

VOLUNTEERS

Overview

The history of the Catholic Church is built on people volunteering their time and talent. Volunteers are vital to the success of parish ministries. The following guidelines were developed to support the work of the volunteers and to ensure their safety and proper running of the parish.

Definition of a volunteer

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a volunteer as “a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service”. A Volunteer is also not an employee functioning under their job description.

Selection, Screening and Assignment of Duties

Volunteers should be at least 18 years of age. If under 18, the volunteer must be accompanied by a parent or have been given permission by the parent to perform volunteer activities while supervised by another adult.

All volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Application. This application form asks the volunteer to provide references. It is highly recommended to check references. Each long-term volunteer should be interviewed as part of the application process. Please do your best to utilize volunteers that are the appropriate age and have the skills necessary to perform the tasks/duties they are being asked to do. Although, not recommended, if a volunteer is asked to perform a task such as plumbing, electrical or roof work, the volunteer should be licensed. It is okay not to accept a volunteer for a certain position, or not at all in order to limit risk.

All volunteers must complete the required Archdiocese of Santa Fe's Abuse Awareness Training. Any volunteer that will be working with children or vulnerable adults must be required to have a background check completed. For those individuals that will be involved in fidelity (money handling) positions such as counting collections, working with scrip, etc., it is recommended that credit checks be conducted. No one will be allowed to volunteer without being screened and granted permission. For minors, a permission form from parents/guardians is required.

Adequate records need to be kept on the selection, screening and assignment of duties for each volunteer. We recommend maintaining these records for a period of three (3) years.

Limit the issuance of facility keys to volunteers. Keys should only be checked out to volunteer supervisors and returned to the office upon completion of the project. It is recommended to maintain a record of all keys that have been checked out. Do not permanently assign keys to volunteers.

Orientation and Training

Ideally, a volunteer position description should be created for each potential volunteer activity. This description should outline the tasks the volunteer will be expected to perform, the skills or qualities a volunteer should possess to perform their task and any orientation or training that the parish can provide.

Each volunteer must be trained in the proper use of equipment or tools needed to perform a task. The equipment should be inspected to determine that it is in safe operating condition and equipped with all applicable safety requirements. If there is any doubt, do not allow the equipment to be used. The parish should be responsible to provide any personal protective equipment for volunteers as needed. Examples would include gloves, safety glasses or respirators.

Never allow a volunteer to provide homemade equipment. Examples would include scaffolds, ladders, grills, cooking equipment, dunking booths and playground or carnival ride type equipment.

It is highly recommended that volunteers take the applicable online training module(s) available through Catholic Mutual's training website: www.cmgconnect.org.

Certain volunteer activities and projects may require Release Forms to be signed by the volunteer, especially for activities with an increased liability exposure such as construction activities.

Supervision and Support

Volunteers must report to someone in a supervisory role so they know who to ask for guidance. Before any project or activity begins, supervisory staff or designated adult supervisors must be present to oversee the work. This is especially important when minors are participating. Support for the volunteers should also be provided by designating someone they can go to with problems that arise from their volunteer work.

Choose supervisors wisely. Ensure they have the ability, temperament and are given the direction to ensure volunteers are used in a safe and effective manner.

Injury/Emergency Procedures

It is important to know what to do if a volunteer is injured or in case of emergency. First aid equipment should be readily accessible in areas used by volunteers. A telephone or other means to contact emergency responders should be available.

Volunteers should know who to call at the parish in case of emergency or injury. If an emergency occurs, a Parish Accident Report Form must be completed as soon as possible and reported to the appropriate personnel.

Be prepared to cancel any projects that take place outside in case of inclement weather such as lightning, strong winds, etc.

Coverage for Volunteers

Volunteers are not covered under the Archdiocesan Workers' Compensation Program. However, as long as they are actively participating in a parish approved activity, the Archdiocese has a program in place to assist volunteers with out-of-pocket medical expenses that result from a bodily injury.

Volunteer Coordinator

Parishes should consider designating a volunteer coordinator who would be responsible for overseeing the selection of volunteers, assignment of duties, orientation and training and the designation of select individuals to supervise the volunteers. A Volunteer coordinator could be an employee or a volunteer.

Catholic Mutual has developed a handbook to support the work of the Volunteer Coordinator. Please feel free to contact the Catholic Mutual Claims/Risk Manager at (505) 831-8122 if you require further assistance or have additional questions.

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

This form is to be completed, signed and returned to the Volunteer Coordinator at the parish, school or agency at which you wish to provide volunteer services. A copy of this completed form will be kept on file.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Last Name	First	Middle	Last 4 digits of SSN	Date
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Present Street Address	City	State	Zip	Daytime Phone
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Permanent Street Address (if different from present address)			Cell Phone	E-mail Address
_____			_____	_____

Have you ever volunteered for a Diocesan location? yes no Are you 18 years of age or older? yes no
 If yes, give details: _____

I am interested in VOLUNTEERING at: school _____; parish _____; agency _____

Interested in volunteering for school activities religious education youth ministry coaching other _____

I am available mornings afternoons evenings weekdays weekends Date available _____

Volunteer Activities

Please list all current and previous volunteer activities beginning with your current or most recent position first. Use additional pages if needed. Include any other names worked under if different from the name you used on this form.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Parish/Company/Organization Name	Phone	From	To
_____	_____	_____	_____
Address	City	State	Zip
_____	_____	_____	_____
Duties/Responsibilities	~~~~~		
_____	_____	_____	_____
Parish/Company/Organization Name	Phone	From	To
_____	_____	_____	_____
Address	City	State	Zip
_____	_____	_____	_____
Duties/Responsibilities	~~~~~		
_____	_____	_____	_____
Parish/Company/Organization Name	Phone	From	To
_____	_____	_____	_____
Address	City	State	Zip
_____	_____	_____	_____
Duties/Responsibilities	~~~~~		

References

Please provide two personal/professional references. If you have resided in this area for less than two years, please provide at least one reference from your previous area of residence.

Name _____			Name _____		
City _____	State _____	Phone _____	City _____	State _____	Phone _____
Relationship _____		Years Known _____	Relationship _____		Years Known _____

IMPORTANT – Please read and sign below

The information provided on this form is true and complete. If accepted as a volunteer, any misstatement or omission of fact on this form may result in suspension of my services. I grant permission to check my background and references and release the diocese and all diocesan locations from any and all liability that may result.

I further understand that all persons who will have contact with children or vulnerable adults are required to comply with Diocesan Safe Environment policies and procedures and are required to undergo a state and federal criminal background check.

Print Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____