

<b>Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Policy and Procedure</b>		
<b>Volunteer Services</b>		
Effective: May 2020	Revised: August 2024	Due to Review: August 2026

**POLICY**

The Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) encourages volunteer service as an important community contribution to recovery.

**PROCEDURE**

**Application Process**

People under the age of 18 are not eligible to volunteer at VPCH.

Readiness of individuals recently hospitalized at VPCH to perform as VPCH volunteers will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Volunteer Coordinator, in collaboration with the Director of Psychology and Recovery Services, will develop a position description for each volunteer opportunity. The position description shall include any specific training requirements and any additional policies and procedures that must be reviewed.

**Review and Assignment**

The VPCH Director of Psychology and Recovery Services, the Volunteer Coordinator, or their designee, will review each application to determine if the applicant is suitable as a volunteer. They will then discuss appropriate opportunities with the applicant and mutually agree on an assignment.

**Orientation, Supervision, and Service**

The Hospital Volunteer Orientation includes, but is not limited to, overview of policies/procedures related to volunteering and the specific volunteer assignment, education on confidentiality requirements, professionalism expectations, the dress code, and mandatory reporting.

Volunteers will be oriented to their assignment by the VPCH Director of Psychology and Recovery Services, the Volunteer Coordinator, or their designee. The volunteer will be provided with a description of their work responsibilities, hours, and designated work area.

Upon arrival at VPCH, volunteers shall check in with Admission/Reception staff and follow hospital visitation protocols. Volunteers shall then be escorted to their assigned work location by

VPCH staff. Volunteers shall remain in their assigned work area and shall always stay with VPCH staff.

In the event of volunteer injury, an event report will be generated and processed in the same manner as an employee event.


Any concerns or issues regarding volunteer activity should be reported to the Director of Psychology and Recovery Services or Volunteer Coordinator or designee. The Director will, at a minimum, review the volunteer role and responsibilities with the volunteer. VPCH has the right to dismiss a volunteer at any time for any reason.

**Volunteer's Legal Status**

Volunteers that have successfully completed the application, passed background checks, and completed the orientation process are, for limited purposes, considered "temporary employees" under State law for civil matters. As such, they may be covered by the State's workers' compensation law, they may be entitled to be represented by State-paid counsel (usually the Office of the Attorney General) if they are sued for conduct arising out of their volunteer work, and they may be indemnified by the State if a civil judgment is brought against them for conduct arising out of their volunteer work. The law concerning representation and indemnification for civil lawsuits provide that if a volunteer is sued for any actions outside of the performance of the volunteer's official duties, such as if the volunteer willfully commits a wrongful act, the volunteer must assume all costs of representation and/or liability. If a volunteer is named as a defendant in a civil case, the State will notify the volunteer in writing of their rights and the limits of insurance coverage and keep them apprised of any developments in the case, if applicable.

**References**

Volunteer forms can be found in the Forms section of the VPCH Share Point site.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Mental Health	 <p>DocuSigned by: Emily Hawes C50275615A62462...</p>	8/28/2024