



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

All policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are subject to change at any time without prior notification. You will be notified as necessary when changes have been made.

Volunteers at Fresh Start are expected to:

- Complete tasks as agreed upon and as communicated by the staff lead.
- Come in as scheduled, on time, and stay until the end of time committed.
- Be pleasant, helpful, respectful, and understanding when interacting with clients and staff.
- View all clients as worthy of your time and energy.
- Follow agency policies and procedures as listed in this handbook and report any safety concerns or issues.
- Record the number of hours worked.

Mission

The mission of the Fresh Start Volunteer Department is to provide opportunities for leaders in the community to share their talents and skills in a way that positively serves women. In doing so, volunteers create personal, meaningful connections, support the mission and strategic goals of Fresh Start, and further the work of building empowered and resilient women in our community.

Timeliness

Fresh Start maintains a strict on-time arrival policy for all clients. This is to help the women to plan ahead when arriving places and to better prepare her for a professional environment. In addition, it honors those who arrive on time and shows a level of respect for everyone in the room. With this in mind, we expect the same level of timeliness from all volunteers. We ask that volunteers arrive 10-15 minutes prior to their assigned volunteer shift in order to allow for any unexpected issues and show respect for the clients of Fresh Start.

Age Requirement

Fresh Start Women's Foundation works primarily with volunteers who are at least 18 years old. We will allow volunteers who are 13 years and older to volunteer for special projects if we have obtained parental consent prior to the volunteer project and if adequate supervision is provided during the hours of the project.

Accessibility

Fresh Start Women's Foundation strives to make our volunteering opportunities accessible to as many people as possible. If you have accessibility requirements, please let us know so that we can work with you in order to serve our population effectively.

Time Commitment

Fresh Start Women's Foundation asks all volunteers to commit to a period of at least 6 months for any/all volunteer opportunities. It is a privilege to volunteer and it is important that Fresh Start provide the best possible and most consistent level of services possible for the women in Phoenix.

Signing In/Out

Volunteers must sign in at the start of their shift, and sign out at the end. If at any time you forget or unable, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know so we can update your volunteer hours.

Orientation and Trainings

The Volunteer Orientation introduces client facing volunteers to the mission and history of Fresh Start, policies and procedures, and available volunteer opportunities. The orientation is a necessary tool which helps volunteers successfully perform their duties at Fresh Start.

Depending on the area in which you volunteer, further training may be required. If the position you are interested in requires further training, you will be notified by the Program Coordinator.

Code of Conduct

The continued success of Fresh Start is dependent upon the trust of the women served and our dedication to preserving that trust. Volunteers must act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of our clients.

Volunteers are also expected to comply with all applicable laws and regulations while refraining from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

One of our first priorities is to assist our clients or potential clients. Nothing is more important than being courteous, friendly, helpful and prompt with the attention you give to the women we serve; it is a reflection not only of the individual volunteer, but of the professionalism of Fresh Start as a whole.

Code of Conduct Details

- **Confidentiality:** The protection of confidential information for the women we serve is vital to the interests and success of Fresh Start. All volunteers must agree to our confidentiality policy at the time of their application.
- **Conflicts of Interest:** A conflict of interest occurs when a volunteer is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for the volunteer or a relative of that volunteer. Fresh Start maintains a strict policy against any possible conflicts of interest.
- **Anti-Harassment:** Fresh Start is committed to providing a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation or other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.
- **Giving and Receiving Feedback:** Fresh Start believes we learn about ourselves from our experiences with other people. Because of this we uphold a culture of giving and receiving feedback for all clients, staff and volunteer. Staff will observe and provide feedback to all volunteers throughout their time at Fresh Start. Feedback will always be given in a respectful, professional, and timely manner. Volunteers are expected to respond to any constructive feedback in a respectful, professional and timely manner. Fresh Start staff welcome and ask for feedback from volunteers throughout their experiences as well.
- **Professional Boundaries:** Ethical and legal problems can arise when a Fresh Start volunteer and a client or staff member form a relationship outside of professional parameters. Every effort must be made to maintain professional boundaries between the volunteer and client and the volunteer and staff. This means that the volunteer does not become the friend, peer, confidant, rescuer, or emotional/sexual partner to clients. This type of relationship must be avoided. It is also considered inappropriate to host an emotional/sexual relationship with any staff member of Fresh Start. It is Fresh Start's expectation that communication to staff or clients should be done through email or phone call directly to the lead staff or Volunteer Coordinator. Personal phone numbers should not be shared between volunteer and client or volunteer and staff.

We ask that you do not give money/gifts or offer transportation to the women we serve and/or ask for transportation or money *from* them.

It is also strongly recommended that you do not give your personal e-mail address, phone number, or other information to a client at Fresh Start unless you are serving as a mentor.

Volunteers who do not follow this professional Code of Conduct will be subject to dismissal.

Soliciting Business

Volunteers must not solicit business during their service at Fresh Start. A volunteer's business may only be mentioned to describe his or her credentials. To maintain professional boundaries, it is recommended that Fresh Start volunteers do not give out personal information of any kind unless they are in a mentoring capacity.

Volunteers as Clients/Clients as Volunteers

In order to uphold confidentiality requirements and to maintain professional boundaries between clients and volunteers, the following policies are in place:

- Clients may volunteer for Fresh Start in certain circumstances decided upon by the Volunteer Coordinator and Fresh Start leadership team.
- Clients are not able to teach workshops or be a mentor while accessing services.
- Volunteers cannot receive a mentor or scholarship.

Any questions about these policies should be directed to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteers and Guests

Community members or guests of volunteers are only allowed to observe a group or workshop after they have received permission in advance from the Volunteer Coordinator and signed the Confidentiality Agreement. A volunteer's children may not accompany her/him on site at any time.

Volunteer Records

The information that was provided in your Volunteer Application and information gathered during your interview and/or reference check will be entered into a computer database. All volunteer applications and coordinating information will be kept confidential. If your contact information changes you may update it in your online file in the Volunteer Center.

Volunteers are considered active in our database until they tell us otherwise, are dismissed from services, or have not volunteered for a full calendar year. At this time they are marked as inactive.

Volunteer files are deleted once the volunteer has been inactive for 3 years. At this time, record of volunteer activity will no longer be available.

If an individual completes a volunteer application and/or orientation but does not begin volunteering, their file will be deleted after one calendar year.

Identification and Security

A volunteer badge **must** be worn during the time you are volunteering in the center. This way you will be easily recognized by clients and staff.

Appearance

You are a representative of our organization and should serve as a positive example to our clients. Fresh Start requires that volunteers be neat, clean, and well-groomed while on duty. We ask that you dress in professional or business-casual attire. Please avoid sneakers, crop tops, tank tops, and shorts while volunteering at Fresh Start unless told otherwise.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted inside the WRC. If you would like to smoke, please do so outside and at least 20 feet away from any WRC entrances.

Accident/Injury

Any accidents or injuries sustained by a volunteer while serving Fresh Start, no matter how minor they may seem, must be reported immediately to a Fresh Start staff member at the time of the incident. An Accident/Injury Report must be completed by the volunteer(s) involved in the incident within 48 hours and must be remitted to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Absenteeism/Leave of Absence

If you cannot make your scheduled volunteer shift, it is imperative that you call your staff lead to advise her of your intentions to miss your shift or update your assignment in the Volunteer Information Center. We ask that you give Fresh Start at least a forty-eight hour notice so that we can try to find a replacement if possible.

Cancellations are highly discouraged as many of our clients rely on these services to assist in achieving their goals. While we understand that issues do arise, we encourage volunteers to take this commitment seriously and come in for the shifts they have chosen. Three (3) cancellations within a six (6) month period, or a seen pattern of cancellations, will result in a dismissal.

Communication via emails, phone calls, and letters will be sent to you regarding missed shifts and will be used in informing you if you have a status change as a volunteer. An appeal to this policy may be made with the Volunteer Coordinator.

For long term volunteers: If you are planning a vacation or have an impending leave of absence, please let us know as soon as possible so that we may make other arrangements to have your volunteer duties covered while you are away.

Disciplinary Action and Dismissal

If an issue arises that requires disciplinary action, the following steps will be followed:

Volunteer Coordinator and staff lead will investigate the situation brought to their attention either by staff, volunteer, or client. A meeting between the Volunteer Coordinator, staff lead, and Community and Engagement Manager will occur to discuss the situation. The volunteer will receive a verbal or written warning and/or, depending on the severity of the situation, asked not to return to volunteer. Fresh Start will make every effort to discipline immediately, enforce discipline fairly, and be effective in evaluating a situation.

Grievance

Whenever a volunteer has a job related question, problem or concern, staff are available to help resolve the matter. The volunteer should discuss the issue with the Volunteer Coordinator. It is expected that most disagreements will be dealt with at the lowest level or the chain of command. In the event that informal conflict resolution fails to resolve a volunteer's problem, a grievance may be sent to the Volunteer Coordinator or Community Engagement Manager directly, via email.

Photo Consent

Fresh Start Women's Foundation has a Photo Release Authorization Form that we ask (but do not require) volunteers to fill out during specific events. The photos may be used for newsletters, advertising, videos, mall displays, publicity, digital media, and other uses.

We ask that volunteers refrain from taking any photos during their volunteer shift. Our confidentiality policy requires prior approval through Fresh Start processes before any photos are taken. If you would like a photo of your class, please discuss this with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Substance Abuse Policy

Fresh Start Women's Foundation provides a drug-free, healthy, and safe environment. A volunteer may not use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The use of illegal drugs and alcohol and misuse of prescribed and over the counter drugs subjects volunteers, employees, and clients to unacceptable safety risks that undermine Fresh Start's ability to operate safely, effectively, and efficiently.

Electronics

We ask that volunteers refrain from using their cell phone during their volunteer work in the building. While we understand that there are times when volunteers need to have their phone accessible, the priority during your volunteer shift is to be on the clients. If you need to make a phone call, we ask that you step away to do so.

Volunteer Evaluations and Observations

It is a volunteer's responsibility to pass out the evaluations given to clients at a workshop or one-on-one coaching. These evaluations are used in order to measure the effectiveness of our programs. The results can be shared with the volunteer at the volunteer's request.

Volunteers can request one-on-one evaluations from their staff lead to discuss strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for additional trainings. This is also an excellent time for volunteers to give feedback.

For workshops given at Fresh Start, there will occasionally be other staff or volunteers observing the class to ensure the curriculum is up to date and Fresh Start policies are being upheld. Sometimes these observations may be done anonymously. Volunteers will receive feedback from any observations that are taken.

Handouts

If you are providing a service at Fresh Start that includes handouts for the clients, those documents must be provided to Fresh Start at the time of your workshop/presentation submission. Any updated documents must wait until the following quarter begins to be submitted and used.

Volunteer Appreciation

Fresh Start truly appreciates the efforts and gifts from our volunteers. Volunteers are a critical part of the success of Fresh Start. If there is something you would like to see, discuss, or recommend about the program, or questions that you have, you may express these by contacting the Volunteer Coordinator.

Release Policy

The volunteers understands and agrees that her or his invitation to offer a service at Fresh Start is contingent upon complying with the terms of this handbook. A volunteer may be dismissed if any of the following occur:

- She or he is found to have solicited business or pressured clients to buy goods or services during a Fresh Start workshop/seminar.
- She or he oversteps a professional boundary.
- She or he, in violation of the terms of this handbook, discloses confidential information about a client to an outside party.
- Her or his observations do not meet Fresh Start's minimum standards.
- She or he has shown a pattern of cancellations in volunteer assignments.

Letter of Acknowledgement

This is to certify that I have received a copy of the Fresh Start Volunteer Handbook. I understand that by signing this form, I acknowledge that I must read the handbook in its entirety in order to fully understand all policies and procedures for which I will be held accountable while completing my volunteer service, internship, service learning, and field experience or community service hours.

Printed Name of Recipient: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____