



Center for the Heart



# Volunteer Handbook

Updated 5/16/2024

[WWW.CENTERFOTHEHEART.ORG](http://WWW.CENTERFOTHEHEART.ORG)



# Welcome to our Community!

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for becoming an active part of the C4TH community. Volunteers are the heart of our organization, so your success is the center of what we do. Our goal is to provide you with support to make your volunteer experience a great one.

C4TH appreciates the time, talent and dedication given by volunteers, so we will creatively find ways to show our gratitude throughout the year. However, we also believe that the greatest “thanks” we can give to our volunteers is to work efficiently, so that we may see our vision fulfilled. This handbook was created to help us do just that!

Should you need assistance at any point, please feel free to be in touch. We are here to support you...every step of the way.

Warm regards,

**Holly Strelzik**

Founder



Center for  
the Heart

# Introduction

## OUR VISION

A world where every individual has access to compassionate, end-of-life and grief care that supports their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, and honors their life journey.

## OUR MISSION

To empower individuals, families, and communities to ensure that every person, regardless of their ability to pay, can navigate end-of-life and loss experiences with compassion, dignity, grace, and peace. Supports their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, and honors their life journey.

## WHO WE SERVE

We believe that our support services should be available to all! Through the generosity of our donors, for those unable to pay, we offer free care or partial scholarships to help cover the costs.

## OUR VALUES

- **Compassion:** Providing care and support to families during difficult times, regardless of their ability to pay
- **Empowerment:** Enabling individuals and families to make informed decisions and find peace
- **Collaboration:** Working together with patients, families, and other organizations to provide comprehensive care
- **Interconnection:** We are committed to supporting and collaborating with other nonprofit organizations that share our mission and values.

# What You Can Expect From Us

## **GOOD COMMUNICATION**

Through emails, calls, newsletters, and social media, we will keep you updated on C4TH news, happenings in Center For The Heart, and any information pertinent to your volunteer position. Most importantly, we will make sure you know how welcome and appreciated you are...at all times.

## **AMPLE SUPPORT**

Our goal is to be prepared for your arrival and provide you with adequate information, training, and assistance for success in your new role. We will also strive to offer learning and social opportunities, and to match you to interesting and important projects. We will respect your skills and individual needs, and help you make a difference.

## **YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE VALUED**

We will strive to provide ongoing feedback, and be receptive and open-minded to your comments and suggestions. We will always value your contribution.

## **WE BELIEVE IN THE BEAUTY OF DIFFERENCIES.**

We know that in Center For The Heart, the collective sum of our individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, self-expression, and talent is what makes us unique. We are the fibers of a vibrant tapestry...most beautiful together. Your voice matters at C4TH!

# What We Expect of Our Volunteers

**Center For The Heart** is committed to upholding the highest standards of conduct and service. When you are serving as an C4TH volunteer, we ask that you please do the same. Here are a few service guidelines that we kindly request you follow:

**Be warm and casual, but professional.** Remember, the first impression you create may be a lasting one.

**Be responsible.** Service begins and ends with individuals. While you cannot control what others do, you can guarantee the quality of your own volunteer work. Strive to be a positive C4TH role model, and don't be afraid to ask for help.

**Be positive.** A positive attitude is contagious. Approaching your assignment with enthusiasm and dedication will positively impact members and other volunteers. Some other tips:

- Raise concerns and share ideas in a positive fashion; focus on solutions, not problems.
- Respond positively to complaints; never argue or dismiss someone's point of view.
- Offer additional services and information; add value to each interaction.

**Be friendly, courteous and helpful.** Common courtesy goes a long way toward making a favorable impression on our current and potential members, volunteers, donors, staff, and the general public. Smile, practice active listening, and treat each person with kindness, and as an individual.

**Be knowledgeable.** The public sees you as someone who represents C4TH, and they expect prompt, courteous and accurate responses to their questions and concerns. So, please stay up-to-date on our programs and services by reading our emails, staying connected to social media, and by regularly checking our website,

# Volunteer Communications

## **Computer Access**

As an important part of our team, we ask the following of you:

- Have regular access to the Internet and a private email address. Email is our main form of communication to share information, such as volunteer instructions, opportunities and confirmations. If you do not have computer access, we ask that you find a friend or family member who can help you with your communications with the volunteer department. If this is not possible, please speak with C4TH staff.
- Respond to emails from C4TH in a timely manner. We are committed to answering emails our emails within 48 business hours.

## **Representing C4TH**

When you're serving as a volunteer for C4TH, what you say and do reflects on C4TH as a whole. We know volunteers may have a variety of beliefs and values, and we sincerely accept this diversity of thought. But if there is an issue on which C4TH has not taken a position, you should remain neutral on the matter while representing C4TH. Any personal comments you make should be clearly identified as personal comments. Finally, as a volunteer, you are permitted to act as a representative of C4TH, but please do so only to the extent described in your position description.

## **Media Contact and Public Commentary**

Media relations can be complex. For that reason, we ask that, as a C4TH volunteer, you don't speak for C4TH with the media or at public meetings without prior permission from C4TH leadership. Please send all media inquiries and inquiries related to public commentary directly to the C4TH Executive Director. Please note that media inquiries are extremely time-sensitive and should be forwarded as soon as they are received.

## **Email policy**

- All business related emails sent must include the approved C4TH address and logo.
- No material is to be sent as email that is defamatory, in breach of copyright or confidentiality, or prejudicial to the good standing of C4TH's in the community or to its relationship with staff, partners and any other person or business with whom it has a relationship.
- Email must not contain material that amounts to gossip about colleagues or that could be offensive, demeaning, persistently irritating, threatening, and discriminatory, involves the harassment of others or concerns personal relationships.

Failure to comply with these instructions is a performance improvement offense and will be investigated. In serious cases, the penalty for breach of policy, or repetition of an offense, may include dismissal.



# Volunteer Communications

## - Social Media -

Online communication tools such as social media and blogs are the go-to channels for people who are interested in keeping up with C4TH. For that reason, and because your behavior as a volunteer reflects on C4TH, please use good judgment whenever you contribute to C4TH social media pages. When you are engaging, please keep in mind the following:

- Be transparent: Identify yourself as a volunteer of C4TH.
- Be accurate: Make sure you check your facts before posting.
- Provide resources: Link back to our website whenever you can.
- Be considerate: Please do not use profanity, derogatory language or personal attacks, or engage in any other inappropriate conduct.
- Be real: Do not just copy and paste press releases or website content. Take talking points and put them in your own words. (The one exception is when you are quoting someone or using an official statement.)
- Be professional: Do not allow legitimate online explanation of a position or debate to devolve into personal attacks, fights or flame wars.
- Protect sensitive information: Protect C4TH's confidential and proprietary information as well as the personal information of others. Get permission to use copyrighted content such as photos or videos, or to cite or reference our supporters, partners or suppliers. Do not disclose or use any confidential or business information about C4TH, such as personal information about volunteers, members or donors.
- You are encouraged and welcome to use your own social media platforms to help promote C4TH, events, volunteer opportunities, advocacy, outreach and more. However, C4TH volunteers are prohibited from starting any new social media groups or platforms that represent the organization.

### **Private/Personal Use of Social Media**

C4TH understands its volunteers have the right to contribute content to public communications on websites, blogs and business or social networking sites not operated by C4TH. However, inappropriate behavior on such sites has the potential to cause damage to C4TH, as well as its community partners. For this reason, all volunteers of C4TH must agree to refrain from posting, sending, forwarding or using, in any way, any inappropriate material including but not limited to material which:

- Is intended to (or could possibly) cause insult, offense, intimidation or humiliation to C4TH or its volunteers, clients and community partners
- Is defamatory or could adversely affect the image, reputation, or operations of C4TH, or its volunteers, clients and community partners.

Any breach of this policy is a serious matter and may result in the termination of the volunteer assignment.

# General Volunteer Policies

## **During Your Assignment:**

- Keep us up to date with your current mailing and email address, phone number, and emergency contact information.
- Stay within the parameters of your volunteer position(s) and assignment(s).
- Understand that all content developed by any volunteer as an C4TH volunteer is the property of C4TH. This includes, but is not limited to, all graphics, web pages, narratives, research, compilations, instructional texts, text, photos, videos, writings, computer programs, spreadsheets, summaries and recordings. Of course, volunteers will receive appropriate credit for their submissions.
- Grant C4TH rights in all photographic images, video and audio recordings of you made during the course of your assignment.
- Return all C4TH property when requested or when your volunteer service ends.

## **Expenses and insurance**

- Cover all your own expenses associated with volunteering for C4TH. In certain instances some expenses will be reimbursed, but you must receive approval in advance, in writing.
- Carry your own insurance coverage. C4TH does not carry health, medical, liability, automobile, worker's compensation or disability insurance coverage for any volunteer.

## **Injury procedure**

If there is an injury:

- The first priority is medical attention. The injured volunteer or worker or nearest colleague should contact appropriate medical personnel. For a serious injury, call 911 immediately
- Any volunteer who is injured on the job must report the incident to C4TH.
- C4TH staff must write an incident report, which will be kept on file at C4TH. This standard report must include:
  - Volunteer/volunteer's name and job details
  - Date of report, and exact date, time and location the injury/incident occurred
  - how the injury/incident happened
  - details of the injury/illness and the part/s of the body injured
  - names of any witnesses

## **Attendance policies**

When you commit to a volunteer position, you become a valuable member of our team and play an important role in the success of C4TH's mission. For that reason, we ask that you please do not make a commitment that you may be unable to fulfill.

## **Cancellations and 'no-shows'**

We understand that life happens. If you are not available to complete the volunteer job for which you have registered, please contact us as soon as possible to keep us informed and prepared.



# Volunteer Performance Support

Our goal is to make sure all our volunteers have wonderful, rewarding experiences with C4TH. Because of that, some volunteer positions offer volunteer training, support programs and performance feedback. Performance feedback sessions give us a chance to meet with volunteers one-on-one to review the position description, discuss what's going well, and identify goals and areas for improvement.

However, if as a volunteer you have not acted in C4TH's interests, it may be necessary to end the volunteer relationship.

## **Causes for release from volunteer service**

Potential causes for release from volunteer service include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to adhere to the this handbook's standards of conduct, or to policies/procedures.
- Breaking of confidentiality.
- Unreliable attendance or not fulfilling the duties of the volunteer position.
- Theft or dishonesty.
- Failure to represent C4TH in a positive and professional manner.
- Disorderly, disrespectful, or indecent behavior.
- Sabotaging or willfully damaging C4TH's equipment or property.
- Violence or implication of violence; carrying a concealed weapon onto C4TH's premises.
- Possession, use, or sale of controlled substances on C4TH's premises.
- Reporting for volunteer assignment under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Note that C4TH may, at times, serve alcohol at special events. To represent C4TH at such events and uphold C4TH's reputation for professionalism, volunteers are strongly encouraged to refrain from the consumption of any alcohol.

## **Grievance procedure**

If you have any questions or challenges regarding your volunteer assignment, please bring them to the attention of C4TH staff. Staff will make every effort to provide you with an opportunity to raise your questions in confidence and without fear of reprisal or discrimination. Every effort will be made to investigate in a timely manner and settle the issue on a fair and equitable basis.

Should the volunteer relationship need to end at any point, we will sincerely thank you for your service and release. When the relationship between C4TH and a volunteer is terminated, all property, if any has been issued, must be returned to C4TH.

# Center For The Heart Harrassment Policy

Center For The Heart is committed to providing an environment that is free from harassment and unlawful discrimination. In accordance with all federal, state and local laws, C4TH expressly prohibits discrimination or harassment based on education, opinions, culture, ethnicity, race, sex, gender identity and expression, class, citizenship, nation of origin, political affiliation, age, languages spoken, veteran's status, religion, sexual orientation, beliefs, varying abilities, or any other protected classification.

C4TH expressly forbids and will not tolerate any actions (e.g., words, jokes, comments or gestures) that unreasonably create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

- Submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of volunteering, either explicitly or implicitly
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an offensive, hostile or intimidating work environment

Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be subject to release from volunteer service. If you believe you are the victim of harassment or have witnessed harassment of any kind, immediately notify the volunteer department.

C4TH will not tolerate any retaliation, harassment or intimidation of any volunteer who makes a complaint under this policy or who assists in a complaint investigation. Any retaliation, harassment or intimidation may result in release from volunteer service.

Investigation of reports of harassment will be conducted, and these investigations will be kept as confidential as is practical. Following the investigation, the volunteer who filed the complaint will be informed of the findings and the action taken. If, as a result of the investigation, C4TH determines that an employee or volunteer has engaged in harassment or illegal discrimination in violation of this policy, C4TH will take appropriate corrective measures. Such action may range from counseling to immediate termination of employment, release from volunteer service or possible legal action.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND NONDISCLOSURE POLICY**

As a volunteer, you are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information of C4TH to which you are exposed while serving as a volunteer. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in termination of your relationship with C4TH.

When you become a volunteer, you agree and understand that any breach of this confidentiality clause will cause C4TH immediate and irreparable harm. You agree that C4TH is entitled to injunctive relief or a preliminary injunction if this confidentiality clause is breached. You agree that C4TH does not need to post a bond if C4TH asks a court for a temporary injunction or interlocutory injunctive relief. Some volunteer positions may require you to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Outside Interests – Volunteers are expected to avoid involvement in activities that might be construed as a conflict of interest. This includes any outside activity that could negatively affect the independence and objectivity of your judgment, or interfere with the timely and effective performance of your duties and responsibilities, or that could discredit C4TH or conflict or appear to conflict with C4TH's best interests. The success of C4TH rests on its reputation and the goodwill of its many supporters.

Unless expressly authorized, no outside activity should involve the use of C4TH assets, funds, materials, facilities, time or the services of other C4TH volunteers and employees. Violations of this policy may result in release from volunteer service with C4TH.

Gifts or Gratuities – Volunteers may not accept gifts, gratuities, free trips, personal property, or other items of value from individuals or organization at any time that would pose a conflict of interest.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT**

C4TH reserves the right to change or modify any portion of this manual as deemed in the best interests of the organization.

I have received, read, and understand the information contained in this Volunteer Handbook. I agree to comply with these policies and practices. I further acknowledge that this handbook is a guide and not a contract. Furthermore, I acknowledge that these policies and practices are subject to revisions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
VOLUNTEER'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
VOLUNTEER'S NAME (printed)