



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

**Allendale Charter Township**

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**Nothing contained in this handbook is intended to create, nor shall be construed as creating, a contract of employment or guarantee of volunteer placement, either express or implied, for any term or for any specific procedures. There is no contract of employment between the Township and any one or all its employees or volunteers.**

## Welcome

Dear Volunteer:

On behalf of the Allendale Charter Township, its staff, and our community members, thank you for your interest and willingness to devote your skills, talents, knowledge, experience, time, and energy to the Township. Your contribution assists the Township in creating a welcoming place for all to enjoy.

We will provide you with training on different tasks depending on the area of your volunteering within the Township. Please be sure to ask questions during your training session(s) and even afterwards as they arise.

Being active in your community, gaining experience, learning new skills, and meeting new people are just some of the many benefits we hope you will experience as a volunteer.

We look forward to having you help better serve our community. Thank you!

Very truly yours,

Adam Elenbaas  
Township Supervisor

Mary Cook  
Library Director

Elizabeth Szymanski  
Community Coordinator

## How to Become a Volunteer

All volunteers must be accepted and enrolled by the Township prior to any assigned tasks being given. Below is a general description of the volunteer selection and placement process:

1. Complete and submit the Volunteer Application Form.
2. Complete a brief in-person interview.
3. Volunteers are selected from applicants according to the needs of the Township.
4. If a minor, obtain and submit a valid work permit.
5. Complete an orientation which will include a tour of the building, introduction to staff, and a review of the Volunteer Handbook.
6. Complete training.

Please note the Township reserves the right to deviate from all or any of the foregoing processes as individual situations and the needs of the Township warrant.

## Duties and Benefits of Becoming a Volunteer

Volunteers can bring many skills and talents to our community. Volunteers often become strong and enthusiastic advocates of their communities. All volunteers have the right to be given meaningful tasks, the right to effective supervision, and the right to be recognized for their contributions to the Township.

### **VOLUNTEER DUTIES**

Volunteers will not be utilized to fill paid staff positions; their work supplements and does not replace that of paid employees. Depending on your volunteering location, some tasks may include, but are not limited to, any or all of the following:

#### *For Library Volunteers:*

- Shelving and straightening of library materials
- Dusting shelves
- Cleaning puzzles and different toys
- Helping with inventory of supplies
- Organizing supplies
- Indoor and outdoor cleaning
- Watering indoor plants
- Hospitality (greeting and welcoming patrons)
- Creating scrap paper and craft preparation
- Assisting with special events at the library
- Shredding documents

#### *For Special Events Volunteers (e.g., Fourth of July Events; Movies in the Park; Concerts in the Park):*

- Putting up signs and equipment
- Tearing down equipment
- Monitoring activities in the park
- Serving refreshments
- Handing out flyers or other items
- Monitoring equipment
- Removal of garbage
- General cleanup

The foregoing is a non-exhaustive list of the types of duties that may be assigned to volunteers. The Township reserves the right to assign additional duties to volunteers from time to time as circumstances warrant.

## **VOLUNTEER BENEFITS**

As noted above, there are many rewarding benefits of serving as a volunteer for the Township, including, but not limited to, the following:

- ▶ Resumé Building: Volunteers can list their volunteer service on their resumés, which may assist the individual in locating other volunteer, academic, and job placement opportunities.
- ▶ References: A volunteer's immediate supervisor may be listed as a reference when needed for applications for school, employment, or other volunteer opportunities.
- ▶ Gain Confidence: Volunteering can help you gain confidence by giving you the chance to try something new and build a real sense of achievement.
- ▶ People: Volunteering can help you meet different kinds of people and make new friends.
- ▶ Skill Building: In addition to learning new skills, volunteering can also help you build upon skills you already have and use them to benefit the greater community.
- ▶ Community Impact: Volunteering allows you to connect to your community and make it a better place, while also helping you feel part of something outside your family and friends.

## Volunteer Eligibility Criteria

Volunteers at the Allendale Charter Township will be expected to:

- Complete and submit an online volunteer application. Paper applications will be available upon request.
- All volunteers must be 14 years of age or older. Volunteers between the ages of 14 and 17 years old must have parent approval and a valid work permit on file.
- Attend our volunteer orientation program. If under the age of 18, a parent or legal guardian is also expected to attend the volunteer orientation program.
- Fill out and submit a **Volunteer Liability Waiver**. If under 18 years old, a parent or legal guardian will need to also sign the Volunteer Liability Waiver.
- For individuals volunteering in the Township's Library, agree to follow the Michigan Library Privacy Act, MCL 397.601, *et seq.*
- Pass an ICHAT background check.
- Serve without expectation or contemplation of any compensation or benefits.
- Follow all guidelines set forth in this Volunteer Handbook, and as otherwise required by the Township.

Applicants will be approved to become volunteers at the discretion of the Township. Volunteers serve at will and may be discharged with or without cause or notice by the Township at any time.

If there is no suitable volunteer match with the applicant's skills and interests or schedule requests, the applicant will be notified.

## Expectations for Volunteers

Volunteers are recognized by the public as representatives of the Township and shall be guided by the same work and behavior code as Township employees. This will include, but not be limited to:

1. Be courteous, professional, and helpful to Township visitors, staff, and other volunteers at all times.
2. Timely report for all scheduled shifts and notify your immediate supervisor in advance if you will be late or absent.
3. Wear appropriate clothing to present a positive image of the Township.
4. Wear a volunteer nametag to help individuals recognize your role.
5. Eat only in designated areas and keep your personal items in a safe place.
6. Make sure volunteer time is properly recorded.
7. Refer all questions, including policy questions, to a staff member.
8. Each volunteer will have an immediate supervisor. If any problems or questions arise, they should be discussed with the volunteer's supervisor.
9. In accordance with the Michigan Library Privacy Act, never reveal to anyone any information about a patron learned while volunteering. This includes any materials looked at, referenced, or checked out by a patron, as well as questions asked by Library patrons.
10. Immediately report any injuries to yourself or others to a staff member. Any potential hazard should also be reported. Volunteers are not covered by Worker's Compensation.
11. Township owned equipment and supplies are for business use only.
12. When leaving the volunteer program, notify your supervisor by giving written notice with the effective date.
13. In accordance with local ordinances, all Township buildings are smoke-free.
14. Follow all policies and rules while performing volunteer work. Volunteers are subject to the same policies as employees.

Volunteers who violate any of these requirements are subject to dismissal from the Township's volunteer program.

## Important Policies and Guidelines

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

We support an environment of equal employment opportunities and will maintain and conduct all practices relating to recruitment, hiring, compensation, benefits, termination, and all other terms and conditions of your volunteer services in a manner which does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, genetic information, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, age, disability, marital status, height, weight, or any other characteristic protected by law. Please contact the Township's Human Resources Manager if you have concerns regarding equal employment opportunity.

### **ANTI-HARASSMENT AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

All our employees and volunteers have the right to work in an environment that is free of inappropriate discrimination and harassment. Harassment and discrimination can occur based on an individual's race, color, religion, national origin, age, weight, height, disability (actual and perceived), marital status, sex, sexual orientation or other characteristics protected by law. The Township prohibits, and will not tolerate, any such discrimination or harassment based upon these factors.

Any applicant or volunteer who believes he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or has witnessed discrimination or harassment toward others must immediately report the incident to his or her direct supervisor or the Township's Human Resources Manager. If either of these individuals are contributing to the problem or the perception of the problem, or if your concern or complaint is not resolved by either of these individuals within a reasonable period of time, the individual should address such concerns or file his or her complaint with the Township's Supervisor. For further information regarding the types of harassment, examples of actions that constitute harassment or discrimination, and the reporting of any perceived unlawful conduct, please see the Township's Human Resources Manager.

The Township prohibits retaliation against any individual who in good faith reports discrimination or harassment, or against any individual who participates in an investigation of such reports. Any agent of the Township who, after investigation, has been found to have retaliated against any individual for reporting unacceptable behavior, or for participating in an investigation, will be, in the discretion of the Township, subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.

### **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

The Township is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Michigan Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act. Accordingly, all employment practices and activities, including volunteer placement, are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis. The Township does not discriminate against any qualified applicant or volunteer regarding any terms or conditions of employment because of such individual's disability, so long as the applicant or volunteer can perform the essential functions of the job, with or without a reasonable accommodation, unless doing so would result in an undue hardship, safety risk, or health risk. If an applicant or volunteer believes that accommodation of a disability is necessary to perform the essential functions of a position, he or she must notify us of this need in writing within 182 days after he or she knows or reasonably should have known of the need for accommodation. All requests for reasonable accommodation must be referred to the Township's Human Resources Manager.

## **DRUG-FREE AND ALCOHOL-FREE WORKPLACE**

The Township is committed to providing a safe, efficient, and productive work environment for all volunteers, employees, and other individuals that is free from the effects of drug and alcohol abuse. The Township will not tolerate any abuse of drugs or alcohol that imperils the health or well-being of its volunteers, employees, or guests, or threatens or compromises the safety of the services it provides.

While on Township property or while performing Township business, volunteers and employees are prohibited from the use of, abuse of, involvement in the manufacturing of, distribution of, possession of, or dispensation of illegal drugs or alcohol. Volunteers and employees are also prohibited from using alcohol to the extent that it violates laws, negatively affects Township activities, or adversely affects the reputation of the Township. Any volunteer who engages in this type of prohibited conduct will be subject to dismissal from the volunteer program.

## **VIOLENCE-FREE WORKPLACE**

To ensure that the Township maintains a safe workplace free of violence for all individuals, the Township prohibits the possession or use of weapons or ammunition, of any kind, on the Township's property, or while conducting business on behalf the Township. This prohibition applies even if the volunteer is licensed to carry the weapon, concealed or otherwise.

Further, verbal threats, physical threats, abusive behavior, or acts of violence against other volunteers, employees, visitors, customers, or other individuals will not be tolerated. Any person who makes threats, exhibits threatening behavior, or engages in violent acts on Township property will be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits and will remain off the premises pending the outcome of an investigation.

Violations of this policy will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and/or referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies for arrest and prosecution.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY; LIBRARY PRIVACY ACT**

The Township is engaged in a business which requires a strict code of confidentiality of information be maintained. During your volunteer service with the Township, you will have access to confidential or otherwise personal or privileged information and records. Such information may include, but is not limited to, Library patrons' reading histories, materials borrowed, resources reviewed, or services used at the Library.

It is imperative that these types of confidential information be protected by refraining from keeping or distributing any of this confidential information. As such, volunteers may not access, review, reproduce, retain, disclose, disseminate, or otherwise use or transmit any such confidential information or records except as needed to perform their assigned volunteer responsibilities and/or as may otherwise be duly authorized.

During orientation, volunteers will learn more about Michigan's Library Privacy Act, and the other types of information, in general, which the Township considers confidential and should be safeguarded. If at any point during your volunteer service with the Township you have questions regarding the confidential nature of data, immediately contact your direct supervisor for clarification.

Volunteers will be subject to dismissal from the volunteer program for knowingly or unknowingly revealing information of a confidential nature.



## Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgment Form

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Allendale Charter Township's Volunteer Handbook (the "**Handbook**"), which I understand provides general, non-exclusive guidelines on the policies, procedures, and programs affecting my participation in the volunteer program with the Township. I also acknowledge that I have had an opportunity to have any questions I have related to the Handbook answered by the Township, and that I fully understand the Handbook's contents. I accept responsibility for familiarizing myself with the information in the Handbook, and for following the Township's rules and guidelines during my volunteer service. I also agree to consult with my direct supervisor or a representative of the Township if I have any future questions that are not answered in this Handbook.

Further, I understand that my volunteer service with the Allendale Charter Township is at-will and may be subject to termination at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause, at the discretion of the Township or myself.

**APPLICANT:**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN:**

**Required if Applicant is Under 18**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

**For Office Use Only:**

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_