



Volunteer Center
OF SONOMA COUNTY

YOUTH VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

IN THIS PACKET, YOU WILL FIND OUT HOW TO:

- ★ **ASSESS YOUR INTERESTS**
- ★ **GET READY TO VOLUNTEER**
- ★ **GET TO KNOW THE OPPORTUNITIES OUT THERE**
- ★ **CONTACT THE AGENCY**
- ★ **WHAT VOLUNTEERING LOOKS LIKE**
- ★ **HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR EXPERIENCE**
- ★ **COMPLETE A TIME SHEET**

ASSESS YOUR INTERESTS

Answer the following questions to determine what your interests are, and then match them to the list of common areas of service.

1. What do you like to do?
2. Do you like to interact with people or work alone?
3. What are you passionate about?
4. What problem would you like to solve in your community?
5. What problem would you like to see fixed in the world?
6. What career are you considering?

Now, based on your answers above, see what kinds of opportunities match your interests:

Opportunities based on services...

- Animals
 - Animal Care
 - Kennel Cleaning
 - Learn medical care of animals
- Kids
 - Childcare
 - Assist staff
- Elderly
 - Friendly Visitor
 - Entertainer
- Mentally Ill/Medical
 - Assist Nurses

- Environment
 - Clean Up
 - Trail Maintenance
 - Planting
 - Removing Invasive Plants
- Social Advocacy
 - Educate the Public
 - Table at events/hand out flyers
 - Help with presentations
- Homeless/Hunger
 - Work in a kitchen
 - Package food
 - Serve food
 - Help with maintenance of shelter
- Events/fundraisers
 - Help to plan special event
 - Serve at dinner
 - Sell raffle tickets
 - Take pictures
 - Entertainer
- Other types of work
 - Office work
 - Help with mailers
 - Create/Maintain database
 - Data entry
 - Create/Maintain social media (ie facebook, twitter etc)
 - Other (be creative open to creating a new opportunity)

GET READY TO VOLUNTEER

1. Plan for your volunteer activity by answering the questions listed below.
2. If you need transportation, get the commitment from the person who will provide that transportation.
3. If you are doing "required" community service, know the number of hours you need, and when that has to be accomplished.
4. To receive a Volunteer Center Certificate of Completion (of Volunteer Hours) you will need to fill out the hours sheet at the back of the packet (signed by a supervisor at the agency where you are volunteering) & write a one page evaluation of your experience and return both to the Volunteer Center.
(These are great for your resume or college application)

★ What Days of the week do I want to volunteer? (circle all that apply)

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

★ How many hours do I need to earn? _____

★ What times can I volunteer?

Mornings

Afternoons

Evenings

★ Who will provide transportation?

Me

Guardian

Public Transportation

Other: _____

GETTING TO KNOW THE OPPORTUNITIES OUT THERE

Use the form below to keep a record of the volunteer opportunities you are interested in.

Agency Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Job description (what would you be doing):

_____.

Agency Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Job description (what would you be doing):

_____.

Agency Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Job description (what would you be doing):

_____.

Agency Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Job description (what would you be doing):

_____.

HOW TO CONTACT THE AGENCY

- ★ Have paper and pencil ready to take notes.

Step 1: Introduce Yourself:

- ★ Hello, my name is _____
- ★ I am a student at _____ and I am _____ years old.
- ★ I want to volunteer this _____ (Summer/Semester/Year)
- ★ I am interested in working with: _____
(Animals, Seniors, Kids, Art, Environment, etc)
- ★ I can volunteer on _____ (available days)
- ★ I would like to volunteer _____ hours each day.

Step 2: Ask the following questions:

1. Does this volunteer opportunity still exist?
2. If not, what other opportunities are there for me to help your organization?
3. What is the job?
4. What time does the job start?
5. Do I need to fill out a Volunteer Application?
6. If so, where can I get that Application?
7. Where do I turn in the Application?
8. Who would I be reporting to?
9. What is the best way to contact them?
10. Are there special clothes I need to wear?
11. Where do I report the first day?

WHAT VOLUNTEERING LOOKS LIKE

Once you are scheduled to volunteer, here are some ways to ensure a great experience:

1. Find out the location and have directions.
2. Dress appropriately, if it's a professional setting, dress up. If you'll be working outside, have good shoes and clothes you don't mind getting dirty.
3. Arrive at least 15 minutes early.
4. Introduce yourself and ask where you sign in.
5. Ask for your supervisor, and shake their hand.
6. Ask for instructions, if you don't fully understand, ask questions. That shows you care and are being responsible .
7. Use appropriate language.
8. Remember, you are a part of the organization's work force.
9. This could lead to a job, and people talk, so make a good impression.
10. Notice your takeaways. With any new experience, mistakes are normal. Learn from them, and know that you will try to do better next time.

They don't expect perfection, they just expect professionalism!

EVALUATION

In order to walk away with the best results, it's vital that you look back and review your achievements and growth. Below is a list of questions that can help you evaluate your experience. This tool can be used for your portfolio for college or when applying for a job. It's best to type your response and treat it like an essay. If you would like to receive a certificate that shows your hours for your career, please type up your response and share with the Volunteer Center (contact info below). You will need to provide a copy of your time sheet with your hours signed by your supervisor.

1. What worked well in the volunteer opportunity?
2. What could have worked better?
3. How did the agency benefit from your service?
4. How did you benefit from volunteering with this agency?
5. What was the most important thing you learned about yourself from this experience?
6. Will you recommend this volunteer opportunity to your friends?

If you need further assistance, or to report your hours and evaluation for a certificate of achievement, contact Rachael McDavid at 573-3399x125 or rmcdavid@volunteernow.org

