

Volunteer Program Mission Statement

The mission of **Gateway** Community Action Partnership is to provide services that improve the quality of life and promote self-sufficiency for the residents of Cumberland, Salem, and Gloucester counties. The implementation of a volunteer program will provide additional resources to the agency and foster and improve community relations. As a result of a volunteer program, **Gateway CAP** will have an enhanced relationship with members of the community by using them as volunteers. Additionally, **Gateway CAP** will be better able to serve the community because volunteers will improve the efficacy of its programs.

Purpose of Volunteer Policies

These policies are written to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer involvement and management efforts. These policies do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. **Gateway CAP** reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy.

Liability

Volunteers are expected to understand the risks associated with volunteering. Further, volunteers whereby waive any claims against, indemnify, and hold harmless **Gateway** Community Action Partnership, its respective directors, officers, employees, sponsors, representatives, and volunteers from any and all liability, including attorney fees, that may result from illness, personal injury, property damage, or wrong doing resulting from involvement with the **Gateway CAP** volunteer program.

Discrimination

Gateway CAP is committed to a policy of fair representation and will not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, geography, or age. **Gateway CAP** will follow this policy in its selection of volunteers. Volunteers are expected to adhere to these same standards in the course of their duties.

Harassment and Discrimination

Gateway is firmly committed to providing a positive work environment free of discrimination and bias. Each volunteer is personally responsible for maintaining such a work environment. **Gateway** prohibits any actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sex, color, religion,

sexual orientation, geography, or age. Any conduct or action, whether overt or subtle, which creates an offensive or hostile work environment is prohibited and will be grounds for immediate disciplinary action.

Gateway prohibits any harassment between volunteers, employees, or other non-employee on the basis of sex, as per the Sexual Harassment policy outlined in the Volunteer Policy Manual. No volunteer of any sex or gender should be subjected to unsolicited or unwelcome sexual overtones and conduct, either verbal or physical. Misconduct applies to people of all sexes and genders, and includes harassment between individuals of different sexes and the same sex.

Any volunteer who believes he or she is a victim of sexual or discriminatory harassment is encouraged to let the harasser know that his or her behavior is unwelcome. In addition, volunteers who believe they have been harassed must immediately report the matter to their supervisor, Program Director, or Human Resources. A grievance is then filed.

Grievances

Under this policy, a grievance is defined as any event, condition rule, or practice which the volunteer believes violates his or her civil rights, treats him or her unfairly, or causes him or her any degree of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the job. A grievance may also deal with an attitude, or an opinion or statement held by a staff member or fellow volunteer.

Volunteer grievances are of great concern to **Gateway CAP**, regardless of whether the problem is large or small. To provide prompt and efficient evaluation of, and response to grievances, **Gateway** has established a procedure for all volunteers. It is **Gateway's** policy to give full consideration to every volunteer's opinion. There will be no discrimination against or toward anyone for his or her part in presenting a grievance. All grievances are handled confidentially.

The grievance procedure is:

1. If urgent action is needed, notify your supervisor immediately.
2. Attempt to discuss your grievance with your supervisor, **Gateway** Volunteer Coordinator, or Program Director to work out the problem.
3. If you are unsatisfied, submit your complaint in writing to a supervisor, **Gateway** Volunteer Coordinator, or Program Director.
4. A response should be made within 5 business days.

5. If you are not satisfied within 5 days of how your written complaint was handled, you may appeal by submitting your written complain to Human Resources.
6. The Human Resources department should respond within 5 business days.

Service at the Discretion of the Agency

Gateway accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the agency. Volunteers agree that **Gateway** may at any time, for whatever reason (including violation of this Code of Conduct agreement), decide to terminate the volunteers' relationship with the agency. Notice of a decision for dismissal should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor, Volunteer Coordinator, and Human Resources.

Representing **Gateway**

Volunteers are asked not to contact organizations or individuals on behalf of **Gateway CAP** unless a staff member gives them express direction to do so. Prior to any action or statement that may significantly affect or obligate **Gateway CAP**, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate staff. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contracts, resources, finances, or other obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of **Gateway** as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single staff, volunteer, client, other person, or **Gateway CAP** business. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with **Gateway**.

Copyright/Ownership Issues

Material produced by volunteers for **Gateway**, including graphics materials, web page designs, narratives, research, compilation, instructional texts, etc., becomes the property of **Gateway** upon submission. Volunteers may be recognized for their contributions as appropriate.

As a volunteer at **Gateway CAP**, I am committed

to: Personal responsibility

- Be dependable, recognizing the commitment and responsibility to my volunteer assignment(s)
- Showing up on time for volunteer assignments and avoiding excessive absenteeism
- Accept assignment(s) consistent with my interest, abilities, and available time
- Accept assignment(s) with an open mind and a willingness to learn
- Accept feedback from my supervisor in order to do the best job possible
- Keep **Gateway** staff informed of progress, concerns, and problems within the program(s) in which I participate
- Avoid conflict of interest situations and refrain from actions that may be perceived as such. Volunteers should reveal any potential or actual conflicts of interest as they arise
- Wear required identification and clothing. All items of clothing must be suitable for the work environment and should not contain offensive or objectionable material (slogans or graphics)
- Not accept tips, request meals to be paid for, or otherwise accept payment for my volunteer work

Respect

- Treat all individuals (including employees, other volunteers, program participants, visitors, and clients) with a sense of dignity, respect, and worth. Make a personal commitment to be nonjudgmental about cultural differences, living conditions and the life-style of each person with whom I work.

- Avoid profane and abusive language and disruptive behavior that is dangerous to self and others.
- Abstain from the use of photo, audio or video recording equipment unless authorized
- Respect all confidential information. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single staff, volunteer, client or other person.
- Not preach to anyone or pressure anyone to accept my political, cultural, or religious beliefs
- Respect and use all equipment appropriately and as required for my assignment. Abstain from the use of county equipment/resources for personal use

Safety

- Provide a safe environment by not harming anyone in any way, whether through discrimination, sexual harassment, physical force, verbal or mental abuse, neglect, or other harmful actions
- Not use, possess, or be under the influence of tobacco products, alcohol, or illegal drugs at any time while serving as a volunteer, and agree to be subject to post-accidental drug testing if found to be appropriate
- Abstain from all illegal activity
- Follow safe workplace practices, including participation in applicable education sessions, using appropriate personal safety equipment and reporting accidents, injuries, and unsafe situations.
- Report suspicious activities to my supervisor.
- Recognize that I have a responsibility to adhere to the rules and procedures of the agency. Failure to do so or failure to satisfactorily perform my volunteer assignment may cause me to be subject to dismissal.

Working with Children

- Abstain from the use of hitting, shaking, or any other form of corporal punishment of children.
- Abstain from using abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment or any other form of emotional punishment of children.
- Comply with mandated reporting in cases of suspected child and vulnerable adult abuse or neglect.
- If volunteering with the Head Start program, comply with all other policies concerning the treatment of children as outlined in the policy manual for Head Start.

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