



# Volunteer and Intern

---

## Quick Reference Guide for Staff Supervisors

September 2017

For more information, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator:

Micki Hickox

[mhickox@interfaithservices.org](mailto:mhickox@interfaithservices.org)

760-489-6380, ext. 204

## **Who are Interfaith volunteers and interns?**

---

Volunteers and interns are an integral part of the culture of Interfaith. In 1979, Interfaith began by a group of volunteers from various faith organizations. The 75 to 85 volunteers ran the organization during the first 18-months of operation.

As a nonprofit organization, the volunteer Board of Directors provides governance and ambassadorship to the organization and community. In addition, thousands of volunteers and interns throughout Interfaith carry out the mission of caring for children, adults and families in the community, and are proud of the unique contributions they make every day.

Volunteers and interns are ambassadors for Interfaith. An element of their job, in partnership with all Interfaith staff, is to serve client needs completely and with a high level of customer service, respect and courtesy, and to represent Interfaith to the community at large. We want their time with us to be as enjoyable and worthwhile as possible, and believe that by working together we can solve problems, meet challenges, and maintain a pleasant and productive environment for all involved.

Interfaith's most successful form of recruiting volunteers is through referrals -- people share their volunteer experiences inspiring others to get involved here!

During FY16-17, Interfaith volunteers gave over 47,000 hours of service and were 2,800 people strong!

## **Purpose of this Quick Reference Guide**

---

The purpose of this quick reference guide is to provide staff supervisor's a snapshot of information, and important details about preparing for and integrating volunteers and interns into their programs to meet and exceed goals, objectives, and provide exceptional service to Interfaith clients while working alongside staff.

Volunteers and interns give their time and talents to Interfaith because they are committed to our cause and the plight of their neighbors. They make a commitment to help because it is important to them to contribute at the highest level, and feel they are a part of the solution.

Volunteers are donors and it is imperative for staff at Interfaith to place a real value on their work. Through training, feedback, respect, communication and appreciation, you are showing them their service contributes to client, staff, and agency successes.

## PREPARATION

---

Be ready for a volunteer or intern to start work in your department:

- Designate a workspace or office sharing option
- Request an email address for long-term interns from the HR director
- Delegate a staff person or experienced volunteer to mentor the new volunteer
  - ✓ Staff supervisors mentor interns
- Schedule time to meet with the volunteer and intern on their first day of service
  - ✓ Share the goals of your department, programs, and projects with volunteers and interns
  - ✓ Reiterate the duties and responsibilities the volunteer or intern will be performing

Note: The volunteer coordinator provides volunteers and interns a job description for each assignment during the onboarding process.

## INTRODUCTIONS

---

Introduce the new volunteer or intern to:

- All department staff, volunteers, interns, and any Interfaith employee you come in contact with.

When introducing the new volunteer or intern:

- Describe how the volunteer or intern will be helping, their assignments, where and when they will work, their background, affiliation to Interfaith, etc.

## LOGISTICS

---

Share with the volunteer or intern the details for your department and the building/facility:

- Hours of operation
- Parking – inform them of any restrictions
- Where to put their personal belongings
- Get access through a code-locked door, and know the volunteer code (4357 or 4357\*)
- Dress code and restrictions (such as closed-toe shoes in the pantry and kitchen areas)
- Staff lounge/breakroom and Restrooms
- Office supplies and equipment (photocopier, telephone, etc.)
- Housekeeping supplies
- Supplies to get the job done (clean-up, food storage, tools, forms, etc.)
- Opening and closing procedures (when relevant)
- Changes to the work area (such as the renovation at headquarters) and “Plan B” when changes are scheduled to occur

## PROCEDURES

---

Ensure volunteers knows how and when to:

- Receive a donation
  - ✓ Each donor must complete a donation receipt for Interfaith records.
- Answer the telephone
  - ✓ “Thank you for calling Interfaith. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, how can I help you?”
- Use the telephone system, including paging, and have access to the employee phone list (if relevant)
- Where to get help or how to address a client who is having a difficult time

## **PROCEDURES** (continued)

- Use the "panic button" (if working at the front desk)
- Wear a hat or hairnet each time they enter the food pantry and kitchen
  - ✓ Interfaith hats available to kitchen and pantry volunteers and interns from the volunteer coordinator
- How to operate an Interfaith vehicle (if relevant)

## **SAFETY**

---

Ensure volunteers know the safety rules and procedures for your department and building/facility:

- Fire
- Earthquake and other natural disasters
- Active shooter (Run. Hide. Fight.)
- When to call 9-1-1
- Emergency exits
- Safety check on Interfaith vehicles
- Telephone usage when driving an Interfaith vehicle
- Lifting, carrying, stocking heavy items
- How to report a safety concern/violation

## **TRAINING**

---

Involve volunteers in department training sessions and information sharing/updates:

- Describe your management style and preferences
- Explain when procedures and processes change, and why the changes are happening
  - ✓ Encourage feedback and ideas from volunteers and interns
- Ensure volunteers or interns are aware of the resources available to clients internally (through Interfaith) and externally (outside agencies)
- Train volunteers so there is always "something for them to do"
  - ✓ Provide meaningful work for them to do whenever their normal tasks are completed, and when client meetings, client walk-ins, etc. are slow
  - ✓ Assign tasks that are a value-add and not "busy work"
  - ✓ Ask other staff if their department(s) needs assistance

## **COMMUNICATION**

---

Communicating with volunteers and interns is important especially since it can be days or weeks between their times of service

- When using email, always BCC (blind copy) volunteers
  - ✓ Sharing volunteer contact information including email addresses can be a privacy violation if a volunteer or intern has not provided permission to share
- Communicate all staff changes when appropriate
- Communicate procedure changes and anything that effects your department
- Communicate client changes when appropriate, such as when a client is banned from the property
- Before you hire someone who has been volunteering or interning, consider talking to the volunteer coordinator about their service, performance, etc.

## FEEDBACK/EVALUATION

---

Interfaith's policy is to provide verbal feedback to volunteers rather than written evaluations. We believe in a "no surprises" approach that is informal, and cultivates teamwork. Please connect with volunteers and interns on a regular basis:

- ❑ Be open to questions, even when asked multiple times
  - ✓ People might be nervous when beginning a new job, even a volunteer or intern position. They want to do well, and will work best in a supportive, share-the-knowledge environment (Which Interfaith is!)
- ❑ Let volunteers and interns know how they are doing, which is especially important during their first few weeks of service/initial training, when they are learning their job
  - ✓ Talk to the volunteer or intern in a private area or office space
  - ✓ Interns will have evaluation forms for you to complete and submit to their schools

Be specific when providing feedback:

- ❑ Begin by telling the volunteer or intern what they do well. Follow with suggestions on how to improve and the process to do that. Finish the conversation on a high note (i.e., why their service matters to Interfaith clients, staff, and your program specifically)
  - ✓ Give the volunteer or intern a timeframe when you will meet again and re-evaluate their progress
  - ✓ Provide them with a staff person or experienced volunteer as a mentor
- ❑ Tackle a challenge or issue sooner rather than later!
  - ✓ Make the volunteer coordinator aware of any concerning challenge/issue when it occurs
  - ✓ Talk to the volunteer or intern about your concerns with the volunteer coordinator present
  - ✓ Be specific about the areas that need improvement or the problems happening
  - ✓ Provide tangible ways to correct the situation, or consider other volunteer options, etc.
  - ✓ Always meet in a private office (such as volunteer services)

### Terminating a Volunteer or Intern

Interfaith appreciates the service people in our community bring through volunteerism and internships. It is our responsibility to provide job descriptions, ample training, updates on any operational changes, regular feedback on their performance, and advise them if they are not performing to the job standards. Usually, terminating a volunteer or intern occurs when their service is unsatisfactory or their behavior egregious, falling outside the bounds of Interfaith's culture and integrity, and the last resort.

### ***Think about the value of volunteers and interns and how they can...***

---

- ❑ Be a partner and make an impact on your department
  - ✓ Fund a program
  - ✓ Fill a position while you recruit a new staff person
  - ✓ Provide a new skill set
  - ✓ Bring their relevant experience and success to support your program goals and objectives
  - ✓ Connect Interfaith to organizations and people in our community who can be champions for our clients, staff, programs and services (corporate partners; foundations; academia; faith organizations; private citizens)
  - ✓ Serve clients
  - ✓ Mentor staff
- ❑ Provide an opportunity for your non-management staff to develop management skills
  - ✓ Collaboration
  - ✓ Delegation
  - ✓ Mentoring and Supervision