



Volunteer Handbook

8150 North Central Expressway
Suite M1003
Dallas, TX 75206
214-877-0726

www.RainbowDays.org

Revised September 2018

Message from our CEO



Welcome to Rainbow Days! For over 37 years, volunteers have been a valuable resource for our staff and the children we serve. We rely on engaged supporters like you to help us accomplish our mission *to help children and youth in adversity build coping skills and resilience to create positive futures.*

This Volunteer Handbook will help you have the best possible experience as a volunteer. It answers frequently asked questions and gives information about our policies and your role. We also invite you to explore our website, www.RainbowDays.org, to learn more about our clients, programs, curriculum and events. Your Program Director can answer most of your other questions, but please feel free to contact me directly should you need additional assistance.

Thank you for your generous gift of time and energy. We are so grateful you have chosen to volunteer with us. You are making a difference to children in need and helping kids rise above!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherri Ansley". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and elegant.

Sherri Ansley
CEO
SherriA@RainbowDays.org

Volunteer Application/Approval Process

Volunteer Application

The first step for an individual who desires to volunteer with Rainbow Days, and the children we serve, is to complete a Volunteer Application AND undergo a Criminal Background Check before volunteering. Background checks are not required for minors under 18 years of age. Background checks are also not required for office-only projects.

Upon completion of the Volunteer application, which can be found [HERE](#) or on the volunteer tab of our website, you will be sent a separate email containing a link to fill out a background check questionnaire through VolunteerNow's veriFYI system. The background check is strictly screening for criminal offenses and does not include a credit check of any kind. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the background check process you may contact VolunteerNow directly at 214-818-9839 or Rainbow Days' offices at 214-887-0726.

ALL volunteers MUST complete a criminal background check before working with the children we serve.

Completion of this application and the background check does not guarantee that an individual will be selected as a volunteer. Volunteers will be selected at the sole discretion of Rainbow Days.

Please accurately complete this form at least 7 days before you desire to volunteer. You will not be able to volunteer with the children we serve until your CBC has cleared.

Please Note: It is our policy to re-run criminal background checks on returning volunteers every 2 years. We also reserve the right to run a background check at any time.

Criminal Background Checks

For direct-service volunteers, Rainbow Days will obtain the results of a statewide criminal background check from the Department of Public Safety via VolunteerNow's veriFYI system.

Criminal background check results will be kept confidential. Any negative findings will be reviewed by CEO, who will determine the appropriate course of action. If it is deemed that you are unable to volunteer with us, you will be contacted by the CEO directly.

Disqualifying Offenses

A person may not serve with youth or children who has been convicted of any disqualifying offenses, been on probation or received deferred adjudication for any disqualifying offense, or has presently pending, any criminal charges of any disqualifying offenses before determination of guilt is made including any person who is presently on deferred adjudication may not serve with youth or children. Disqualifying offenses are:

1. Felonies or misdemeanors classified as an offense against the person or family or involves an offense against the person or family.
 - a. Offenses against the person include, but not limited to murder, assault, sexual assault, injury to a child, and abandoning or endangering a child.
 - b. Offenses against the family include, but not limited to bigamy, incest, and interference with child custody, enticing a child or harboring a runaway child.
2. Felonies or misdemeanors classified as an offense against public order or indecency.
 - a. Offenses against public order and decency include, but are not limited to prostitution, obscenity, and sexual performance by a child, possession or promotion of child pornography, and disorderly conduct.
3. A felony or misdemeanor violation of any law intended to control the possession or distribution of any substance including a controlled substance in the Texas Controlled Substances Act. Driving Under Influence (DUI) or Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) is **not** a disqualifying offense.

Rainbow Days retains the right to disqualify a volunteer for other offenses not listed herein on a case-by-case basis.

Volunteer Policies

Drug Free Environment

Rainbow Days is committed to maintaining a drug-free environment. Volunteers will not distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances while at Rainbow Days or at Rainbow Days-related activities:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.
3. Any usable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation.
4. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs.

A volunteer need not be legally intoxicated to be considered “under the influence” of a controlled substance.

A volunteer who uses a drug authorized by a licensed physician through a prescription specifically for that volunteer’s use will not be considered to have violated this policy.

Smoking and Tobacco Usage

The use of tobacco is prohibited at Rainbow Days' offices, all Rainbow Days events and programs, and in the presence of clients. Volunteers will not provide, distribute, or facilitate participant access to tobacco products.

Personal Appearance / Dress Code

Suggested apparel for volunteer activities are: shorts (walking length), jeans or comfortable pants and closed-toed shoes (like tennis shoes). No tank tops, cropped tops, short shorts, t-shirts with political affiliations, inappropriate pictures or slogans or, open-toe shoes are permitted when working directly with children. Additionally, we may request that piercings (beyond women's pierced ears) may be covered up depending on the event. If a service site has a stricter dress code, then the site dress code will be followed.

Child Contact

Rainbow Days recruits caring, educated and nurturing staff members and volunteers and it is of primary importance for both staff and volunteers to provide a safe environment for children. It is Rainbow Days' policy to protect children and youth from inappropriate touches, inappropriate physical contact and inappropriate relationships while in the care of Rainbow Days.

Rainbow Days also strives to protect its employees and volunteers through education on appropriate touches and practicing caution. All Rainbow Days volunteers will recognize and respect the rights of children and families, as established by local, state, and federal laws.

Volunteers are asked to refrain from personal contact with a child – this includes direct contact via email and/or phone. Volunteers will not give gifts or money to clients without prior approval from Rainbow Days.

Appropriate physical contact includes touches over which a **child has control**. For example, Rainbow Days staff and volunteers may hug a child **only** when the child initiates the hug. Infants, toddlers, and Pre-school children may be carried at events in the presence of parents, guardians and staff. High fives and fist bumps are all appropriate forms of reciprocal physical contact.

Volunteers will refrain from **inappropriate touching**, which includes: lap sitting, front-to-front hugs, kisses, back rubs or massages, piggy-back rides, swinging kids by wrists or ankles, and rides on shoulders.

Reporting of Child Abuse

Rainbow Days, Inc. shall comply with the provisions of state law as set forth in Chapter 261 of the Texas Family Code relating to reporting suspected child abuse and the provisions of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) policy. Rainbow Days' staff shall respond to disclosures or suspicions of abuse of minors by reporting to appropriate agencies as required by law.

Procedure

1. Any staff, contractor, or volunteer of Rainbow Days, who has any reason to suspect that a child receiving program services is the victim of abuse or neglect as defined by Chapter 261 of the Texas Family Code, is required to report the allegation to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services within 48 hours of first suspecting abuse or neglect. By law, staff, contractors, or volunteers of Rainbow Days. may not delegate the duty to report to another person or entity or rely on another person or entity to make the report.
2. Staff, contractors and volunteers who have direct contact with children and youth are briefed on recognizing symptoms of child abuse and neglect and the policy and procedure for reporting abuse.

Procedure for Reporting

1. Thoroughly document information and observations
2. Discuss the suspected abuse or neglect with the Rainbow Days ECO or Program Director
3. Contact the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services (DFPS) to submit a report. There are two ways to report abuse: Call the Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400 toll-free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nationwide or make your report through the secure web site – www.txabusehotline.org
4. The law requires that the following information, if known, be reported:
 - a. name and address of minor;
 - b. name and address of the minor's parent or person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child if not the parent; and any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse, such as the child's school, name and age of the alleged abuser, and description of the child's condition or injury.
 - c. Document information given to DFPS and the DFPS response. Record the intake caseworker's name and other pertinent information.
 - d. Submit a copy of all documentation to the Program Director and place a copy in the client file.

Sexual Harassment

Rainbow Days volunteers will not engage in sexual harassment of children. Examples of sexual harassment of children include activities such as engaging in sexually oriented conversations, telephoning children at home or elsewhere to solicit unwelcome social relationships, physical contact that would reasonably be construed as sexual in nature, and threatening or enticing children to engage in sexual behavior in exchange for gifts or other benefits. In considering allegations that a volunteer has sexually harassed a child there is a presumption that the conduct was unwelcome.

Sexual Harassment is a form of discrimination and is strictly prohibited. Sexual harassment is any verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her gender and that:

1. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.
4. Rainbow Days volunteers will not engage in sexual harassment of any adult in which they come in contact with while serving as a Rainbow Days volunteer.

Harassing conduct includes (1) epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to gender and (2) written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of gender and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on Rainbow Days premises.

Rainbow Days or their agents shall investigate all allegations of sexual harassment and officials will take prompt and appropriate disciplinary action against volunteers found to engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment.

In order for any action to be considered sexual harassment, it must be unwelcome. If a volunteer believes that he/she is being sexually harassed, the volunteer must let the person know that the comments or actions are unwelcome.

Volunteer Service Records

The reporting and recording of volunteer hours may seem like busy work or a bother, but it has REAL VALUE. When an accurate account is maintained, we increase our ability to have on-going, consistent, and effective volunteer programs. It also helps to locate and identify volunteers for specific service. Personally for the volunteer, keeping a record of hours worked can directly benefit a person as a valued record of community involvement, responsibility and dedication.

Each volunteer is asked to complete and submit Rainbow Days volunteer time sheets (see attachment) for in-office volunteering and take-home projects. At events, volunteers are asked to sign in and out at the Volunteer Check-in table. Board Members and Group Facilitators are asked to report their hours to their staff Director.

Thank you for your time and service to Rainbow Days! Rainbow Days strives to have a warm, engaging and friendly environment for our volunteers and we know you will enjoy volunteering with us!

If you have any questions about Volunteering with Rainbow Days, please contact: Sunni Roaten, Volunteer Manager, at 214-214-3833 or SunniR@rainbowdays.org



VOLUNTEER TIME SHEET

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date	Time In	Time Out	Total Hours	Volunteer Activity	Direct Service (work w/ children)	Admin. Support (office/clerical)	Staff Approved

I acknowledge that the information listed in this time sheet is true and accurate.

Signature: _____ Date: _____