



**American  
Red Cross**  
*of Central Maryland*

**VOLUNTEER  
HANDBOOK**

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**Greetings,**

**Welcome to the Central Maryland Chapter of the American Red Cross. You've joined a team that includes more than 2,000 volunteers in communities throughout Central Maryland. You're also part of an international movement with organizations in more than 170 countries. The Red Cross Movement is something special, started and maintained around the world by the actions of people like you, united by a common interest in improving the quality of human life.**

**Volunteers like you are the essential link to our community, helping the Red Cross provide relief to victims of disasters and helping people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.**

**In this volunteer-led organization, you may become involved with many different types of activities. We want to hear from you as we seek to match your interests and abilities with the needs of services throughout the Red Cross. Please feel free to contact any of the staff in the Human Resources and Volunteers office if you have questions, suggestions or comments. The names and contact information are listed at the back of this handbook.**

**Best of luck to you, and welcome. We hope that your association with the American Red Cross brings you many meaningful and rewarding experiences.**

# WELCOME TO THE AMERICAN RED CROSS!

Thank you for joining our cadre of over five million American Red Cross volunteers and volunteer blood donors.

This handbook was prepared to give you some essential information about the policies and expectations of the Central Maryland Chapter, also referred to as the Chapter. The handbook has been organized by topic to help you find information you need easily. You are also encouraged to talk with your supervisor and the Department of Human Resources and Volunteers if you have any questions about the content of this handbook. Please take the time to read through it and refer back to it as questions arise.

The Chapter reserves the right to modify the policies in this handbook without prior notice. The policies described in this handbook replace all prior policies, handbooks or policy guidance provided.

Thank you for giving your time and talents to help others. We hope that you find volunteering with the American Red Cross a positive and rewarding experience.

## **American Red Cross Mission**

The American Red Cross, a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, will provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.

## **Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement**

Volunteers are expected to adhere to the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality. Brief descriptions of each are provided below:

- ◆ **Humanity:** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (“the Movement”), born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavors, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.
- ◆ **Impartiality:** The Movement makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.
- ◆ **Neutrality:** In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.
- ◆ **Independence:** The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective

countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

- ◆ **Voluntary service:** The Movement is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.
- ◆ **Unity:** There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.
- ◆ **Universality:** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

Our commitment to the Fundamental Principles brings us together with a common purpose and inspires us to excel and to behave in ways that inspire the trust of the American people. Each of us is responsible for upholding and living in accordance with these values every day.

### **Values**

Our American Red Cross values provide the foundation for the way we behave and the standard to which we hold ourselves. Each of us is responsible for upholding the values and living in accordance with them every day:

- Accountability,
- Collaboration,
- Commitment,
- Results,
- Trustworthiness and
- Humanitarianism.

### **Ethics Every Day**

As American Red Cross volunteers, each of us is responsible, every day, for our own behavior and decisions. We affect the people and community around us. We make a difference.

We are committed to making a positive difference by...

- Improving the quality of human life.
- Enhancing self-reliance and concern for others.
- Helping people avoid, prepare for and cope with emergencies.

In living out this mission, each of us is responsible for living up to the fundamental standards of our culture:

- Telling the truth
- Keeping promises
- Respecting individuals
- Being fair

Each of us is responsible for maintaining the highest standards of ethics... every day.

### **The Concern Connection Line**

It is your responsibility to be an active protector of the values that make us who we are. If a potential illegal, unsafe or unethical situation arises in the Red Cross workplace, speak up! If

possible, notify your supervisor, volunteer resources representative or any manager with whom you feel comfortable. If attempts to resolve this at a local level are unsuccessful, call the Concern Connection Line, 1-888-309-9679.

### **Red Cross History**

Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross in 1881. In 1905, the United States Congress gave Red Cross a charter that mandates it to provide relief for domestic and international disaster victims and communication services for members of the Armed Forces. Every Red Cross chapter must do these two things, although many provide a much greater variety of community services.

Facts about the Red Cross -

- The International Red Cross was founded by Henry Dunant in 1863. Its headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The American Red Cross was founded by Clara Barton in 1881 and is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- The United States Congress has mandated that all Red Cross chapters must provide services for the military and their families and provide relief assistance during all disasters, domestic and international.
- The American Red Cross Headquarters is in Washington, DC.
- There are 700 chapters and more than 65 plus blood services regions in the United States; we also have Armed Forces Emergency Services stations serving members of the military and their families in the US and overseas.
- All Red Cross disaster assistance is an outright gift. It is funded by voluntary contributions from the American people.
- The International Red Cross has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize four times.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is an international organization with societies in more than 170 countries. It is unique among voluntary service organizations because it was founded on a set of seven Fundamental Principles.

### **About Our Chapter**

The Chapter serves people in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard Counties and Baltimore City. Our headquarters is located at 4800 Mt.Hope Drive, Baltimore. The chapter's web site address is [www.redcross-cmd.org](http://www.redcross-cmd.org).

We are particularly proud of the services and achievements that are unique to our own community.

- Since 1990 we have housed the Holocaust and War Victims Tracing Center, a national Red Cross service that helps provide answers to people seeking the fate of loved ones lost during the World War II era.
- Our volunteers serve patients in local Veteran Administration hospitals, helping distribute comfort kits and talking to the hospitalized veterans.
- Our youth volunteers in Red Cross Clubs and Corps support Red Cross in many activities, such as; teaching Community Disaster Education, participating in the Measles Initiative,

conducting school supply and clothing drives for new resettled refugees in partnership with the International Refugee Committee, and other service learning projects.

These are just a few of the many ways through which our volunteers, including you, touch the Central Maryland community.

The Chapter provides this wide range of services to the community:

**Emergency assistance** to victims of fires, storms, and other disasters, as well as community education to prevent and prepare for emergencies.

**Emergency communications** and assistance to members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families.

**International tracing** services for people who have lost touch with family members due to war, natural disasters, and other calamities.

**Teach and certify people in lifesaving skills** such as CPR, first aid, and life guarding.

**Train people** in swimming, nursing assistance, childcare, and other health and safety related areas.

**Youth Services** provides young people opportunities to develop leadership skills and positively impact the communities they live in through involvement in Red Cross Clubs and Corps and community outreach programs.

**Provision of safe blood** and blood products to more than 65 area medical facilities for cancer patients, accident victims, and others in need. The Greater Chesapeake and Potomac Region provides nearly all of the blood needed in the Central Maryland area. The Chapter works together with the Region by recruiting, training, and scheduling volunteers and drivers to assist in the blood collection program. The Greater Chesapeake and Potomac Blood Services Region is located at 4700 Mt. Hope Drive. The Blood Services web site address is [www.my-redcross.org](http://www.my-redcross.org), and is just up the street from our Chapter Headquarters.

Information relating to Blood Services, such as blood drive locations, hosting a blood drive, or questions related to giving blood, can be obtained by calling the Greater Chesapeake and Potomac Region at 1-800-GIVE LIFE, (1-800-448-3543).

## VOLUNTEER POLICIES

**Commitment to Volunteers, Diversity and Youth Involvement**

The achievement of the goals of the Chapter is best served by the active participation of members of the community. To this end, the Chapter accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels of the organization and within all appropriate programs and activities.

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource. They shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as equal co-workers, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the values, goals and procedures of the organization.

The Chapter is committed to diversity and inclusiveness. Our employees; volunteers; governance; customers; financial contributors; clients; blood, bone marrow and tissue donors; suppliers and vendors should be representative of the diversity of the people residing in each local community the Red Cross serves. We are committed to people diversity, program diversity and service diversity.

Youth volunteers are welcomed! We accept youth as volunteers beginning at age fourteen. They must have the written consent of a parent or guardian prior to volunteering. The volunteer work assigned to a minor should be performed in a non-hazardous environment and should comply with all appropriate requirements of child labor laws.

Youth are a vital link to the life of the American Red Cross and the future of this country. The American Red Cross is committed to developing youth involvement so that young people may better serve their community and become the leaders of tomorrow.

**Definition of an American Red Cross Volunteer**

A Red Cross volunteer is an individual who, beyond the responsibilities of paid employment, freely assists the American Red Cross in the accomplishment of its mission without expectation or receipt of compensation.

**Role of the Board of Directors**

The Board of Governors of the American Red Cross delegates authority and responsibility to the board of directors of each chapter for governance of the chapter; delivery of authorized services in the chapter's jurisdiction; and meeting corporate obligations to comply with corporate regulations. The unbounded generosity and compassion of all our donors, volunteers, and paid staff enable the Red Cross to provide help and hope.

**Volunteer and Employee Roles and Relationships**

The American Red Cross is an organization governed, supported by and primarily staffed by volunteers. Employees provide support to, and are not substitutes for, volunteers. When possible, principal management roles are filled by teams of volunteer and employee management partnerships working together and sharing responsibility.

Volunteers serve in governance, management, direct service, support service, and advisory roles. Volunteers may be involved in all programs and activities of the organization, and serve at all levels of skill and decision making.

Consistent with the Strategic Direction of the American Red Cross to inspire a new generation of volunteers; volunteers and employees are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programs of the Chapter and the American Red Cross. Volunteers and employees have equal and complementary roles to play. Volunteers are encouraged to understand and respect the needs and abilities of the employees.

### **What You Can Expect as a Red Cross Volunteer**

Your responsibility as a volunteer:

1. Be realistic and candid in accepting your assignment, taking into consideration your interests, skills and availability, as well as the needs of Central Maryland Chapter.
2. Learn your volunteer assignment as well as you can by completing all required training, asking questions and staying in touch with your supervisor.
3. Contribute to the Red Cross by being reliable and dependable in doing your job and working with your co-workers.
4. Follow all policies and guidelines of Chapter, sign a Code of Business Ethics and Conduct; observe confidentiality when needed, and engage in appropriate public behavior at all times.
5. Participate in the feedback process by letting the Department of Human Resources and Office of Volunteers, hereafter referred to as HR/OV; know how you feel about your volunteer experience and by giving constructive suggestions for improvement in any area.
6. Develop your skills as a volunteer by participating in training and development opportunities. Learn as much as you can to do the best job possible.

### **What You Can Expect the Central Maryland Chapter to Provide for You**

1. A suitable assignment based upon your interests, skills and availability, as well as the Chapter's needs.
2. Orientation and training to help you perform your job.
3. The opportunity to work as part of a team, to contribute to the welfare of the community and the organization, and to be recognized for your contribution.
4. The support you need to do your job, including necessary equipment, supplies, work space and helpful supervision.
5. The opportunity to give feedback about your Red Cross volunteer experience.
6. The chance to grow and develop as a volunteer through participation in other Chapter activities, special training events, meetings and more responsible positions.
7. Recognition and appreciation for your gifts of time, treasure, and talent.

### **Insurance for Volunteers**

In general, the American Red Cross insurance covers volunteers while they are acting as agents for the Red Cross for –

- Liabilities they might incur while performing Red Cross duties
- Liabilities incurred as a result of accidents while driving a Red Cross motor vehicle
- Medical expenses incurred in conjunction with their Red Cross volunteer activities (this insurance is limited to a maximum of \$10,000 and injured volunteers should first turn to their personal health and medical insurance)
- Wrongful acts such as any breach of duty, error, misstatement, or misleading statement by any volunteer while performing official duties on behalf of the Red Cross

### **Dual Role of Red Cross Volunteers and Employees**

At times, employees of the Chapter may desire to volunteer for the organization. Exempt employees may volunteer for Chapter. However, because of the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act, non-exempt (hourly) employees may only volunteer for the Chapter in certain limited circumstances. Specifically, a non-exempt employee is not permitted to volunteer his or her time to the American Red Cross, except when *all* the following conditions have been met:

(1) the service is entirely voluntary with no promise of advancement or penalty for not volunteering -- that is, it is not coerced;

(2) the volunteer work is sufficiently distinct from, and in a different capacity than, the work for which the non-exempt employee is paid. For example, a non-exempt employee who teaches any courses as part of his or her usual job functions may not “volunteer” to teach other courses; and

(3) the volunteer neither expects to receive pay for the volunteer work nor receives any wages for the work.

Any employee who wishes to volunteer services for the Chapter or American Red Cross must speak to his or her manager and HR/OV before performing any such volunteer service and complete a volunteer application.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICIES**

### **Role of the Department of Human Resources and Volunteers**

The productive involvement of volunteers requires a planned and organized effort. The function of HR/OV, is to;

- provide a central coordinating point for effective volunteer placement within the Chapter
- direct and assist volunteer and employee efforts jointly to provide more productive services.

The staff in HR/OV shall also bear responsibility for maintaining liaisons with other volunteer programs in the community and assisting in community-wide efforts to recognize and promote volunteering. They shall bear primary responsibility; for planning effective volunteer assignments, assisting staff in identifying productive and creative volunteer roles, recruiting suitable volunteers and tracking and evaluating the contributions of volunteers to the organization.

### **Volunteer Records, References and Privacy**

The Chapter maintains personnel records of each volunteer which are the property of the Chapter and are confidential. Volunteers are required to notify HR/OV of any changes in contact information (such as emergency contact notification). Volunteers may review their personnel records annually if they wish. They should notify HR/OV and schedule a time that is mutually convenient to do this. Records may not be removed from the Department.

### **Volunteer Position Descriptions**

Every registered volunteer position in the Chapter has position descriptions summarizing the principal duties, responsibilities, qualifications and essential work functions of the assignments. Volunteer position descriptions are periodically updated to reflect changes in title, assignment or essential work functions.

### **Recruitment and Equal Opportunity**

Volunteers are recruited by the Red Cross on a pro-active basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding volunteer involvement to assist in mobilizing communities to help people prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters and other life-threatening emergencies.

Volunteers are recruited without regard to gender, disability, age, race or other condition. Volunteers are recruited based upon their skills, abilities and suitability to perform volunteer responsibilities. No final acceptance of a volunteer will take place without a specific written volunteer position description for that volunteer.

Our volunteer intake process is as follows, the prospective volunteer:

- Completes a volunteer application;
- Participates in a screening interview;
- Initiates background check process;
- Completes volunteer orientation; and
- Reviews and then signs the American Red Cross Code of Business Ethics and Conduct as well as the Intellectual Property and Confidential Information Agreement.

Additionally, some volunteers, such as nurses or disaster mental health volunteers, will need to provide proof of current licensure.

Exceptions to these procedures may be made under some limited circumstances such as when the community is experiencing a larger-scale disaster.

Volunteers working in blood services complete additional specialized training as required by the Blood Region.

In our Chapter, volunteer opportunities are available at three military Installations. Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center at Fort George Meade, Kirk U.S. Army Health Center at Aberdeen Proving Ground, and the Naval Health Center in Annapolis, Maryland.

Volunteers serving on military bases or other government installations, may need to comply with additional rules and regulations. Based on a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense, and the American Red Cross, November 20, 1990, the American Red Cross is recruiting and assisting certain medical personnel to become Red Cross volunteers for voluntary service in Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs). For the purpose of this program, the term medical volunteer includes those who are licensed, registered, or certified to provide patient care such as physicians, nurses, social workers, therapists, dieticians, pharmacists, medical technicians, EMTs, etc. Interested potential volunteers may receive information and the application forms from the local Red Cross Chapter. To qualify as a Red Cross volunteer, it is necessary to complete and sign the medical volunteer application form and to attend a Red Cross orientation. American Red Cross volunteers working under the direct supervision and control of Department of Defense personnel will henceforward be considered employees of the Federal Government for purposes of the Federal Tort Claims Act. This means that the Federal Government intends to defend and indemnify such volunteers in case they are sued for negligence in the course of their volunteer duties.

### **Recruitment of Minors (Parent/Guardian Release Form)**

Volunteers who are 14, but have not reached the age 18, must have written consent of a parent or legal guardian prior to volunteering. The volunteer services assigned to a minor should be performed in a non-hazardous environment and should comply with the appropriate requirements of child labor laws.

### **Service at the Discretion of the Organization**

The Chapter accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the Chapter. Volunteers agree that the organization may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the Chapter or to make changes in the nature of their volunteer assignment.

### **Nepotism and Fraternization**

The Chapter permits the volunteer involvement of qualified relatives of employees as long as such volunteer involvement does not, in the opinion of the Chapter, create actual or perceived conflicts of interest. For purposes of this policy, "relative" may include a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew or corresponding in-law or "step" relationship or "significant other" with whom the volunteer has a relationship. The Chapter exercises sound business judgment in the placement of related volunteers in accordance with the following guidelines:

(1) Individuals who are relatives may work in the same Chapter facility, as long as no direct reporting or supervisory relationship exists. No volunteer is permitted to work within the "chain

of command” of a relative such that the volunteer’s work responsibilities or career progress could be influenced by a relative.

(2) No relatives are permitted to work in any positions, in which the Chapter believes an inherent conflict of interest may exist.

(3) Volunteers who marry or enter into a romantic relationship while volunteering are treated in accordance with these guidelines. If, in the opinion of the Chapter, an actual or apparent conflict arises as a result of marriage, one of the volunteers will be reassigned or volunteer involvement will end within 90 days if no reassignment is available.

This policy applies to all categories of volunteer assignments.

Note: Family members are frequently involved as volunteers especially during episodic volunteer events. Youth volunteers may depend on parental involvement as drivers or chaperones. Family volunteer involvement should be encouraged as long as it does not create a perceived conflict of interest.

### **Reference and Background Checks**

The Chapter strives to maintain a safe and productive workplace with honest, trustworthy, qualified, reliable and non-violent volunteers and employees who do not present a risk of harm to their co-workers or others. At the direction of our National Headquarters in July 2006, the Central Maryland Chapter now requests that a third party perform background checks on all volunteers eighteen years and older. Based on the specific position a volunteer holds, the Chapter may request additional requirements to the basic background check. An example would be a volunteer who works in our finance office, who routinely drives a Red Cross vehicle or who works independently with youth. These background checks will be performed in accordance with applicable federal and/or state law.

## **SUPERVISION, FEEDBACK, TRAINING, AND MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES**

**Role of Supervisors**

Each volunteer has a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor may be a volunteer or employee.

This supervisor is responsible for the day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

The supervisor has primary responsibility for developing suitable assignments for the volunteer, for involving the volunteer in the communication flow of the Chapter and for providing feedback to the volunteer regarding their work.

A volunteer or employee who is assigned supervisory responsibility for volunteer(s) shall have this responsibility delineated in their position/job description.

**Performance Feedback**

Volunteers and their supervisors are encouraged to have informal, open and honest discussion on an ongoing basis about work performance and goals of the volunteer. A more formal performance review may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the volunteer's supervisor. Performance reviews are intended to reflect the volunteer's effectiveness on the job, and are a continuing record of work performance. They allow the supervisor to measure the volunteer's work against the requirements of their positions, and assess general performance behaviors. As a result of performance feedback, volunteer development activities may be pursued.

**Training for Volunteers**

Volunteers and employees should have equal access to training for equivalent positions. All volunteers must go through Red Cross orientation. Volunteer development is a collaborative effort between the Chapter, supervisors and volunteers to align individual goals with the overall direction of the Chapter. Development efforts are focused on building the capabilities of all volunteers. Developmental activities may include both hands-on projects and formal training.

**Communicating with the Department of Human Resources and Volunteers**

A supervisor is responsible for maintaining regular communications with HR/OV regarding the status of the volunteer(s) they are supervising and are responsible for the timely provision of all necessary paperwork to HR/OV. The department should be informed immediately of any substantial change in the work or status of a volunteer and should be consulted in advance before any corrective action is taken.

Contact information for HR/OV regarding queries or concerns can be found at the end of this book.

**Leaving Your Volunteer Assignment and Exit Interview**

A volunteer may decide to end his or her service with the Red Cross at any time and for any reason. Notice of the volunteer's decision to separate should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor.

On or before the volunteer's last day of work, HR/OV or the volunteer's supervisor will schedule an exit interview, at which time all Chapter property must be returned. This includes American Red Cross-authorized credit cards (including but not limited to: Visa, rental car, car service, telephone) and American Red Cross properties (including, but not limited to: equipment, supplies, policy manuals, organization manuals, business documents, papers, files, proprietary information, computers and accessories, portable telephones, procurement cards, access cards, identification badges and keys).

### **Awards and Recognition**

The American Red Cross is committed to recognizing its volunteers and employees. Red Cross volunteers are eligible for a number of awards both locally and nationally. Service pins are awarded on the volunteer's five-year anniversary and in five-year increments thereafter. Volunteers are also recognized during National Volunteer Week as well as at other chapter-wide recognition events throughout the year.

### **Tax Information**

Certain expenses incurred while volunteering are tax deductible, provided volunteers keep an accurate record. Visit [http://forms.marylandtaxes.com/current\\_forms/502V.pdf](http://forms.marylandtaxes.com/current_forms/502V.pdf) to download a Maryland 502V form and review applicable information.

### **Attendance**

The Chapter expects all volunteers to assume diligent responsibility for their attendance and promptness. Volunteers who are unable to come to work or who will be late should notify their supervisors at least one hour prior to their scheduled start time.

Volunteers who have been absent for health reasons may be asked to provide fitness for duty certification prior to being allowed to return to active volunteering.

### **Work Schedules**

The Chapter establishes the time and duration of working hours as required by workload, customer service need, the efficient management of personnel resources, and any applicable laws. Daily and weekly work schedules may be changed from time to time at the discretion of the Chapter as needed. The schedule of work hours and the meal period for volunteers is determined by the supervisor and changes in work schedules are announced as far in advance as practicable. The standard operating hours are Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm.

### **Holidays**

The Chapter observes eight holidays each year. Holidays that fall on Sunday will be observed the following Monday. Holidays that fall on Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. The holidays observed are:

<b><u>Holiday</u></b>	<b><u>Date Observed</u></b>
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New Year's Day	January 1
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Friday after Thanksgiving	Fourth Friday in November
Christmas Eve	December 24
Christmas Day	December 25

### **Snow Days**

When scheduled to volunteer, **follow Baltimore City government's decision to close or grant liberal leave.** This information will be broadcast on local media.

In the event there is snow on an official government holiday when no media announcement would be made, volunteers should call 410-624-2000 ext. SNOW (7669) to learn of the Chapter's intent to remain open or to close. If the chapter is open and a volunteer cannot make their assignment they are to contact their supervisor.

## **SAFETY & SECURITY POLICIES**

### **Workplace Safety and Security**

In order to provide a secure, safe and healthy work environment for volunteers, the Chapter periodically provides information to volunteers about workplace safety and security.

Volunteers are discouraged from bringing large amounts of cash or other personal valuables to work unless absolutely necessary. The Chapter is not responsible for volunteers' personal items that are lost or stolen.

Those with ideas, concerns or suggestions for improved safety and security in the workplace are encouraged to bring them to management's attention so that the safety and welfare of all volunteers can be improved. Volunteers should feel free to report, without fear of retaliation, any condition which they believe poses a safety, health or security risk in the workplace. The Chapter will investigate such reports promptly and thoroughly and take appropriate corrective action. Further, any comments or jokes regarding threats of violence will be taken seriously, and dealt with appropriately and promptly.

Each volunteer is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. Volunteers must report any unsafe condition to their supervisor immediately. Volunteers who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report or, where appropriate, take action to remedy such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including separation.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, volunteers should immediately notify their supervisor. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance benefit procedures.

### **Injuries While Volunteering**

All volunteers are expected to follow appropriate safety guidelines while volunteering. However, even under the best circumstances, an accident may occur.

If a volunteer is injured, even slightly, the volunteer is expected to immediately stop the activity that caused the injury and seek first aid or medical attention if necessary. The volunteer must inform his or her supervisor about the incident and complete an incident report. If the volunteer is unable to reach the supervisor, the volunteer must contact the Department of Human Resources and Volunteers. The volunteer should not resume the activity until treatment has been provided and/or he or she has been given a supervisor's approval to continue the activity.

For information about insurance please refer to the "Insurance for Volunteers" section in this handbook. Volunteers who become unable to work because of a volunteer-related illness or injury must inform their supervisor as soon as possible.

### **Use of American Red Cross Vehicles**

Volunteers may be required to travel as part of their responsibilities and must do so in a courteous and safe manner. It is the policy of the Chapter that its drivers are qualified and legally authorized to operate motor vehicles used in the course of chapter business in a safe manner. Only volunteers who follow the guidelines outlined here are allowed to operate Chapter vehicles or operate a personal vehicle on Chapter business.

At no time are drivers permitted to subject a Chapter vehicle to abuse through careless or reckless operation. They may be disqualified from driving vehicles for many reasons; such as; numerous accidents, excessive or reckless speeding, driving under the influence or with a suspended license, failure to report an accident and/or breaking any motor vehicle laws. No driver may operate a motor vehicle while the driver's ability or alertness is so impaired, through fatigue, illness, etc., as to make it unsafe for the driver to operate the vehicle.

Drivers are required to notify their supervisor of license suspensions or revocations, and to report accidents or damage to company vehicles immediately no matter how insignificant they appear.

Seat belts must be used at all times, by both the driver and all occupants of the vehicle. Smoking is prohibited in Red Cross vehicles. The Red Cross strongly encourages drivers of marked Red Cross vehicles to be certified in first aid and CPR.

No driver may use a cellular device while driving for the Red Cross either in their own vehicle or a Red Cross owned vehicle. Staff, while operating a Chapter vehicle, or while driving their personal vehicle on Chapter business, **may not**;

- 1.) text message in accordance with Maryland law (effective October 1, 2009),
- 2.) Use a hand-held cellular telephone per American Red Cross National Headquarters unless accompanied by a blue tooth or ear phones.

Parking and traffic fines incurred while utilizing vehicles are the responsibility of the driver.

Volunteers who routinely drive Red Cross vehicle are required to complete a defensive driving course offered through the Emergency Services Department.

Staff that routinely drive Red Cross vehicle are required to complete a defensive driving course. To take the course go to:

- <http://www.saffetyserve.com/redcross/>
- Click on New Student and follow instructions.

Students will be charged \$15.95 for the course. This will be reimbursed by the student's department. The students will be mailed their certificate two days after successfully completing the course.

A copy of this certificate is to be provided to the Human Resources Department by the manager and placed in their personnel file.

### **Red Cross Property**

The Central Maryland Chapter of the American Red Cross works to prevent property loss of any kind. All property used to conduct business belongs to the Chapter. The Central Maryland Chapter assumes no liability for personal property brought into the workplace or any Red Cross worksite.

### **Identification**

In order to facilitate identification, the American Red Cross volunteer name identification should be clearly visible when you are representing the American Red Cross. New volunteers will be issued identification badges which should be worn at all times when on Chapter premises or when serving on Red Cross business off-site. Lost badges should be reported to HR/OV immediately so that a new badge can be issued. Badges must be turned in when a volunteer's service with the organization ends.

**Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

The Chapter has developed an Emergency Evacuation Procedure for the Mount Hope Headquarters. Volunteers will receive details from their supervisor. An evacuation plan is posted in each department.

## CONDUCT POLICIES

**Code of Business Ethics and Conduct**

All volunteers and employees of the American Red Cross, in delivering Red Cross services and in all other Red Cross activities, shall meet the following standards of conduct:

No volunteer or employee shall:

- a) Authorize the use of or use for the benefit or advantage of any person, the name, emblem, endorsement, services, or property of the American Red Cross, except in conformance with American Red Cross policy.
- b) Accept or seek on behalf of any person, any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value offered as a result of the volunteer's or employee's affiliation with the American Red Cross.
- c) Publicly use any American Red Cross affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue not in conformity with the official position of the American Red Cross.
- d) Disclose or use any confidential American Red Cross information that is available solely as a result of the volunteer's or employee's affiliation with the American Red Cross to any person not authorized to receive such information or use to the disadvantage of the American Red Cross any such confidential information, without the express authorization of the American Red Cross.
- e) Knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the American Red Cross in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation.
- f) Operate or act in any manner contrary to the best interests of the American Red Cross.
- g) Operate or act in a manner that creates a conflict with the interests of the American Red Cross and any organization in which the individual has a personal, business, or financial interest. The individual shall disclose such conflict of interest to the American Red Cross chair of the appropriate governing board, the appropriate Chief Executive Officer, or the General Counsel, as applicable, upon becoming aware of it. Where required, the individual shall absent himself or herself during deliberations, and shall refrain from participating in any decisions or voting in connection with the matter.

**AMERICAN RED CROSS CODE OF BUSINESS ETHICS AND CONDUCT  
CERTIFICATION AND DISCLOSURE**

I certify that I have read and understand the Code Business Ethics and Conduct of the American Red Cross and agree to comply with it, as well as applicable laws that impact the organization, at all times.

I affirm that, except as listed below, I have no personal, business, or financial interest with any organization that conflict, or appear to conflict, with the best interests of the American Red Cross.

Disclosure of Future Actual or Potential Conflicts:

At any time during the term of my employment or volunteer status with the American Red Cross, should an actual or potential conflict of interest arise between my personal, business, or financial interests and the interests of the Red Cross, I agree to:

- a. Disclose promptly the actual or potential conflict to the chair of my unit, the executive of my unit, my department head, or the General Counsel, as applicable; and

- b. Until Red Cross approves actions to mitigate or otherwise resolve the conflict, refrain from participating in any discussions, deliberations, decisions or voting related to the conflict of interest.

### **Confidential Information and Intellectual Property**

Red Cross has sole entitlement and copyrights to any intellectual property that is conceived or developed by volunteers, employees and its agents during the course of service to the American Red Cross. All registered volunteers and employees are required to sign a Confidential Information and Intellectual Property Agreement as a condition of volunteer involvement as required in the Board of Governors Manual.

Intellectual property includes inventions, discoveries, and original works of authorship as defined by U.S. patent, trademark, and copyright law. Questions about this policy should be directed to HR/OV.

### **Harassment Free Workplace**

The Chapter is committed to a work environment free from unlawful harassment in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity while working, while on Chapter premises, while traveling on Central Maryland Chapter business, or at Central Maryland Chapter social functions. The Chapter has zero tolerance for unlawful harassment.

Unlawful harassment is defined as harassment based on any characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local law including race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, veteran or disability status, which is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to alter the working conditions of a volunteer or employee. Examples of conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

1) Verbal or physical conduct that harasses a volunteer on the basis of a category protected by applicable federal, state or local law and that is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to create an intimidating, threatening, offensive or hostile environment.

2) Sexual displays or publications, or other verbal or physical conduct, where a volunteer is told either explicitly or implicitly that he or she must submit to the conduct to remain involved as a volunteer or where his or her reaction to the conduct is used as a basis for a management decision, such as evaluation, advancement, assigned duties, disciplinary action, or any other condition of volunteer involvement or career development. Examples of prohibited verbal or physical conduct include:

- Unwelcome sexual advances;
- Stalking, dating violence, date rape, or sexual assault;
- Persisting with romantic advances despite the rejection of the advances;
- Requests for sexual favors, whether or not accompanied by promises or threats with regard to the employment or volunteer relationship;
- Sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; comments about an individual's body, sexual prowess, sexual activity, or sexual attractiveness;

- Leering, whistling, or touching; insulting or obscene comments, sounds, or gestures; displays of sexually suggestive objects, cartoons or pictures.

3) Words, actions or visual matter that demean or show hostility toward an individual or group because of any characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local law.

Volunteers are responsible for reporting any concerns regarding unlawful harassment to management pursuant to the Dispute Resolution Policy

### **Violence-Free Work Environment**

The Chapter promotes a safe work environment for all volunteers and does not tolerate any type of violent behavior committed by or against volunteers. All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and in accordance with the Code of Business Ethics and Conduct.

Threatening or violent behavior committed by anyone against volunteers, employees, vendors or clients during work or off-duty hours will not be tolerated. Such behavior may include but is not limited to the following:

- (1) Physical injury to another person;
- (2) Threats;
- (3) Behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury in another person;
- (4) Intentionally causing damage to Red Cross property or property of another volunteer or employee;
- (5) Possession of weapons (for example, guns, knives, clubs, explosive devices, etc.) on Central Maryland Chapter property or while at Chapter sponsored-activities; or
- (6) Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or domestic violence.

Statements or gestures which in any way suggest that the volunteer may engage in violent conduct will be taken seriously by management and responded to appropriately. Volunteers have a responsibility to report any potentially dangerous situations or unauthorized individuals on Chapter premises to management immediately. Reports of statements or behavior which may violate this policy will be investigated promptly and in as confidential a manner as possible. A volunteer suspected of violent behavior may be placed on leave during an investigation until a course of action is determined.

Incidents involving violent behavior by a volunteer may warrant removal of the individual from the workplace until further evaluation determines his or her suitability for return to the workplace. An evaluation that finds a volunteer suitable to return to the workplace does not negate further disciplinary action, up to and including separation.

### **Dispute Resolution**

The Chapter is committed to a work environment where all persons are treated with respect and dignity. The Chapter has therefore adopted the Dispute Resolution Policy to establish a comprehensive method of resolving volunteer concerns that builds trust and produces prompt and fair resolutions. The Dispute Resolution Policy may be used to resolve issues regarding any

condition of volunteer involvement or the application, meaning, or interpretation of any volunteer resource policy or procedure that affects the work activity of a volunteer.

Volunteers are strongly encouraged to follow the steps listed below to discuss any concerns with their supervisor.

### Step One

The volunteer should promptly report a concern to his or her supervisor, who will investigate the matter and take appropriate action. Any supervisor who receives a concern alleging a violation of the Harassment Free policy will notify HR/OV immediately.

If the concern the volunteer is having involves his or her supervisor, the volunteer should report his or her concern to the next level of management who will review the situation.

### Step Two

If the problem is not resolved in Step One, the volunteer is encouraged to seek assistance from HR/OV. In an effort to resolve the problem, the Director of HR/OV will consider the facts, conduct an investigation, review the findings and recommendations, and respond back to the volunteer; and in addition, may ask the volunteer to put the concern in writing and provide appropriate documentation.

### Step Three

If a volunteer is not satisfied with the decision of the Director of HR/OV, he or she may prepare a written summary of the concerns and request that the matter be reviewed by the Chapter's Executive Director. In these instances the decision of the Executive Director is final.

No volunteer will be retaliated against for acting in good faith to report a potential issue or for assisting in the investigation of a possible issue.

### Progressive Discipline

The Chapter has adopted rules and standards to ensure productive, harmonious operations. The best interest of the Chapter lies in ensuring fair treatment of all volunteers and in making certain that discipline is prompt, fair and uniform.

The Chapter endorses a philosophy of progressive discipline in which it attempts to provide volunteers with notice of deficiencies and an opportunity to improve whenever practical or reasonable. Volunteers' performance and conduct is evaluated on an ongoing basis, with feedback provided when necessary. Informal discussions may be used to ensure that volunteers know and follow rules and standards. These discussions should focus on clarifying expectations, providing appropriate training and development and coaching.

In some cases, formal disciplinary action may be deemed appropriate. Progressive discipline steps may include, but are not limited to, oral warnings, written warnings, final written warnings or suspension and discharge from service. The Chapter retains the right to administer discipline in any manner it deems suitable and any of the steps listed above may be skipped. Separation from service may occur at any time without any progressive discipline steps having been taken.

### Red Cross Communication Systems

All communication systems are Chapter property and are to be used for business purposes. Because these communication systems are provided for business purposes, volunteers should have no expectation of privacy regarding their personal use of any Chapter communication systems, and their communications and systems use may be audited by authorized management at any time without notice. Chapter communication systems include, but are not limited to: email, telephone, Internet, fax, voicemail, bulletin boards, and interoffice mail.

Volunteers are to use proper discretion in the amount and length of non-business use of Red Cross communication systems.

Volunteers must be mindful that their association with the Chapter and the Red Cross will be visible to any recipient of an electronic communication, and assure that their communications are consistent with the mission and accepted community standards.

Prohibited uses of Central Maryland Chapter communication systems include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Developing, accessing or distributing material which:
  - harasses or disparages others, or contains ethnic or racial stereotypes, epithets or slurs;
  - contains pornography, profanity, violent or sexually explicit images, messages, or cartoons;
  - solicits for commercial ventures or outside organizations;
  - advocates positions not officially endorsed by the Red Cross
  - violates any applicable law
- 2) Personal mass email distribution (“spamming”), unauthorized computer access (“hacking”), obtaining pirated software, or violating copyright protections.
- 3) Distributing sensitive, proprietary, confidential, or private information of the Chapter and/or the Red Cross without appropriate authorization.
- 4) Obtaining unauthorized access to another volunteer’s or employee’s communication systems, or sending unauthorized communications under another colleague’s name. Central Maryland Chapter communication systems may not be used in situations that violate Federal, State or Local Law. Inappropriate use of any Central Maryland Chapter communication systems may result in disciplinary action, up to and including separation.

### **Non-Solicitation/Distribution of Literature**

Approaching fellow volunteers or employees in the workplace regarding personal activities, organizations or causes, regardless of how worthwhile, important or benevolent, can create unnecessary apprehension and pressures for fellow colleagues.

In the interest of maintaining a proper business environment and preventing interference with work and inconvenience to others, volunteers may not distribute literature or printed materials of any kind, sell merchandise, solicit financial contributions, or solicit for any other cause in the workplace during working time. The workplace includes Chapter buildings, parking lots and driveway areas and work areas in which Chapter work is regularly performed. This policy also prohibits solicitations via the Chapter email or other telephonic communication systems. Furthermore volunteers may not distribute literature or printed material of any kind in work areas at any time.

Solicitation or distribution by non-staff is prohibited on any Chapter property, including buildings and surrounding parking, patio, and driveway areas. Any requests from outside persons or organizations to sell merchandise, solicit contributions, distribute literature, arrange displays or utilize Central Maryland Chapter facilities are to be referred to HR/OV.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

The Red Cross maintains a workplace that is free from the effects of drug and alcohol abuse. The Red Cross will not tolerate any abuse of drugs or alcohol that imperils the health or well being of its staff or the customers it serves, threatens its operation, or compromises the safety of its products and services.

The Red Cross reserves the right to establish drug and alcohol search and screening procedures consistent with applicable laws, as deemed necessary. Implementation of search or screening procedures will be established only with the joint and prior approval of the Executive Director.

While on Red Cross property or while performing Red Cross business off premises, volunteers are prohibited from unlawful possession, use, manufacture, distribution, sale or dispensation of illegal drugs or alcohol. Such conduct is also prohibited during nonworking time to the extent that it violates laws, negatively affects Red Cross activities, or adversely affects the reputation of the American Red Cross.

Volunteers who use legally prescribed drugs during work, and have any reason to expect that such use may affect their ability to perform work, must report this fact to HR/OV.

### **Smoking**

The Chapter provides a smoke-free work environment. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on American Red Cross property, including parking lots, sidewalks, grounds and vehicles and wherever Red Cross services or activities are taking place.

### **Representing Red Cross**

Prior to any action or statement, which might significantly affect or obligate the Chapter, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from their supervisor. These actions may include but are not limited to: public statements to the press, collaboration or joint initiatives, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the organization as specifically indicated within their position/job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

### **Media Inquiries**

The American public relies on the American Red Cross as a symbol of trust and as a powerful voice in providing lifesaving information. Red Cross volunteers are active ambassadors of the American Red Cross. If approached by a member of the media regarding Red Cross issues, volunteers should refer the question to their supervisor or to the Public Relations Department at 410-624-2081.

### **Dress Code**

Appropriately dressed volunteers add to the overall credibility of the Red Cross and display a sense of confidence to the American Public. Volunteers should check with their supervisor for specific dress that is appropriate to the service to which they are assigned. Please ask for this information when you begin your Red Cross assignment.

## **Department of Human Resources and Volunteers**

**Bobbie Jones**

**Pam Tice**

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**[www.redcross-cmd.org](http://www.redcross-cmd.org)**

OR

**EMAIL US AT**  
**[volunteers@arc-cmc.org](mailto:volunteers@arc-cmc.org)**



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