



VOLUNTEER/INTERN CODE OF CONDUCT

The following expectations are general for all volunteers, interns, and funded participants. They are designed to help everyone understand what is expected while participating in the Harris County Public Health (HCPH) Volunteer and Internship Program, including placements at the Harris County Animal Shelter.

COMMITMENT: Individuals 18 & above wishing to volunteer with HCPH are asked to serve a minimum of 50 hours within a 3-6 month period. Exceptions are made for volunteers seeking experiences that may be completed in one day (e.g. special events, shadowing for class assignments, etc.). We request volunteers aged 16 or above serve a minimum of 40 hours within 3-6 months.

ABSENCE: It is important that you complete your scheduled hours. Talk to your site supervisor/preceptor if you need to modify your schedule. Notify the appropriate employee if you are unable to come on your scheduled date, or if you are going to be late. In the event that you have health problems and your priorities change, please inform us if, and when, you will return (if possible).

IMMUNIZATION & TESTING: It is your responsibility to arrange for recommended vaccinations and necessary testing & follow-up, according to the occupation-specific exposure risk identified by the Harris County Public Health Clinical Quality Management Program.

MONTHLY REPORT OF HOURS OF SERVICE: Your contributions are very important to HCPH employees and clients. Please report all completed volunteer/internship hours to your site supervisor/preceptor so that he/she may report hours to the Volunteer & Intern Program Coordinator by the 5th business day of the month following the completion of the hours. It is your responsibility to ensure that your hours are turned in accurately and on time.

APPEARANCE: Volunteers and interns should abide by the HCPH Dress Code Policy. Volunteers/interns are expected to exercise mature judgment in matters pertaining to attire and grooming in order to project a positive public image.

1. Worn apparel should conform to common sense standards of neatness, good taste, and safety. Commonly accepted daytime business attire is required. Extremes in clothing and/or grooming are inappropriate.
2. Volunteers/interns required to wear lab coats, and/or uniforms should ensure that they are laundered frequently enough to appear clean to the public at all times.
3. Hair styles should be governed by standards of neatness, cleanliness, and good grooming.

BADGE AND UNIFORM: Always wear your name badge to clearly identify your name, position (volunteer/intern), and the department in which you are placed. You may wish to leave the badge at your location so you won't forget it. Wear a lab coat or uniform, if required. At the conclusion of your placement, please return your badge and any County issued access cards to your immediate supervisor or the Volunteer & Internship Program Coordinator.

HEALTH: If you are ill, please remain at home and return when you are well. Please be sure to notify your supervisor/preceptor or the HCPH Volunteer & Internship Program Coordinator if you will be absent due to illness.

PROCEDURES UPON ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE: Sign-in and out as instructed by your supervisor/preceptor. Please be sure to document all completed volunteer/internship hours on the appropriate form or within our online management system located at <http://hcph.vsyslive.com>. Please inform your supervisor when you go on break, when you are leaving for the day, or of any deviations from your agreed upon schedule.

LUNCH AND BREAKS: Discuss appropriate time, place, and length of breaks with your preceptor/supervisor. Time spent having lunch or commuting to your volunteer/intern location from home is not included in your total volunteer/intern hours for the day.

CONDUCT WITH CLIENTS: Respect patient and client privacy regarding personal information in accordance to the HCPH Confidentiality Statement. Be dignified and pleasant, and maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Personal or intimate interactions with patients and/or clients is prohibited. Do not accept money or gifts from a patient or client. Community members wishing to make donations Harris County Public Health, including to the Harris County Animal Shelter, should be advised to contact the shelter to learn the appropriate procedures.



BEHAVIOR: Be professional and honest in all your actions. Avoid socializing too much when on duty. Avoid asking medical staff (physicians, dentists, nurses, etc.) for personal medical advice. Abusive language, drugs, alcohol, and weapons are strictly prohibited during volunteer or unpaid internship service. If you or a client has a complaint, ask your supervisor for help. If you are not satisfied, speak to the Volunteer & Internship Program Coordinator at the Main Office, Liaison at your location, or the site manager.

ASSIGNMENT: If your volunteer/internship assignment or schedule are no longer suitable, please speak with your preceptor/supervisor, or the HCPH Volunteer & Internship Program Coordinator to discuss the potential for a schedule adjustment or relocation to a position that is more suitable to your skills, interests, and availability.

INJURY: If you are injured while on duty at your placement location or while attending an event on behalf of HCPH, please notify your supervisor immediately. All incidents should also be reported to the HCPH Human Resources Department on the appropriate Incident Report Form.

TELEPHONES: Answer the telephone as instructed. County phones and other equipment should only be used for official County business or in an emergency situation. All volunteers/interns are expected to adhere to the Harris County Property, Equipment, Media, and Services Policy. Individuals utilizing county property, whether tangible or intangible, have no expectation of privacy in the use of County-owned or County-provided equipment or supplies. This includes County computers, e-mail, telephones, tablets, voicemails, fax machines, copiers, radios and wireless devices, wire services, on-line services, including County WiFi and the Internet that are County property or accessed using County computer equipment. Your personal wireless devices such as an iPad, Kindle, cell phone, etc. should only be used during lunch or breaks. The full policy is available online at <http://www.harriscountytexas.gov/hrrm/PersonnelRegulations>. Adherence to this policy does not necessarily constitute an employment relationship with Harris County, Harris County Public Health, or Harris County Animal Shelter.

UNAUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES: Check with your preceptor/supervisor regarding activities that you are authorized to do, and those that are not permitted. For activities that are not expressly recommended as a part of volunteer/internship placement, please speak with your preceptor/supervisor for guidance. Restricted activities include soliciting business, donations or signatures, selling goods/services, or distributing literature on HCPH property without approval from the site manager. If you are unsure if an activity is within the scope of your volunteer/internship placement, please speak with your immediate supervisor of the HCPH Volunteer & Internship Program Coordinator for guidance.

EXIT PROCEDURES: In the event that you complete your volunteer/internship assignment, or you are unable to return to your volunteer placement because of health issues or other priorities, please inform your supervisor, Liaison at your location, or the Volunteer & Internship Program Coordinator as soon as you are aware. Interns are asked to notify the Volunteer & Internship Program Coordinator within 2 weeks of your projected internship end date. Your suggestions on how we can improve our volunteer and intern program are greatly appreciated and may be shared through the completion of an evaluation of your Volunteer/Internship experience.

FINAL PRODUCTS AND DELIVERABLES: Products and deliverables generated as a result of participation in a HCPH Volunteer or Internship placement are the property of Harris County Public Health. These items should not be shared with outside entities without the consent of the Director of the HCPH Division/Office where the project resulting in the generation of the product or deliverable was created. Examples include, but are not limited to products such as internship posters that may include unpublished or otherwise unreleased epidemiological data, survey tools and project plans for upcoming HCPH initiatives, grant applications, and internal HCPH policies and frameworks.

HAZARDS AND PROBLEMS: Report hazards, broken equipment, and/or any unusual occurrences to your supervisor immediately.

SMOKING: HCPH HAS A NO SMOKING POLICY IN ALL FACILITIES & VEHICLES.

MEDIA POLICY: Interns/Volunteers are required to adhere to the HCPH Media Policy and Social Media Policy.

- 1) All information to be sent to the media will be released by the Office of Communications, Education and Engagement (OCEE). This includes requests for interviews including HCPH property, staff, volunteers, or patients (both human and animal), and events. This includes information for sources such as television, online, radio, newspapers and newsletters.
- 2) When contact or interview with the media is unavoidable, OCEE should be notified as soon as possible.
- 3) To ensure timely release of applicable information to the public, OCEE should be informed immediately of all public health emergencies, crises, or significant events of which you become aware.



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- 4) Approved OCEE Social Media Liaisons may utilize social media tools and platforms on behalf of HCPH and must be in compliance with the HCPH Social Media Policy at all times. All Social Media Liaisons must attend the HCPH Social Media Policy and Guidelines orientation and sign the Social Media Policy Acknowledgement Form provided by OCEE.

In accordance to the Social Media Policy, Interns/Volunteers should adhere to the following practices:

Do:

- Post links and positive comments about experiences volunteering/interning with HCPH
- Celebrate successes, for example, great work by staff and volunteers
- Post positive comments about HCPH such as topics about emergency response, animals, events and news
- Share, Like, React, Comment on HCPH social media posts
- Take responsibility for ensuring that any references to HCPH policies are factual, complete, and accurate
- Show respect for the individuals, partners, and communities with which they interact

Do Not:

- Without prior permission, post photos or videos of HCPH patients or community members receiving services from HCPH
- Voice grievances or make disparaging remarks about HCPH and the Harris County Commissioners Court.
- Breach the confidentiality of private information from any HCPH department, as defined in the Volunteer/Intern program Confidentiality Statement. No information should be disclosed without the permission of the appropriate Division/Office Director or designee
- Disclose personal information of HCPH staff and volunteers, and partners
- Damage the reputation of HCPH or post disparaging, obscene or defamatory information
- Harass, bully, discriminate or post hateful information about HCPH, its staff and volunteers and partners as defined in the HCPH Volunteer/Intern Participation Agreement

I realize the important part I play in the services offered the community by HCPH, and I agree to follow the above expectations and to fulfill my commitment to HCPH.