



Winona Family YMCA

Volunteer Policy Handbook

A Guide for Short-Term or One-Time Volunteers

Our Mission

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

Thank you!

Your great generosity will have a profound and lasting impact on the Winona Family YMCA community. Your willingness to give selflessly to help others speaks to both your strengths and the quality of your character. Please know that your volunteerism is recognized, appreciated, and valued. We thank you and look forward to working with you!

Youth Volunteer Policy:

- No minimum age for youth accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Minimum age for youth in a youth group accompanied by an adult leader: 8
- Minimum age for youth volunteering on their own: 4 years older than the oldest youth participant in the program.

Emergencies

It is every volunteer's responsibility to report all issues regarding behavior, injury, and emergencies to their supervisor or co-workers immediately.

First Aid and CPR

All staff at the Y are certified in CPR and First Aid and will handle all first aid related incidents.

How to Respond to Disciplinary Issues

Dealing with discipline is the responsibility of the main instructor or program staff. Volunteers should not carry out disciplinary actions or carry out consequences, rather talk to your site supervisor or program staff about any behavior concerns or disciplinary issues.

Expectations

Attendance, Tardiness and Notification of Absence

Your supervisor will be the one to set-up a schedule with you. If you are going to be late or unable to volunteer on a scheduled day, please notify your supervisor as soon as you can.

Checking in & Tracking Volunteer Time

We keep track of all volunteer hours. Please let the front desk staff know you are here to volunteer for each shift, and fill out the volunteer log at the front desk.

Phone Usage & Electronic Devices

Use of cell phones or any other electronic devices, while volunteering, should be limited to emergencies.

Photo and Video Policy

Without prior approval, volunteers are not permitted to photograph or otherwise record their volunteer service, nor should you take pictures or videos of any program participant or member without written approval from the person.

Open Communication

Your point of contact for all questions, comments and concerns regarding volunteer activities is your Supervisor. We welcome all feedback and want to know what we can do to make the volunteer experience better for both our volunteers and participants. Communicate openly! We can't solve a problem unless we know it exists. If you don't feel comfortable talking to your supervisor, please contact the CEO.

YMCA Code of Conduct

Team members are expected to behave in a mature and responsible way and to respect the rights and dignity of others. The YMCA Code of Conduct does not permit language or actions that could harm or frighten another person, or negatively impact operations.

Violations of the Harassment Policy include but are not limited to:

1. Inappropriate touch of program participant, member, guest or staff.
2. Angry or vulgar language including swearing, name-calling or shouting.
3. Physical contact with another person in any angry or threatening way.
4. Any demonstration of sexual activity or sexual contact with another person.
5. Harassment or intimidation by words, gestures, body language or any other menacing behavior.
6. Theft or behavior that results in destruction of property.
7. Carrying or concealing weapons, devices or objects that may be used as weapons.
8. Using or possessing illegal chemicals on YMCA property, in YMCA vehicles or at YMCA-sponsored programs.
9. Using or possessing alcohol on YMCA property, in YMCA vehicles or at YMCA-sponsored programs with the exception of specific authorized events.
10. Inappropriate release of confidential information.
11. Falsifying documents such as applications, resumes, time sheets, reports, financial information, etc.
12. Excessive tardiness or absenteeism.
13. Inappropriate attire or grooming.
14. Violations of any conduct specific to YMCA programs such as Child Care, Aquatics, etc.
15. Use of YMCA equipment or facilities for personal gain.
16. Unsafe or inappropriate use of equipment and vehicles.

Definition of Appropriate and Inappropriate Physical Contact

DO NOT pick up children or allow children to sit one's laps. Only children under the age of 3 are allowed to sit in a staff member's or volunteer's lap.

Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Side hugs● Shoulder-to-shoulder● Pats on the shoulder or back● Handshakes● High-fives or fist-bumps● Verbal praise● Touching hands, shoulders, or	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Full-frontal hugs● Kisses● Showing affection in isolated areas● Lap sitting● Wrestling● Piggyback rides● Tickling

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arms • Arms around shoulders • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing a youth to cling to an employee's leg • Any type of massage given by or to a youth • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the youth or the volunteer • Compliments relating to physique or body development • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas • Physical restraints*
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* If a staff/volunteer believes a youth is at risk of hurting themselves or others, the use of physical restraints is strictly prohibited. Instead, measures should be taken to remove others from the situation and relocate to a safe space away from violence, notify supervisors, and determine what additional help from law enforcement is required. Training in providing physical restraints obtained from outside organizations may not be able to be verified, and is not recognized by Y-USA.

Definition of Appropriate and Inappropriate Verbal Interactions

Volunteers are prohibited from speaking to youth in a way that is, or could be construed by any observer, as harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Volunteers must not initiate sexually orientated conversations with youth. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with youth.

Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Redirection • Praise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving youth in the personal problems or issues of the volunteer • Secrets • Cursing • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming • Belittling • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate youth • Derogatory remarks about the youth or their family. • Racist, sexist, or homophobic language

Mandated Reporters

As a YMCA team member, you are in a key position to help protect minors from harm. Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect. According to Minnesota State law, anyone who works with children and/or families is considered a Mandated Reporter. As a Mandated Reporter, you have a legal obligation to make a report to Child Protection if you know or have reason to believe a minor is being neglected or abused or has been neglected or abused in the preceding three years. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a criminal misdemeanor under state law and violates YMCA policies. Persons who report in good faith are protected from civil or criminal liability.

Recognizing Child Abuse

[Watch for the following and report:](#)

Neglect

Indicators:

- Pattern of poor hygiene, or clothes that are dirty or inappropriate for the weather.
- Child left unsupervised for too long.
- Child is often absent, tired, and hungry.
- Parents are often late or just not around.

Physical Abuse: *Injury or pattern of injuries that are not accidental*

Indicators:

- Bruises, burns, cuts, and/or welts - especially when explanation doesn't fit the injury.
- Injury is in the shape of an object.
- Delay in seeking treatment.
- Injuries in various states of healing.

Emotional Abuse: *Chronic act(s) that endanger child's mental health or emotional development*

Indicators:

- Belittling or verbally abusing a child (e.g., criticism, insults).
- Terrorizing, corrupting, insulting, making mean remarks to a child.
- Child shows negative self-talk, is depressed, and is over eager to please.

Recognizing Child Sexual Abuse:

[Watch for the following and report:](#)

Indirect: Observing a child undress or urinate; forcing a child to view sexual activity

Direct: Molestation, rape, fondling

Indicators:

- Child experiences pain in genital area when walking or urinating.
- Child is overly seductive, obsessively clean, withdrawn, or very self-conscious.

Grooming is a method sex offenders use, of building trust with a child and adults around the child in an effort to gain access to and time alone with her/him. However, in extreme cases, offenders may use threats and physical force to sexually assault or abuse a child. More common, though, are subtle approaches designed to build relationships with families. The offender may assume a caring role, befriend the child, or even exploit their position of trust and authority to groom the child and/or the child's family. These individuals intentionally build relationships with the adults around a child or seek out a child who may have fewer adults in her/his life. This increases the likelihood that the offender's time with the child is welcomed and encouraged.

What behaviors are used as part of the grooming process?

Although not all child sexual abuse involves grooming, it is a common process used by offenders. It usually begins with subtle behavior that may not initially appear to be inappropriate, such as paying a lot of attention to the child or being very affectionate. Many victims of grooming and sexual abuse do not recognize they are being manipulated, nor do they realize how grooming is a part of the abuse process.

[Watch for the following and report:](#)

1. An adult seems overly interested in a child.

2. An adult frequently initiates or creates opportunities to be alone with a child (or multiple children).
3. An adult becomes fixated on a child.
4. An adult gives special privileges to a child (e.g., rides to and from practices, etc.).
5. An adult befriends a family and shows more interest in building a relationship with the child than with the adults
6. An adult displays favoritism towards one child within a family.
7. An adult finds opportunities to buy a child gifts.
8. An adult caters to the interests of the child, so a child or the parent may initiate contact with the offender.
9. An adult who displays age and gender preferences.

If You Suspect Child Abuse or Grooming

You are a mandated reporter. You must report it to Child Protection or your local law enforcement agency within 24 hours. Be sensitive to the need for confidentiality.

Reporting Abuse

1. Notify your supervisor of the situation and what you have observed.
2. Report to Child Protection, police or county sheriff **AND** U.S. Center for Safe Sport within 24 hours. The number for Winona County is 507-457-6500.
3. The involved parent, child or adult must **not** be contacted.
4. All conversations/situations surrounding the incident should be documented.
5. If there is probable cause to suspect that the abuse is being caused by someone within the YMCA, a team member, volunteer or member, that person will be placed on administrative leave pending an investigation.

Allegations of Abuse and Cooperation with Authorities:

All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior with youths or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously. Our organization will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse are made and investigated.

Guidelines for Team Members Working with Minors

1. At no time during a YMCA program may a team member be alone with a single minor where he/she cannot be observed by others.
2. You should never leave a minor unsupervised.
3. When supervising minors in the restroom, team members will make sure that the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing minors to use the facilities.
4. Stand in the doorway of the restroom while minors are using the restroom.
5. If assisting younger minors, doors to the facility must remain open.
6. Always send minors to the restroom in threes and whenever possible, with team members.
7. Conduct or supervise private activities in pairs – putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. (If not feasible, position yourself so that you are visible to others). **Always remember the Rule of 3. Always have 3 people present.**
8. When team members must change clothing, make sure that minors are not present.
9. Team members should not abuse minors in any way, including:
 - a. Physical abuse – striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, etc.
 - b. Verbal abuse – humiliating, degrading, threatening, etc.
 - c. Sexual abuse – touching or speaking inappropriately.
 - d. Emotional abuse –shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel, etc.
 - e. Neglect – withholding food, water or basic care.

10. Team members should use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism.
11. Team members will have age-appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline.
12. Physical restraint should NOT be used. Instead move individuals in danger to a safe space and rely on law enforcement's advice.
13. If team members notice fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc., questions/comments will be addressed to the parent or minor in a non-threatening way and responses will be documented.
14. You should respond to minors with respect and consideration and treat all minors equally regardless of race, age, gender, religion, disability, genetic information, cultural identity or sexual orientation.
15. Team members will respect minor's rights not to be touched or looked at in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Minors are not to be touched on areas on their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
16. Team members will refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of minors, parents and team members.
17. Team members should not transport minors in their own vehicles or allow youth participants old enough to drive to transport younger minors in the program.
18. Team members should not give any gifts to minors (for example, video games, jewelry, snacks, etc.).
19. Team members may not date program participants who are under the age of 18.
20. Minors should not be released to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian with written authorization on file.
21. Team members should report any violations of these policies to their supervisor.

Outside Contact with YMCA Youth Participants Policy

As a general rule, team members should not have contact or communication with the youth who participate in YMCA programs outside of YMCA work/volunteer time.

If communication with a minor outside of work or volunteer hours is necessary, you must copy a supervisor or the youth's parent/legal guardian when sending or replying to emails and text messages.

- Team Members should not initiate and should avoid receiving personal communication with youth whom they have met through Y programs. Communication is considered "personal" if it does not involve both a YMCA communication tool and Y-specific subject matter.
- Communication between team members and youth should only be through YMCA communication tools, such as Y email accounts and phones, and the team member's supervisor should be aware of this communication.
- Team members must not share any personal email addresses or instant message name or nickname with youth.
- Team members should not initiate or respond to e-mail or instant messages from youth while using any personal (non-Y) connection to the internet.
- Use of social networking sites to communicate with youth is only permitted if done through a Y sponsored or approved site.
- Text messaging with youth through non-YMCA channels is not permitted.
- No personal blog or social networking site should be used.
- Any website or blog maintained by an intern should not have pictures of or make reference to any youth involved in YMCA programs.

- If team members receive communication from youth through non-Y channels and/or regarding a non-Y-specific subject matter, this must be immediately reported to a supervisor

Bloodborne Pathogens

Bloodborne Pathogens: (BBP) Pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease to humans, including HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C. Since these diseases are difficult to identify and treat, you need to take special precautions to minimize your risk of exposure.

Note: Only designated personnel who are trained, authorized and equipped to respond to medical emergencies and or bodily fluid spills will do so. Avoid contact and notify your supervisor if a spill or exposure incident is encountered.

If however, you must respond, [follow these steps](#).

1. While responding to bodily fluid spills, an appropriate level of PPE will be worn including:
 - a. Disposable liquid-proof gloves—All incidents
 - b. Safety glasses—Incidents with minimal exposure potential (e.g. a laceration with minimal bleeding)
 - c. Face Shield—Incidents with a potential of bodily fluid becoming airborne (e.g. a laceration with spurting, arterial bleeding)
 - d. Apron (or disposable suit) and shoe covers—Incidents with a potential of bodily fluid becoming airborne or incidents in which response personnel could walk through a spill or move against material contaminated with a spill
 - e. Barrier mask and/or Bag Valve Mask—Incidents requiring mouth-to-mouth resuscitation
2. Regulated waste (such as contaminated dressings and bandages) and other materials will be double bagged.
3. All potentially contaminated surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized with a bleach solution or will be disposed of as contaminated medical waste.
4. After performing necessary duties personnel will clean, sanitize, remove and discard any contaminated PPE.
5. All personnel are required to wash their hands with soap and warm water.
6. If an exposure is suspected, any employee or volunteer, trained or untrained, should immediately:
 - a. Wash exposed skin surfaces with large amounts of soap and warm water
 - b. Rinse exposed mucus membranes with large quantities of warm water
 - c. Report any actual or suspected exposure incident to their supervisor. The employee will immediately be referred to a physician or other licensed health care provider for a confidential follow-up (at no cost to the employee)

Please read and sign the following document:

Winona Family YMCA

Volunteer Policy Acknowledgment & Waiver

I hereby acknowledge the following:

- I have received a copy of the Winona Family YMCA Volunteer Policy Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to read, understand and follow the policies, rules, and benefits described.
- I understand that the Y has the right to modify, suspend, supersede, or cancel the policies, rules, and benefits found in this policy, in whole or part, without advance notice.
- I understand that any written or oral statements by a supervisor contrary to this policy are invalid and should not be relied upon.
- I understand that the contents of this policy are confidential and may not be distributed in any way nor discussed with anyone who is not an employee of the YMCA.

Photo, Video, & Audio Release:

I give permission to the Winona Family YMCA and its employees or representatives to take photos, video or audio footage of me volunteering for use in any media format to help promote the Y and volunteerism. **Note:** If you would prefer to opt out of the photo release, please mark here:

- No, I do not authorize the Y to use my photo, video or audio for promotional purposes.

Release, Indemnification and Hold Harmless Agreement

In consideration of participating in activities, and for other good and valuable consideration, I hereby agree to **release** and **discharge from liability** arising from negligence **Winona Family YMCA** and its owners, directors, officers employees, agents, volunteers, participants, and all other persons or entities acting for them (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Releasees"), on behalf of myself and my children, parents, heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate, and also agree as follows:

1. I acknowledge that participating in YMCA activities involves known and unanticipated risks which could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis or permanent disability, death, and property damage. Risks include, but are not limited to, broken bones, torn ligaments or other injuries as a result of falls or contact with other participants; death as a result of drowning or brain damage caused by near drowning in pools or other bodies of water; medical conditions resulting from physical activity; and damaged clothing or other property. I understand such risks simply cannot be eliminated, despite the use of safety equipment, without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity.
2. **I expressly accept and assume all of the risks inherent in this activity or that might have been caused by the negligence of the Releasees.** My participation in this activity is purely voluntary and I elect to participate despite the risks. In addition, if at any time I believe that event conditions are unsafe or that I am unable to participate due to physical or medical conditions, then I will immediately discontinue participation.
3. **I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless Releasees from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action which are in any way connected with my participation in this activity, or my use of their equipment or facilities, arising from negligence. This release does not apply to claims arising from intentional conduct.** Should Releasees or anyone acting on their behalf be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.
4. I represent that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I may suffer or cause while participating in this activity, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or

damage myself. I further state that I have no medical or physical condition which could interfere with my safety in this activity, or else I am willing to assume – and bear the costs of – all risks that may be created, directly or indirectly, by any such condition.

5. I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining portions shall remain in full force and effect.

By signing this document, I agree that if I am hurt or my property is damaged during my participation in this activity, then I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against the parties being released on the basis of any claim for negligence.

I have had sufficient time to read this entire document and, should I choose to do so, consult with legal counsel prior to signing.

I have read and understood this document and I agree to be bound by its terms.

Volunteer's Name (please print)

Date

Volunteer's Signature

PARENT OR GUARDIAN ADDITIONAL AGREEMENT FOR MINORS

(Must be completed for participants under the age of 18)

In consideration of _____ (PRINT minor's name) being permitted to participate in this activity, I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless Releasees from any claims alleging negligence which are brought by or on behalf of minor or are in any way connected with such participation by minor.

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

Please Print Name Here

Once you've reviewed this handbook, please sign this form and return via email to sredpenning@winonaymca.org, or drop off/mail to the Winona Family YMCA, Attn: Volunteer Coordinator, 902 Parks Avenue, Winona, MN 55987.

Current as of 1.16.2024