuse. Families also receive long-term case management through our Family Assistance Program which provides information, resources, and financial assistance.
- Case criteria for the DCAC's multidisciplinary team includes the most severe and complex cases of sexual and physical abuse of children or witnesses to a violent crime in Dallas County who are aged seventeen years of age and younger.
- DCAC coordinates the internationally recognized Crimes Against Children Conference (CACC). This four-day conference is the largest professional education forum for front-line professionals in the field of child abuse. More than 5,000 professionals attended in 2024 which included more than 300+ workshops and interactive learning opportunities. Attendees represented every state in the U.S. and 22 additional countries.
- In addition to CACC, DCAC provides *Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse* training for local professionals. Additional educational opportunities for children, adults, schools, faith communities, civic organizations, and human service agency staff are provided free of charge by our Education Department. In the last 11 years, DCAC staff have educated more than 700,000 community members.

# Agency & Facility Information

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center  
5351 Samuell Boulevard  
Dallas, Texas 75228  
214.818.2600

*Please note, there is a similar address down the street in Mesquite. If you are using GPS, please make sure your city is set to Dallas.*

This is a **completely smoke-free campus** as part of our LEED certification. This means no smoking or vaping anywhere in or around the building, including the parking lots. Signs will be posted to inform visitors of our smoke-free campus. Staff, partners, or volunteers who smoke or vape will need to do so offsite.

## Hours of Operation

Business hours are from 8:00 am – 8:00 pm Monday to Thursday and 8:00 am — 5:00 pm on Friday. However, our building is available for the investigation of cases 24-7.

During regular business hours, the main entrance opens at 7:45 am.

## Parking

Volunteers should park in the Visitor's Parking Lot at the front of the building. As part of our LEED certification, some of the spaces are marked for high fuel-efficiency cars. Please respect the handicapped and LEED spaces and park in designated parking areas. The fire lanes, driveways, and loading zones must be kept free of parked automobiles.

## Break Room and Courtyard

The break room and courtyard are shared areas to be used by all staff, partners, and volunteers for eating and interacting with other team members.

## Restrooms

There are four restrooms (2 male/2 female) designated for use by staff, partners, and volunteers. All clients should use the restrooms found in the waiting rooms.

## **Best Practices for Facility Maintenance**

In general, please help us keep the building neat and tidy! This includes:

- Wipe down all counters, tables, and sinks after use.
- Everyone is responsible for cleaning his/her cups, glasses, and utensils. Do not leave any items in the cabinets or sink.
- Discard all paper towels and trash in designated trash receptacles.
- Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator or Front Desk staff when items need to be re-stocked.

## **Holidays**

DCAC is closed on the following holidays.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the following day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- During the week between Christmas and New Year's, DCAC operates with a skeleton crew and on-call staff only. There are no volunteer opportunities during this time.

## **Inclement Weather**

In the event of inclement weather, DCAC follows the schedule of the Dallas Independent School District regarding delayed opening, early closure, and cancellation. The Volunteer Coordinator will also contact anyone scheduled for the day.

All sessions or events that are scheduled to occur during a time of delayed opening, early closure, or cancellation will be rescheduled.

We realize that weather conditions can vary widely across the metroplex. If the center remains open but you feel it's unsafe for you to travel, please feel free to let us know that you need to cancel. Your safety is our priority.

# Year-Round Volunteer Opportunities

In addition to the areas listed, there are many one-of-a-kind or one-time-only opportunities. For this reason, it is important you provide the Volunteer Office with information regarding your special skills and interests.

## **Activity Center**

Volunteers help clients ages 2-17 in one of the waiting rooms by reading stories, playing music, helping with homework, doing arts and crafts projects, or playing games.

We will cover this opportunity during the Volunteer Orientation. In addition, the Activity Center Child Care Attendant will also provide training during your first shift in this space.

## **Dining Series Volunteer**

Volunteers serve dinner to clients attending evening weeknight services by setting up, serving, and cleaning up after a meal.

Volunteers are NOT required to provide the meal. If you are interested in providing the meal, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Hosting a Donation Drive**

Our clothes closet always needs to be restocked with new, unused items. Volunteers can help coordinate, host, collect, and deliver items to DCAC. Donation drive ideas include diapers, infant needs, craft and art kits, laundry detergent, and cleaning supplies.

## **Administrative Support**

During event seasons, there may be additional administrative tasks where help is requested. These projects may include assembling gift bags, writing thank you cards, or other small tasks. Please share if you're interested in these one off opportunities.



# Conference Volunteer Opportunities

## Crimes Against Children Conference (CACC)

August 3 – 7, 2025

*The conference setup will take place on August 1 and 2.*

The largest conference of its kind, CACC trains over 5,000 professionals from all over the world who fight crimes against children. In 2024, we hosted attendees from every state in the U.S. and 22 countries around the world.

Volunteers must attend CACC Volunteer Training in August and are asked to commit to at least one full 6 or 12-hour day. On-site responsibilities range from participant registration, speaker and volunteer check-in, room monitoring, assistance with special events, and other duties as assigned.

Volunteering for CACC includes access to the volunteer lounge, snacks, free parking, and a CACC volunteer t-shirt. Additionally, you will be making a difference by welcoming visitors to Dallas and volunteering your time to those fighting crimes against children and helping children heal.

## Special Event Opportunities

Volunteers can also help with special projects throughout the year, including:

- CHAMP Camp - March, June
- Aim for Advocacy- April
- Backpack/School Supply Drive - July
- Trunk or Treat - October
- Holiday Giving - December
- Room Makeovers - ongoing

For more information on these opportunities, please talk to the Volunteer Coordinator.

# Volunteer Policies & Procedures

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC) actively pursues new volunteers in order to meet the evolving needs of the agency. Volunteers are selected based on experience, knowledge, and personal commitment. All applicants are required to complete an application, provide a signed Volunteer Policy Document, and consent to a criminal background check. Completion of Volunteer Orientation does not guarantee that you will be approved for a volunteer position with DCAC.

DCAC carefully screens volunteers before, during, and after training. Because our primary priority is the safety of children and the ability to create a child-friendly environment, sometimes we must make a tough decision about volunteers and personnel.

Occasionally, during or after training, we will find that the work of the agency and the volunteer are just not a good fit. If we discover an issue, depending on the severity, we will either work with the volunteer to alter their assignment or we may find it necessary to terminate our relationship and help the volunteer find other volunteer opportunities.

## **Nondiscrimination**

DCAC is an equal opportunity employer and maintains a policy of nondiscrimination with respect to all employees, volunteers, and applicants for volunteer positions. All personnel actions, such as recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, transfer, layoff, recall, compensation and benefits, discipline, termination, and educational, recreational, and social programs are administered without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability status, opposition or participation activity protected by applicable law, or membership or application for membership in a uniformed service. Employment and volunteer decisions, subject to the legitimate business requirements of DCAC, are based solely on an individual's qualifications, merit, and performance.

## **Age Requirement**

The minimum age requirement to volunteer at the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center is age 18. Those who are 18 must NOT be enrolled at a Dallas County school.

Teenagers and children may be approved to volunteer at DCAC on a case-by-case basis if they are accompanied by an adult, will have no client contact, and an agency-based need is present.

## **Volunteer Expectations**

1. *Be mission centered.* We hope that every experience that clients, volunteers, donors, partners, and staff have at DCAC leaves them with a strong sense of our commitment to

the mission of improving the lives of abused children in Dallas County and providing national leadership on child abuse issues.

*2. Prioritize safety first.*

- Complete a volunteer application that includes confidential felony and misdemeanor arrest/conviction information, permission to allow DCAC to request Child Abuse/Neglect Central Registry, DPS Criminal History Check, sex offender registry check, and a confidentiality agreement.
- Complete orientation and any additional training.
- Strive to create the most physically and emotionally safe environment for a child and family the entire time they're on campus.
- Ask for staff help when a situation feels uncomfortable or is escalating.

*3. Be a reliable and predictable member of the team.*

- Act in accordance with the Volunteer Agreement.
- Be on time for your assigned shift. It is always useful to be slightly early, so that it is possible to check in for any special instructions or situations and you can be ready to start your shift as scheduled. Ten minutes is recommended.
- Remove yourself from the VicNet schedule and notify the Volunteer Coordinator (or Front Desk) as far in advance as possible when a substitute is needed.
- Check in for each shift worked to maintain an accurate service record and to discuss with the Volunteer Coordinator any need to leave before the end of the assigned shift.
- Notify the Volunteer Coordinator of any changes of information in order that the volunteer's database record may be kept current.

## **Background Checks**

Background check forms for the Child Abuse/Neglect Central Registry, DPS Criminal History, and national sex offender registry are submitted for verification before being accepted as a volunteer and are renewed every three years. If something changes in your background during that time DCAC must be notified immediately.

DCAC relies on the expertise of law enforcement when a background check reveals a potential problem. DCAC will not accept volunteers if they have been convicted, have prior charges, or have charges pending for a felony or misdemeanor involving a sex offense, violent act, child abuse or neglect, or related acts that would pose a risk to children or DCAC's program's credibility.

Additionally, DCAC will not accept volunteers if they have been convicted, have prior charges, or have charges pending for a felony or misdemeanor involving theft within three years of the volunteer application date.

DCAC will not accept volunteers if they have a Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) disposition of Reason to Believe (RTB) for sexual abuse or physical abuse. All other RTB dispositions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and a determination made by DCAC's Chief Advancement Officer.

Due to the sensitive nature of DCAC's work, the Center reserves the right to deny volunteer services to anyone. Potential volunteers will be contacted upon acceptance of their application. *All information from the application and background check is kept strictly confidential. There is a \$11.95 fee we ask volunteers to cover to help us keep our funds reserved for client focused work.*

## **Volunteer Orientation/Training**

Every volunteer is required to attend a volunteer orientation prior to starting as a volunteer. General volunteer orientations will be conducted monthly.

If a period longer than 12 months passes without service, returning volunteers may be asked to attend the necessary orientations to begin serving again.

## **Ethics and Boundaries**

DCAC is committed to serving our clients, client families, employees, and the community in an ethical, legal and responsible manner. DCAC provides the Code of Ethical Conduct as a resource for all staff (employees, contract labor, interns, and volunteers) who conduct business/operational activities on behalf of the center.

Social, familial, sexual, and business relationships with current or previous DCAC clients are prohibited. This means that current and previous clients should **not** be enlisted to serve as volunteers.

*Please be mindful of your personal boundaries as well as those of our clients:*

- Don't share your personal life with the clients.
- Don't meet up with clients outside of the agency for any reason.
- Never let anyone outside the agency know the name of a client receiving services at DCAC.
- Never bring gifts to a client or accept personal gifts from a client.
- Don't ever "share secrets" with a client. If they ask if you can keep a secret, tell them no.

- If you see a client in the community, don't approach them as this could lead others to believe they are clients of DCAC.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality of DCAC client information is of utmost importance. Any information about children, families, employees or other volunteers at the DCAC is considered absolutely confidential.

All records and documents are and remain the sole property of the DCAC. All records and documents in the custody of DCAC volunteers are to be safeguarded and treated as confidential. Disposal or destruction of records and documents is to be made only in accordance with established requirements.

All information pertaining to clients served at DCAC is confidential. A volunteer is prohibited from giving any information regarding any case or client to any person, organization, or agency including but not limited to the client's name, description of the alleged offense reported, family members, or dates the client was seen/served. Information may be released only through the authorization of the President & CEO or through pre-approved DCAC inter-agency protocol guidelines.

If you should discover a client of DCAC is someone you know whether you hear that person's name or see them on-site, immediately notify your supervisor. The supervisor will then take responsibility for reassuring the client in question that you are a volunteer at DCAC and will adhere to our confidentiality agreement.

## Mandatory Reporting

We are all mandated reporters in the State of Texas. What does that mean?

*If a professional has reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person, the professional shall make a report not later than the 48th hour after the hour they first suspect that the child has been or may be abused or neglected. A professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report. Texas Family Code: Section 261.101*

Remember, you are their voice, not the investigator. Believe the child, remain calm, gather information like who, what, when they will see the person again and that is it. Report the abuse at the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 for situations where someone faces immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in death or serious harm. For non-urgent situations, you may make a report online.

## **Public Addresses and Articles for Publication**

Public addresses and articles for publication by DCAC volunteers must be cleared in advance through the Volunteer Coordinator. *No volunteer may represent him/herself as a spokesperson for the DCAC without prior approval from the Chief Advancement Officer.*

## **Dress Code**

It is important to remember that volunteers who are serving in the reception area, waiting rooms, in administrative offices, or other such positions that come into contact with our clients and guests represent a lasting impression on all of the staff and partners of the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center.

Each volunteer is furnished with a guest badge upon entry to the building which should be worn at all times when on duty. Dress conservatively and in accordance with your assigned position.

Volunteers and those serving throughout the center at seasonal or special events may wear business casual clothing or nice blue jeans. Please refrain from wearing leggings or yoga pants.

Tank tops, low-cut shirts, shirts exposing the mid-drift, and T-shirts with inappropriate slogans or graphics are not permitted for any volunteer assignment. Dress shorts no higher than mid-thigh are appropriate for outdoor events. We encourage comfortable shoes for all volunteer positions.

## **Documentation of Volunteer Hours**

It is especially important that volunteers report their service hours. Hours are valuable to DCAC and are reported for grant and funding sources.

When you arrive to volunteer, please use the Volunteer QR code at the front desk to sign in/out for your volunteer shift. Your PIN is typically the last seven digits of your phone number.

If you are not able to sign in using the iPad, please let the front desk know and they will provide a paper log to sign. If you forget to log your hours on the day of your volunteer assignment, hours may be emailed to the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteer@dcac.org](mailto:volunteer@dcac.org).

## **Complaint/Grievance Resolution**

Misunderstandings or conflicts can arise in any organization. To ensure an effective working environment, it is important that such matters be resolved before serious

problems arise. Most incidents resolve themselves naturally; however, should a situation persist that you believe is detrimental to you or DCAC we ask that you discuss it with the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Corrective Action**

It is the policy of DCAC to provide volunteers with every opportunity to resolve problems occurring in a volunteer's relationship with DCAC. The following guidelines have been established by DCAC for determining and handling documented unsatisfactory performance and/or unacceptable behavior on the part of any DCAC volunteer.

### ***Reasons for corrective actions to be taken include, but are not limited to:***

**Gross Negligence:** Action resulting in significant error or harm. The flagrant violation of a known state or agency rule, regulation, policy or procedure.

**Habitual Negligence:** The repetition of various acts demonstrating a lack of care or conscientiousness in carrying out the policies, guidelines, procedures and/or objectives of the agency.

**Violations of Law:** Actions resulting in a violation of DCAC's Affirmative Action Policy or other legal regulations.

**Unsatisfactory Job Performance:** Job performance and/or productivity consistently documented below what is expected or required.

## **Misconduct**

Actions that do not meet DCAC standards as established for safe, acceptable, legal, and efficient operation of the agency. *Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:*

- Inappropriate conduct with a child
- Violation of volunteer guidelines
- Knowingly disclosing confidential information to an individual not authorized to receive such information
- Meeting with clients outside of DCAC
- Reporting to volunteer under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Possession or storage of intoxicants and/or illicit drugs on duty
- Insubordination
- Verbal or physical fighting

- Habitually disrupting normal office routine or the performance of other volunteers
- Falsifying agency records or reports, including time or travel reports
- Using the perceived authority of the agency for personal benefit
- Excessive absenteeism
- Using agency equipment, time, supplies, etc. for personal use without prior approval
- Intentionally making false/misleading verbal or written statements in matters of DCAC interest



# CACTX Volunteer Policies

*Texas Standards for Children's Advocacy Centers, 2024 Edition*

*We follow best practices provided by the Children Advocacy Center of Texas.*

## Screening Requirements

All volunteers shall complete the following screening requirements:

- Attained a majority age (18 years or older);
- Submitted a volunteer application;
- Complete a personal interview with a designated CAC staff member;
- Submitted personal references, which are verified and checked by a designated CAC staff member; and
- Submitted to a national criminal history check, child abuse registry check, and a sex offender registry check.

Please note, the term "volunteer" throughout this standard refers to volunteers performing on-site duties at the CAC and volunteers involved with direct service activities. Special event volunteers that do not interface with clients or perform their duties on-site at the CAC may not be required to submit to the screening requirements outlined in this standard.

## Re-Screening

For longstanding volunteers, re-screening criminal history checks, child abuse registry, and sex offender registry checks, must take place at a minimum of every 3 years.

# Job Description: Activity Center Volunteer

**Description:** This volunteer should be comfortable with all ages of children and have excellent human relations skills for the sometimes challenging position. Dedication, flexibility, and a non-judgmental attitude are essential qualities.

**Responsibilities:** Interact with children using toys, games, arts and crafts, books, and movies. Provide snacks for children following their forensic interview, assist case managers as needed by providing a change of clothes and personal items if children are taken into CPS custody. Provide emotional support for children and offer feedback to case managers on an as-needed basis.

It is our expectation that volunteers orient themselves in the playroom so that they can see the doors at all times. This will allow you to be accessible to the children in the playroom and ensure the safety of the children while they are in the playroom.

We count on you to be available for your scheduled shift so please be on time and prepared to work. It is our request that you give us at least a two-hour notice in the event that you're unable to work your scheduled shift.

**Requirements:** Be a flexible, sensitive, compassionate, and non-judgmental person who is comfortable with children of all ages. Respect for client confidentiality is a must. Should be sensitive to the trauma of sexual abuse and use interpersonal skills to provide any needed support. Must be 18 years of age, successfully complete pre-volunteer screening, including Child Abuse/Neglect Central Registry and DPS Criminal History Check, and complete volunteer orientation.

**Supervision:** Reports to Volunteer Coordinator, Activity Center Child Care Attendant, Case Managers, and Assistant Directors

Day of Contacts:

- Activity Center Child Care Attendant
  - Leslie Santamaria, lsantamaria@dcac.org
- Assistant Director of Support Services
  - Marisha Devore, 214-319-1778, mdevore@dcac.org
- Interim Volunteer Coordinator
  - Liz Robinson, 214-208-1905, lrobinson@dcac.org

# Activity Center Guidelines

To maintain a safe child-friendly environment for the children who come to DCAC, the following guidelines have been put in place. Please remember that the playroom is not a childcare facility but rather a play environment for the children, created to facilitate the work of the professionals at DCAC.

*REMEMBER: You are in charge. Do not be afraid to speak up. The safety of this environment is up to you.*

## Safety

- Some children could exhibit developmental delays.
- Provide age-appropriate toys. Please keep an eye out for any broken toys that could be a choking hazard. Please remove those items from the play area or throw them away.
- Always place yourself in the room so you can always see the entire area.
- If a child discloses abuse or wants to talk about their situation, please validate the child's comment and notify a Family Advocate as soon as possible.
- Please ensure that conversations including sensitive content are taking place in confidential areas.
- A First Aid Kit is located in the Staff Break Room, in the closet behind the main door. Volunteers may use this to attend to minor cuts, bumps, or bruises. The volunteer should notify a Family Advocate immediately after the incident occurs or is reported to them.
- Children who are ill (running a high fever or vomiting) should be removed from the playroom. In addition, children with ringworm, scabies, skin irritations, lice, pink eye, and other contagious conditions should be removed from the playroom. The volunteer should notify a Family Advocate immediately upon detection.
- Report any concerns to a Family Advocate or to the front desk.

## Behavior Issues

- Children may be assertive, or even aggressive, with their play and others.
- Children who are known to exhibit aggressive behavior, sexual behavior

problems, and other behavioral problems may not be appropriate to be in the playroom and may be assigned to the Children's Programming Advocate.

- Children who exhibit inappropriate behavior while in the playroom may be asked to leave the area. The volunteer must notify staff immediately once the behavior is detected. The staff will call the child's caseworkers or caretaker to remove the child from the playroom.
- Redirect the child.
- Offer choices.
- Invite them to be your helper and have them sit next to you for a minute.
- If the negative behavior continues, report to a Family Advocate or to the front desk.

## **Holding Children/Hugging**

It is not possible to list all the kinds of behaviors that are inappropriate and prohibited and the following list, although not all-inclusive, provides examples of such prohibited, harmful, and inappropriate behaviors that violate DCAC policies:

- It is best not to hold any of the children.
- Invite the child to sit by you at the table.
- Offer them the opportunity to hold the book.
- Whenever possible, DCAC volunteers will avoid child/adult one-on-one interaction. If it becomes necessary for an adult/child one-on-one interaction, it will be conducted in a room that is visible, through a window or camera or in full visibility by another adult and with the door open. •
- Volunteer interaction with child clients should be interruptible and/or observable.
- DCAC volunteers will use appropriate touching only with the child's permission. This includes high-fives, fist bumps, and handshakes. If a child initiates other types of physical contact, such as hugs, hand holding or lap sitting, DCAC volunteers will do so in the presence of another adult. •
- DCAC volunteers will respect a child's right not to be touched and their right to say no. DCAC volunteers will ask the child before initiating any type of physical contact. If a child says no or indicates that he/she is uncomfortable with physical contact, the staff will refrain from touching them. At no time will any DCAC

volunteer touch a child in areas the child considers private or that are covered by a bathing suit.

## **Bathroom and Diapers**

- DO NOT go into the bathroom with a child.
- If a child cannot go to the bathroom alone, please ask a Family Advocate or the front desk staff to call the child's caregiver or caseworker.
- If a child needs to have his or her diaper changed, please ask a Family Advocate or the front desk staff to call the child's caregiver or caseworker.
- Standing outside the door and reassuring the child you are there is appropriate.
- Children and clients must always use the restroom provided in the Activity Center.

## **Activity Center Activity Buckets**

- Activity Buckets are in the Clothes Closet. Your volunteer badge will grant you access to the Clothes Closet area when held up to the door scanner.
- Select one of the activity buckets to use with the children in the playroom.
- Please return the activity bucket before introducing a new activity.

## **Clean Up**

- Please clean up one activity before moving to the next.
- You may ask a child and/or the child's caregivers to help you pick up the toys in the playroom.
- Place all playroom toys back on the shelves.
- During slow periods, volunteers are asked to complete tasks such as sanitizing toys, Clothes Closet maintenance, surface cleaning, or administrative tasks.

## Security

- For the safety of our children, please ensure the playroom doors always remain closed. Children are to remain in the Activity Center unless being escorted by DCAC staff or caseworker.
- At no time is a child allowed to leave the playroom without an authorized DCAC staff member or caregiver. No unattended children should be outside of the playroom.
- Children and Clients must always use the restroom provided in the Activity Center. No children or caregivers should be using the staff restroom in the front of the building for any reason.
- Volunteers have the responsibility to watch and monitor all entrances and exits at all times. This is crucial to the safety of all children in the playroom.
- Volunteers should always be visible in the playroom. Volunteers should only step out of the playroom to get a staff member when needed, get new activity buckets, or to take a quick break.
- Caregivers must remain in the waiting rooms even if their child is in an interview or therapy. Clients may not wait in the hallways, general waiting room or in their car.

Please know that every week you are here at DCAC, you are planting the seed of hope with a child. Our goal is to offer a safe, warm, and fun environment for all the children entering our building.

# Job Description:

## Dining Series Volunteer

**Description:** This volunteer will be assigned to assist with dining series where he/she will be expected to establish rapport and create a comfortable atmosphere for the children and accompanying adults who may be visiting DCAC.

This volunteer should be comfortable with all ages of children and have excellent human relations skills. Dedication, flexibility, and a non-judgmental attitude are essential qualities.

**Purpose of Position:** To establish rapport, set up dinner, serve food, and clean up the meal so families have a safe, fun, and comfortable environment during evening services.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Arrive 20-30 minutes prior to meal service for serving time and preparation
- Set up dinner service: gloves, plates, napkins, plasticware, drinks, dessert (if available)
- Greet and welcome each family/client
- Serve individual portions of food
- Package leftovers: baggies, plates, foil
  - Clean-up dinner service: wipe down all tables; wash, dry, and put away serving utensils; put supplies in closet

We count on you to be available for your scheduled shift so please be on time and prepared to work. We understand illness, family emergencies, and unavoidable events. It is our request that you give us at least two hours' notice if you're unable to work your scheduled shift.

**Requirements:** Be a flexible, sensitive, compassionate, and non-judgmental person who is comfortable with children of all ages. Have excellent human relations skills and sensitivity to cultural/ethnic differences. Respect for client confidentiality is a must. Must be 18 years of age, successfully complete pre-volunteer screening, including Child Abuse/Neglect Central Registry and DPS Criminal History Check, and complete volunteer orientation.

**Supervision by:** Volunteer Coordinator, Case Managers, and Assistant Directors.

# Volunteer Agreement

*Between Volunteers and the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center*

## **As a volunteer I will:**

- Interact with clients, guests, staff, and other volunteers in a courteous manner, respecting the dignity and rights of all
- Demonstrate/exercise excellent boundaries with children, teens, and parents to ensure that nothing compromises the investigative process and to ensure that children experience a physically and emotionally safe environment that promotes their healing
- Maintain confidentiality of all sensitive information
- Assume responsibility for familiarizing myself with and observing the rules and policies of the organization and my specific volunteer assignment
- Perform the duties and responsibilities, according to the job description, to the best of my abilities
- Present the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center in a positive manner before the general public

## **The Dallas Children's Advocacy Center will:**

- Respect my dignity and rights and treat me in a courteous manner
- Inform me of the organization's rules and policies
- Provide me with a job description that summarizes the duties of the job and limits of responsibility
- Orient, train, and supervise me for my volunteer assignment
- Keep accurate records of my involvement and provide references upon request
- Keep me informed about the organization through newsletters and other sources of information



# Acknowledgment Form

I acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand all policies and guidelines within the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center Volunteer Manual.

I understand it is my responsibility to comply with and implement all policies and procedures included in this document.

Additionally, I understand that failure to abide by these requirements may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of the volunteer relationship.

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Volunteer Name

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Volunteer Signature

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Date

***Thank you for dedicating your time and service to  
Dallas Children's Advocacy Center.***

***We could not provide our life-changing services  
to children and families without you!***