



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF MARIN AND SOUTHERN SONOMA  
COUNTIES



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# **Volunteer Handbook**



# Welcome

Welcome to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties. We are thrilled that you have chosen to volunteer with our organization. Volunteers are a vital part of achieving our goals: providing young people with a safe, positive environment, opportunities and expectations, and supportive relationships with peers and adults. We hope that you find the duties of your particular volunteer job description to be fulfilling and that your volunteer experience with us is rewarding and positive. This handbook includes details about our organization, the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers, and volunteer policies and practices in effect at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties.

Volunteering with youth carries a great responsibility. The examples you set and the influence you have may be the determining factor as to whether or not our Club Members become responsible members of society.

Our organization has made every effort to establish policies that are fair and generally acceptable to our type of organization. This manual cannot possibly cover all situations and conditions that might occur, but an attempt has been made to include the important aspects of volunteerism. Our policies are constantly being reviewed and revised in order to be meaningful and stay current with changing times. The policies described in this manual are intended as information only. They do not, by reason of their publication, confer any special consideration or privileges to specific persons nor do they in any manner constitute a promise or contract of volunteerism, or guarantee any specific condition of volunteerism. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties reserves the right to change, from time to time, any or all of the policies, procedures, rules or benefits described in this manual.

The following policies were created to apply in most situations that may occur; however, where the Boys & Girls Club of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties believes that the individual needs or circumstances of a volunteer require special consideration, exceptions to the policies may be made. *This manual is for you, and it should be read carefully and kept for reference.*

Thank you for your support.



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## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties is to *enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.*

## **Youth Development Strategy**

Our goal is to provide programs and services that promote and enhance the development of youth by instilling:

- A sense of Competence
- A sense of Usefulness
- A sense of Belonging
- A sense of Power or Influence

We strive to enable all youth to help themselves realize their potential for growth and development. Our programs are created by youth development professionals and are offered in five core program areas:

- Health and Life Skills
- Education and Career Development
- The Arts
- Leadership and Character Development
- Sports, Fitness, and Recreation

Within this framework we hope to reach our goals as youth development professionals and provide a positive and safe place for youth to learn and grow.



## Chapter 1: Volunteer Program

### The Importance of Volunteers

There are three strong reasons BGCMSSC incorporates volunteers into its programs. First, it helps build organizational strength. Volunteers strengthen programs with the unique skills and life experiences they bring to our Clubs. Second, you, as volunteers, have credibility that paid staff does not. You can go into communities and promote the organization because you believe in it. Volunteering is a personal choice, not your job. Never underestimate the power of volunteer advocacy. Third, using volunteers extends the resources of our organization. Volunteers provide extra hands that enable program staff to do tasks and activities that might not otherwise get done. Volunteers also provide valuable input to program leadership and staff.

### Why Volunteer?

People volunteer for many different reasons. Some volunteer because they want to enter the youth development profession and wish to gain experience in the field. Some have outside careers and wish to give back to the community. Others are retired and choose to give their time and share their wealth of experience. Whatever the reason for volunteering, everyone receives personal benefits from their work. There is a great deal of satisfaction that comes from being involved in the lives of others.

### Boys & Girls Club volunteer staff:

- Are at least 16 years old
- Submit an application
- Complete a criminal background check showing no record (*18yrs and older*)
- Interview with Director of Marin Programs/Volunteer Coordinator and/or Program Director at Petaluma Site
- Attend orientation
- Sign an agreement verifying that they understand procedures and what is expected of them

What is most important in volunteer placement is that an individual's skills, talents and time commitments match and meet the needs of the Club. The application process assists in determining placement.



## **Volunteer and Other Classifications**

*Volunteer:* Any individual who, by choice and without monetary reward, contributes time and service in one or more of the core program areas on a regular basis to assist the Club in the accomplishment of its mission.

*For-Credit Volunteers:* Those who receive credit from another agency for volunteer service and time (such as court-mandated volunteers, students or interns.)

*Members:* Kids who are registered Boys and Girls Clubs Members.

*Paid Staff:* Paid staff are employees of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties who help the Club accomplish its mission.

## **Responsibility for Activating Volunteer Staff**

The Director of Marin Programs and/or the Volunteer Coordinator approve and activate a volunteer. When a volunteer's qualifications and experience are such that the person can fulfill a volunteer position, a position will be assigned. The Director of Marin Programs and/ the Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for activation and termination of all volunteer staff.

## **Volunteerism is At-Will**

Every Club volunteer has an at-will relationship with the Club. Volunteers are free to resign their position at any time, just as the Club is free to terminate a volunteer for any reason at any time.

## **Recognition**

Volunteers will be recognized on an annual basis. Informal recognition of volunteers will also take place year 'round', in a variety of ways through Club employees and members.

## **Volunteer Count**

The number of volunteers, volunteer hours and a variety of other data will be collected on a monthly basis.



## **Chapter 2 - Harassment-Free Work Environment**

The Club will not tolerate any harassment of any volunteer staff relating to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. The Club will not tolerate any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or any other conduct of a sexual nature by a female or a male. These actions constitute harassment when:

Submission to or rejection of such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a condition of volunteerism; or becomes the basis for a placement decision regarding the volunteer; or creates a hostile, offensive or fearful work environment.

Harassment of any nature is a serious offense. Retaliation against a volunteer staff member who makes charges of harassment is also serious and will not be tolerated. Harassment or retaliation will result in action, up to and including discharge.

Any volunteer staff member believing he/she has been a victim of harassment should talk to the Director of Operations, Director of Marin Programs, and/or their specific Program Director.

## **Chapter 3: Volunteer Procedures**

### **Assignment**

A volunteer can be assigned to a position when all the application paperwork has been returned. Assignment to a specific position will occur when a volunteer appears to have the skills and abilities to meet the needs of the Club and its members.

### **Attendance**

The positions volunteer staff fill are very vital to our Club Members. Therefore, it is essential that volunteers be punctual and regular in attendance. Volunteers need to sign in and out according to regulations established by the Club. Volunteers are expected to remain on duty for the full time agreed upon, except when conditions vary and are approved by the supervisor. Volunteers should notify the supervisor as soon as possible of any planned excused absence.

### **Personal & Professional Reference Check**

References for all potential volunteer staff of the Club, who have direct contact with children, will be checked.



## **Background Check**

Any employee or volunteer, 18 years of age or older, who has direct contact or works within the general vicinity of our Club Members must complete and pass our criminal background check procedures.

## **Evaluations**

All Club volunteers assigned a position will be provided with the opportunity for an objective review of their performance measured against the position description to help them reach their potential. A position evaluation of each volunteer will be completed annually, or when a position assignment change occurs.

Recommendations based on a volunteer's performance will be made in writing by the supervisor and placed in the volunteer's personnel file.

## **Grievance Procedures**

Any volunteer who has a complaint concerning the application or interpretation of any volunteer personnel policy should discuss the matter with his/her immediate supervisor. If the volunteer and the immediate supervisor cannot reach a mutually satisfactory solution to the grievance, it may be reviewed by the Director of Operations.

## **Orientation**

All new volunteers must attend a mandatory orientation to the Club covering issues such as Club philosophy and the core programs.

## **Personnel Record**

Individual volunteer records are maintained and kept confidential.

## **Position Descriptions**

Written position descriptions are maintained for all volunteer staff positions. Position descriptions are the responsibility of the Program Director and will be updated as needed.



## **Recording Hours**

All volunteers must record their hours of service. This should be done at the site where they volunteer. The Program Director will train the volunteer in the process.

## **Resignations**

Resignation is defined as a separation from the Club initiated by the volunteer. A few weeks notice of intent to resign would be appreciated and should be given in writing to the volunteer's immediate supervisor. Volunteers who resign are requested to schedule an exit interview with the Director of Operations or the Director of Marin Programs. This interview can be by phone or in person. The purpose of the exit interview is to:

- Review reasons for the resignation
- Discuss possible changes that might be needed in the position description
- Express our appreciation for their involvement with the Club
- Verify the return of all documents and property of the Club

## **Supervision**

Each volunteer will be assigned an immediate supervisor. All concerns, problems, criticisms and suggestions should be brought to your immediate supervisor. Please feel free to express yourself. Volunteers often offer a fresh perspective, so your suggestions are welcome.

If you are troubled by something, it is best to address the situation at the onset. Resolving concerns as early as possible avoids stressful situations and hurt feelings. Please feel free to express your concerns.

## **Trial Period and Transfers**

It is generally accepted that new volunteers are on a "trial period" for the first three months. If service is satisfactory and interest level remains high, volunteers will automatically be placed on a regular status. Where the frequency of the volunteer work has not been adequate for the supervisor or the volunteer to determine whether or not the placement is satisfactory for both parties, the initial period may be extended.



## Termination

All volunteerism with the Club is at-will and may be terminated at any time, with or without cause and without prior notice by the Club. All terminations will be documented in writing and a copy will be placed in the volunteer's personnel file.

## Training

All training will be conducted by the volunteer's immediate supervisor or other club paid staff. There will be continuous training of all club workers, under direction of the Director of Operations, the Director of Marin Programs, or individual Program Directors, through regular staff meetings and other club trainings.

## Chapter 4: Your Relationship with Members

### Guidelines to follow:

- Introduce yourself to the members.
- Treat members with respect and dignity.
- Be dependable. Keep your promise.
- Leave your personal problems at home.
- Pass along any member concerns which you feel need further attention to the Program Director.
- Do not accept money, goods or gifts from members (except items such as handmade crafts, cards, etc.)

The safety and security of Club Members is of utmost concern. Inappropriate touching or contact with youth by volunteers is prohibited. **You are not allowed to be alone with a child under any circumstances.** If a volunteer has any knowledge of or becomes aware of any circumstances which may endanger the health, safety or well-being of Club Members, the matter must be brought to the attention of the Program Director.

Volunteers should not have contact with Club Members outside of regular Club activities. If there is evidence of inappropriate, non-Club interaction between a volunteer and a Club member(s), the following steps may be taken:



- The volunteer will be suspended.
- Meetings will be held with the volunteer and club member to gather facts. Staff or other members will be consulted as needed.
- The Program Director will review the facts to determine if a policy violation has occurred.
- If a violation is established, the volunteer-Club relationship will be terminated.

## **Chapter 5: General Information**

### **Confidentiality**

Information regarding Club members, paid staff and volunteers, both verbal and written, is often privileged and confidential. Personal information is not to be released without written consent of the individual involved.

### **Grooming and Dress**

All volunteer staff should be dressed and groomed in an appropriate manner.

The following guidelines are to be followed at all times.

- No clothing can advertise or have reference to tobacco products, drugs, profanity, alcohol, racism or any other inappropriate image.
- Shorts are permitted, but must be of an appropriate length and cannot be “skintight.”
- All shirts must have sleeves (tank tops, halter tops, etc are not permitted).
- Shoes appropriate for the workplace must be worn at all times. No “flip-flops” unless appropriate for the activity. (i.e. swimming, boating, etc.).
- No hats of any kind should be worn indoors unless for medical reasons or the day has been designated as “Hat Day” for the entire Club.
- No cutoff jeans or sweatpants are to be worn.
- Any visible tattoo’s cannot be related to or endorse tobacco products, drugs, profanity, alcohol, racism, gang activity or any other inappropriate image.

Personal appearance should be a matter of concern for each volunteer. If your supervisor feels your attire and/or grooming is out of place, you may be asked to leave your workplace until you are properly attired and/or groomed.



## **Drug-Free Workplace**

The Club is a drug-free workplace. The possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs and-or alcohol is prohibited within our workplace environment. All volunteers and staff are prohibited from entering the workplace under the influence of illegal substances and/or alcohol and are required to abide by the policy. All volunteers, staff and consultants are required to inform appropriate supervisors of policy violations. Persons violating this policy will be subjected to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.

## **Holidays**

The following holidays are observed by the Club:

New Year's Eve	Labor Day	Christmas Eve
New Year's Day	Thanksgiving and day after	Christmas Day
Independence Day	Memorial Day	Presidents Day

## **Hours of Operation**

Normal Club program hours are generally after school Monday - Friday 2:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. During Camp weeks (Summer/Spring Break, etc.) the Club is open Monday- Friday- 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

## **Injuries**

All injuries or accidents must be reported to the Program Director at once. Forms are available for accidents or incidents involving members and volunteers.

## **Media Relations**

Written or verbal statements for publications regarding the Club shall be released only by the President and CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties.

## **Personal Belongings**

The Club cannot be responsible for the loss of personal funds or belongings, nor is it covered by insurance for such loss. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each volunteer to adequately safeguard personal belongings.



## **Smoking and Tobacco Use**

Use of tobacco products is prohibited in Club vehicles and on Club property and while engaging in Club activities. Tobacco use is prohibited in Club parking lots and while volunteers are on breaks. If you must smoke on your break we ask that you do so around the block, out of view from the Club and that you remove your volunteer badge.

## **Telephone Usage**

Program phones are restricted to the business of the organization. Volunteers should inform their friends and relatives that they are to restrict personal calls except in the case of emergency. Likewise, volunteers are asked to make calls of a personal nature only when absolutely necessary. Text messaging is also prohibited while volunteering. Cell phone use is not allowed while interacting with Club Members.

## **Transportation**

Volunteer staff are forbidden to transport Club members for Club activities in their personal vehicles.

## **Working Conditions**

The physical working conditions in the Club must comply with legal requirements of safety and sanitation. It is the responsibility of all volunteer staff to immediately report and correct, if possible, hazards which may come to their attention.

## **Chapter 6: Standards of Conduct**

Members of the Club deserve the best possible examples of conduct, decorum and good citizenship. The behavior of volunteers sets an example for our youth to follow. It is expected that all volunteers will conduct themselves in an appropriate manner that reflects the goals and mission of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties.

The Club tries to keep rules to a minimum. However, a few regulations are always needed to provide clear understanding for all volunteers. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive or to cover every situation. If a volunteer violates any rules established by the Club, including the following rules, that person may be subject to discipline up to, and including immediate discharge. Notwithstanding, volunteerism is considered to be at-will and the volunteer may be terminated with or without cause.



Disciplinary action may include the following: oral and/or written reprimands, a probationary period or termination.

The following violations are subject to disciplinary action:

- Inappropriate contact with youth
- Unsatisfactory work performance
- Excessive tardiness or absenteeism
- Absence without notice
- Creating or contributing to a disturbance
- Insubordination
- Lying, cheating or stealing
- Use of Club facility and/or equipment without permission
- Malicious damage to Club property
- Illegal conduct of any kind



## **Volunteer Clubhouse Site Orientation Check List**

During your first visit to the Clubhouse site you are assigned to following your formal volunteer orientation, we'd like you to make sure that you meet the following folks and are informed of the following Clubhouse practices...

- Meeting with the Program Director to learn more about the specific Clubhouse site
- Introductions to all of the Club's Program Coordinators
- Tour of the Clubhouse site
- Introductions to other volunteers at the site
- Learn where adults use bathrooms at the Club. If adults and kids use the same bathrooms, what is the process for ensuring kid/adult privacy?
- Learn where to find the Club's daily program schedule
- Learn what the most popular activities and programs are at the Clubhouse site
- Learn the basic rules of the Clubhouse site
- Become matched up with a specific staff person to shadow them for the day
- Introduction to all of the Club Members during the daily Club Meeting or after snack



## **Boys & Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties**

I have received a copy of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties Volunteer Handbook and have been afforded the opportunity to ask questions regarding its content. I agree to comply with the organizations policies and procedures detailed in this handbook.

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*Volunteer's Signature*

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*Date*

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*Director/Volunteer Coordinator Signature*

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*Date*