

# **Gifts of Hope, Inc. Volunteer Policy**

## **Philosophy of Involvement**

Gifts of Hope encourages the teamwork of salaried staff and volunteers so that we can offer our clients and their families the best services possible at no cost. Volunteers contribute their unique talents, skills and knowledge of our community to provide personalized attention to our children and families of Gifts of Hope, enable the salaried staff to concentrate on the work for which they were trained, and educate the public about our organization and its cause. Volunteers are an integral part of our team. Without them, we would be unable to offer the outstanding quality of programming that we provide to our Gifts of Hope families.

## **The Right to Volunteer**

Gifts of Hope understands volunteer participation is valued because it assists our organization to accomplish its mission and reach out to provide services in the most cost-effective and compassionate manner possible. Gifts of Hope accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the agency. Volunteers agree that Gifts of Hope may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with Gifts of Hope.

## **Clients as Volunteers**

Gifts of Hope accepts clients as volunteers where such service does not constitute a conflict in service provision for the volunteer or the client.

## **Allocation of Resources**

Gifts of Hope honors a strong commitment to the provision of adequate resources and support to our volunteer program. Gifts of Hope recognizes that volunteers bring many benefits to our organization. These products of volunteer involvement are not free - despite the fact that volunteer labor is not paid in monetary terms. Gifts of Hope understands that volunteers necessitate expenditures. This is one reason why Gifts of Hope is committed to attend to the resource needs of our volunteer program.

## **Volunteer-Client Relationship**

Gifts of Hope expects that volunteer relationships with clients to have the same boundaries as those of paid staff. At Gifts of Hope our role is supportive in nature. Gifts of Hope encourages it's staff and volunteers to be friendly, caring, and supportive to the Gifts of Hope clients.

## **Volunteer-Paid Staff Relations**

Gifts of Hope views the presence of volunteers serving in our organization as a privilege. Gifts of Hope takes careful steps to encourage teamwork between the volunteers and Gifts of Hope

# **Gifts of Hope, Inc. Volunteer Policy**

paid staff members. Volunteers and paid staff are considered partners in implementing the mission and programs of Gifts of Hope, with each having an equal but complementary role to play. It is essential to the proper operation of this relationship that each partner understands and respect the needs and abilities of each other.

## **Employees as Volunteers**

Gifts of Hope paid employees may not serve in a governing role while employed by the organization. Paid employees may however serve in a policy-making or advisory role and may serve in a direct-service volunteer role(s) which are outside the scope of their paid work within the organization and which takes place outside of the usual working hours. Family members of employees are allowed to volunteer and they may be placed under the direct supervision or within the same department as other members of their family who are employees.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Gifts of Hope will tolerate no sexual harassment of its employees or volunteers. Sexual harassment means unwelcomed sexual conduct, even if submitted to voluntarily, that is used as a basis for employment or volunteer decisions such as hiring, firing, providing training or increasing pay which will affect an employee or volunteer, or unreasonably interferes with an employee or volunteers job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment even if no tangible or economic damages result.

## **Use of Organizational Affiliation**

Volunteers may not use their affiliation with Gifts of Hope in connection with partisan politics or religious matters.

## **Right of Refusal**

Volunteers are assigned to areas where we feel they are most needed. If a volunteer is not satisfied with his/her assignment they may contact the Coordinator of Volunteers and request to be reassigned.

## **Policies about Policies**

Gifts of Hope recognizes that policies should fit the organization's mission and mandate and contribute to the ethical and safe involvement of our volunteers. Gifts of Hope policies must comply with all federal, state, and other legislation and regulations as well as other stipulations that might apply under collective agreements. Unless specifically stated, these policies apply to all volunteers serving in all programs and projects on behalf of Gifts of Hope, and to all

# **Gifts of Hope, Inc. Volunteer Policy**

departments and sites of operation of our organization. Gifts of Hope expects compliance with all policies. Volunteers must sign an acknowledgement form denoting their familiarity with all pertinent Gifts of Hope policies. Volunteers may/will be required to sign a certification indicating that they have read and understand and will comply with all/certain policies. Amendments to Gifts of Hope policies are subject to ratification by the Board of Directors which has final responsibility for such amendments, and reserves the right to amend these policies in any way at any time. Any questions volunteers may have regarding policies or their interpretation should be directed to the Coordinator of Volunteers or the Executive Director. All policies and procedures pertaining to volunteers will be fully documented and clearly communicated to volunteers and paid staff.

## **Alcohol/Drugs**

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from the use, involvement, or abuse at anytime of illegal drugs and/or alcohol to the extent that it negatively affects Gifts of Hope

## **Multiculturalism/Anti-Racism**

Gifts of Hope is committed to ensuring that its mission and operation embrace the Permian Basin community. It actively encourages the Permian Basin community to participate fully and benefit fully from its services. Gifts of Hope will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sexual orientation or natural origin. Gifts of Hope is committed to racial equality and the elimination of racism. It strives to reflect the Permian Basin community in its structure (volunteer and staff) and to promote equal access to its services. Gifts of Hope embraces multicultural volunteer involvement. Gifts of Hope services are sensitive to the needs of culturally and racially diverse clients. Gifts of Hope programs seek to eliminate systemic barriers to full participation and promote positive race relations and attitudinal change. Discriminatory or racist incidents or behavior are not tolerated. Communications present a positive and balanced portrayal of racial and cultural minorities.

## **Access to Information**

Gifts of Hope staff and volunteers have the right to have access to information relevant to and necessary for the satisfactory performance of their assignment. Staff and volunteers will have access to all appropriate written and verbal communication and information pertinent to their work for the organization, including items such as care plans, behavior questionnaires, and medical history.

## **HIV/AIDS/Communicable Diseases**

Gifts of Hope recognizes that policies regarding HIV/AIDS need to be guided by a commitment to the protection of the individual's right of privacy and confidentiality. HIV/AIDS is considered

# **Gifts of Hope, Inc. Volunteer Policy**

a handicap to which Gifts of Hope will make reasonable accommodations. These objectives need to be balanced against due regard for public health. Gifts of Hope recognizes that HIV/AIDS infection is a life-threatening illness, like cancer or heart disease, and that staff, volunteers, and clients with HIV/AIDS infection will be treated like those with any other life-threatening illnesses. Staff and volunteers with the HIV/AIDS infection have the right to: continue working as long as their condition permits; be accorded complete confidentiality concerning their HIV/AIDS status. Other staff and volunteers have the right to: a safe and healthy working environment; education on the subject of HIV/AIDS. Gifts of Hope undertakes: to avoid discriminating against any staff member or volunteer on the basis of HIV/AIDS infection; to refuse to tolerate discrimination or harassment of staff, volunteers or clients with HIV/AIDS infection; to develop and implement an educational program on HIV/AIDS infection for staff and volunteers. Discriminatory acts by staff and volunteers against any staff, volunteers or clients with HIV/AIDS infection are unacceptable and may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Representation on Decision Making**

Gifts of Hope views our volunteers as an integral part of our organization. They are encouraged to offer input, regarding their assignments to our Coordinator of Volunteers. Gifts of Hope treats our volunteers as equals to our paid staff, in terms of respect and dignity. Our organization values our volunteers and their input.

## **Speaking on Behalf of the Organization**

While on assignment with Gifts of Hope, volunteers will not represent themselves as other than a volunteer with Gifts of Hope. Volunteers are authorized to act as a representative of Gifts of Hope as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications. Before any action or statement which might significantly affect or obligate Gifts of Hope, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from an appropriate staff member. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Gifts of Hope requires all staff and volunteers immediately disclose any business, commercial or financial interest where such interest might be considered as being in real, potential or apparent conflict with their official duties of Gifts of Hope. Any staff or volunteer that is deemed in a conflict-of-interest situation will be reviewed and it will be decided if continued connection in any form with Gifts of Hope is allowable throughout or following the conflict.

## **Definition of ‘Volunteer’**

# **Gifts of Hope, Inc. Volunteer Policy**

Gifts of Hope defines a 'Volunteer' as anyone who without compensation or expectation of compensation performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of our organization. Gifts of Hope volunteers must be officially accepted and enrolled by our organization prior to performance of a task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers are not considered as an 'employee' of Gifts of Hope.

## **Confidentiality**

Gifts of Hope staff and volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a staff member or volunteer, whether this information involves a single staff member, volunteer, client or other person or involves overall organization business. All information- verbal or written concerning clients and their families will be held in strictest confidence and shared only with the team to the degree necessary to offer appropriate assistance with Gifts of Hope services. Only the individual client information necessary to provide comprehensive services shall be sought out. Failure to maintain confidentiality is viewed as a cause for: immediate termination of the volunteer's relationship with Gifts of Hope or other corrective action. Volunteers are required to sign a confidentiality agreement and compliance with that agreement is a condition of their participation in Gifts of Hope programs.

## **Special Case Volunteers**

Gifts of Hope accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student intern programs, group volunteer projects and corporate volunteer programs. In each of these cases, a special agreement must be in effect with the organization, school or program from whom the special case volunteers represent and must identify responsibility for management and care of the volunteers.