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Section 1 VA Medical Center at Memphis

MISSION:

The VAMC at Memphis exists to serve the veteran through the delivery of timely, quality care by staff who demonstrate outstanding customer service, the advancement of healthcare through research, and the education of tomorrow's healthcare providers.

VISION:

The VAMC at Memphis will be recognized locally, regionally and nationally as a leader in quality patient care, positive customer service, medical/allied health education, health-related research, and employment opportunities.

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS:

- *Quality*
- *Financial Integrity*
- *Patient Satisfaction*
- *Employee Satisfaction*

VALUES:

- *Trust*
- *Respect*
- *Commitment*
- *Compassion*
- *Excellence*

VA VOLUNTARY SERVICE MISSION STATEMENT:

To provide a structured Volunteer Program under the management of VA compensated employees in cooperation with community resources to serve America's veterans and their families with dignity and compassion.

Section 2 VOLUNTEER – A DEFINITION

Volunteers are people who give the gift of themselves and of their time to do something in relation to a cause in which they believe; people who by their actions, not their words, are ready to help where help is needed; and people who are ready to serve where service is wanted.

As a VAVS (Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service) volunteer, you become an integral part of the health care team. Your efforts will benefit the facility in continuing its commitment to excellence while providing you with the personal satisfaction of contributing to the welfare of those in need. Each year, hundreds of volunteers find fulfillment, practical work experience and companionship within VA Medical Center at Memphis.

♥ **Teens** have the opportunity to learn from this introduction to an environment of commitment and responsibility.

♥ **Students** gain experience for college, resumes and employment applications, and accrue the volunteer hours needed to meet school and community service requirements.

♥ **Homemakers**, a vital part of the Voluntary Service Program, share their compassion, skills and expertise on behalf of patients, families and staff.

♥ **Employed** adults volunteer for personal growth, job advancement, career change or social commitment.

♥ **Retirees** gain personal satisfaction and reward by offering their time and experience to the facility.

Section 3 VOLUNTEER Code of Responsibility

Be Sure: Look into your heart and know that you really want to help other people. Know your own limits.

Be convinced: Do not offer your services unless you believe in the value of what you are doing.

Accept the Rule: Respect confidences. Don't criticize what you don't understand. There may be good reason.

Speak Up: Ask about things you don't understand. Don't coddle your doubts and frustrations until they drive you away.

Be Willing to Learn: Training is essential to any job well done. Prepare for each work assignment.

Keep on Learning: Know all you can about your facility and your assignment. Use time wisely; don't interfere with others' performance.

Welcome Supervision: Consult with supervisor when unclear on policy or action. You will do a better job and enjoy it more if you are doing what is expected of you.

Be Dependable: Your work is your bond. Do what you have agreed to do. Don't make promises you can't or won't keep.

Be a Team Player: Find a place for yourself ON THE TEAM. Give constructive feedback that will improve effectiveness.

Section 4 VOLUNTEER Bill of Rights – Volunteers have

The right to be treated as a co-worker, not just free help, not as a prima donna.

The right to a suitable assignment with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education and employment background.

The right to know as much about the facility as possible – its policies, its people, its programs.

The right to be trusted with necessary confidential information.

The right to expect that your tasks will have been planned.

The right to continuing education on the job as a follow-up to initial training, information about new developments, training for greater responsibility.

The right to sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, patient, well informed and who has the time to invest in giving guidance.

The right to promotion and a variety of experiences through advancement to assignments of more responsibility, through transfer from one assignment to another, through special assignment.

The right to be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, to have respect shown for an honest opinion.

The right to recognition in the form of promotion awards through day-by-day expressions of appreciation and by being treated as a bona fide co-worker.

“Everyone can be great because anyone can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't even have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love...”

–Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Section 5 AUTHORIZATION TO SERVE

The services of VAVS volunteers are for the purpose of supplementing, not replacing VA compensated staff. Regularly scheduled (RS) volunteers are individuals who participate in the VAVS program on a regularly scheduled (at least once a month) assignment under VA supervision. Occasional volunteers are those individuals serving under the VAVS program who do not meet the requirement of RS volunteers. Volunteers (RS or occasional) are not permitted to participate in or conduct a program for patients in a VA facility independent of VA direction, control and supervision.

Student volunteers have a genuine interest in the community and the future of America. Student volunteers must be 13 years of age and are governed by the same principles that apply to regularly scheduled volunteers. Students under the age of 19 must have written parental or guardian approval to participate in the VAVS program. **Note:** Post-secondary students will not be considered volunteers while receiving academic credit under a formal affiliation agreement.

Volunteer Assistance by VA Employees - Assistance by VA employees as either RS or occasional volunteers in the VAVS program is permitted, providing their assignments are unrelated to their responsibilities as employees and are outside their regular working hours. VA employees may not be certified as a VA facility representative or deputy representative nationally or locally.

Volunteer Assistance by Patients, Outpatients and Former Patients – Facility inpatients will not be permitted to serve as VAVS volunteers. Individuals who are prescribed or encouraged to work as volunteers as a part of their treatment, will not be certified as volunteers under the purview of the VAVS program. To hasten rehabilitation, to encourage former inpatients to resume normal home and community involvement, to discourage and avoid possible facility dependence, a six-month waiting period prior to initial acceptance as a VAVS volunteer will be considered.

Section 6 WORK DONE BY VOLUNTEERS

The wide variety of assignments performed by volunteers at this health care facility assist veteran patients by augmenting the staff. A complete assignment guide may be obtained from the Voluntary Service office. Days and hours of assignments vary from assignment to assignment.

- All regularly scheduled volunteers are expected to be present at their regular assignments. Plans for anticipated absence should always be made with your VA supervisor.
- Volunteers are requested to notify their supervisor and Voluntary Service when they no longer plan to serve.
- Problems of immediate urgency should be referred to your VA supervisor and Voluntary Service.

Section 7 SECURITY, PRIVACY, AND LIABILITY ISSUES

LIABILITY, INJURY, AND DAMAGE PROTECTION



To ensure security and safety of patients and patient information, background checks may be performed on volunteers assigned to certain areas. These volunteers will be informed of this action prior to assignment.

Volunteers, as without compensation (WOC) employees, are subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act and all VA regulations implementing that statute. Volunteers must assist VA staff in safeguarding the privacy of patient information accessed during the course of their duties. Volunteers are not exempt from prosecution or fine in the case of unlawful release of patient information.

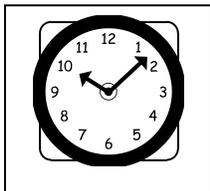
Volunteers are regarded within the purview of the Federal Tort Claims Act when they are working within the scope of their assigned duties, i.e. volunteers who are injured on the job are entitled to benefits under the provisions of Workers Compensation.

VA volunteers have the same protections from personal liability as paid Federal employees. Federal law provides immunity to all Federal employees (including VA volunteers) from claims or suits for personal injuries or death, or for property damage so long as the employee's actions are part of their Federal duties.

Section 8 ORIENTATION

All RS volunteers receive general facility orientation from Voluntary Service. Service specific training will be provided by the service/department manager/chief or designee. Volunteer supervisors will periodically provide an evaluation of the volunteer's performance.

Voluntary Service will conduct all-volunteer competency updates annually. Volunteers must participate in continuing education to remain active.



Time and Attendance - All persons performing volunteer work must be accounted for on a daily basis. The information is used to respond to family inquiries, location in the event of a disaster, on-the-job injury claim verification, etc. Only recorded hours will be applied toward awards or verification of service for school or court referral purposes.

ID Badge - In order to foster and maintain security, all health care facility employees and volunteers are issued a photo identification badge. ID Badges are to be worn at all times while on assignment. To receive a photo identification badge, volunteers are to present themselves to the Police Department with authorization from Voluntary Service for processing of photo identification.

Parking Regulations

- Parking for volunteers is available in the West Parking Lot and is accessible via the access code.
- Vehicles parked in volunteer-designated spaces must display a decal.
- Motorcycles and bicycles may park in designated spaces only.
- Outpatient parking spaces are available only for those individuals having outpatient status.
- Only vehicles with handicap designation may park in handicap spaces.

Traffic Regulations

- Maximum speed limit: 15 mph.
- Speed limit in all parking lots is 10 mph.
- All traffic-related accidents will be promptly reported to the VA Police.
- All traffic and parking control signs must be obeyed.
- Any individual operating a motor vehicle on VA property in violation of federal, or state or VA regulations may be issued a violation.
- Vehicles discovered on campus that are not properly registered, or parked, or parked without reason on campus are subject to removal at owner's expense.
- Speed limits are established and posted on all roads and streets.
- All vehicles are to be locked when left unattended.
- VA assumes no responsibility for the safety of any cars parked on campus.
- Pedestrians have the right of way when crossing any street/parking area from any point within the geographical limits of the campus.



“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.” - Muriel Strode

Tuberculosis Testing



Medical Treatment - Volunteers are considered WOC employees and are provided health services, free-of-charge, in accordance with established policy.

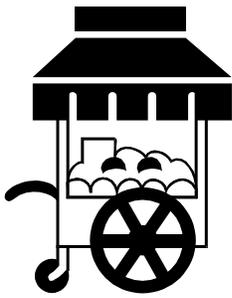
- New volunteers, when deemed necessary for the protection of VA patients or volunteers, will be provided a physical examination without charge.
- A physical evaluation or determination for fitness for duty may be required based on the requirements of the volunteer position.
- Emergency outpatient treatment for injuries sustained while performing assigned volunteer services will be provided to volunteers.
- The facility Infection Control Committee will determine the need for tuberculin tests and examinations, including chest x-rays, without charge to RS volunteers.
- Volunteers who are injured or become ill while on their regularly scheduled assignment must report to the Occupational Health Clinic.
- Volunteers may receive other employee benefits and/or services as determined locally, including cholesterol testing, blood pressure screening, and influenza vaccinations.

Volunteer Meals



Meal Benefit - All regularly scheduled volunteers during the administrative tour are eligible for a gratuitous meal. Volunteers must sign-in prior to 1:00 p.m. each day Monday through Friday and have their Volunteer ID badge on. The meal allowance is equivalent to \$5.50.

Canteen



Veterans Canteen Service - Volunteers are authorized to make purchases in the Canteen.

Retail Store hours:

Monday through Friday

7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cafeteria hours:

Monday through Friday

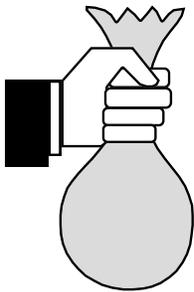
7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Saturday

9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Vending Operations:

24 hours every day



Tax Deductions - Expenses incurred in rendering volunteer service at the health care facility are deductible for income tax purposes. Cost of uniforms, special shoes, cleaning and upkeep of uniforms and travel expenses to and from the health care facility may be listed as contributions for Federal Income Tax purposes.

Volunteer Uniforms - All volunteers entitled to issue of a government-owned volunteer uniform will be provided one, as appropriate and upon request. The Chief, Voluntary Service will authorize issue of volunteer uniforms. Volunteers are requested to sign a responsibility waiver upon receipt of the uniform. Volunteers are authorized to wear insignia and uniforms identifying their organization affiliations except in instances in which it may be deemed medically inadvisable. In these instances, VA officials will explain to the volunteers concerned and to their representatives the reasons for exception.

Hours, Awards and Recognition



Awards In Recognition of Volunteer Service – Voluntary Service will provide appropriate recognition for contributions of VAVS volunteers and their organizations to the VAVS Program. Volunteers have a significant impact on VA and will be recognized for their contributions. Recognition may consist of tangible awards, such as certificates, pins, plaques, etc. Those volunteers who have satisfactorily completed the prescribed VA orientation and meet award eligibility will be recognized in a formal ceremony on an annual basis. Credit for hours will be given to volunteers when services are rendered with a VA facility, clinic or other off-station site approved by VA as an appropriate location for an RS assignment under VA supervision. Credit will be given for hours actually worked, rounded to the nearest hour.

POLICIES

Keys may be issued to RS volunteers as deemed necessary. Lost or stolen keys must be reported immediately. A fee may be charged for keys lost or not returned upon separation from service. RS volunteers who require keys need to contact their respective supervisors. **NOTE:** Unauthorized possession, manufacture, or use of keys to unauthorized rooms or areas on VA property are prohibited.

Lockers are available in the Voluntary Service office for volunteer personal property. Each locker must be empty at the end of the day and the lock and key returned to Voluntary Service staff.

VA Medical Center at Memphis is a smoke-free environment. There are designated areas outside the main building where smoking is permitted. It is important that when smoking, one uses a receptacle in which to put out the cigarette. **DO NOT** give patients any smoking materials.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS



No items, handouts or gifts should be brought into the facility or distributed without specific permission of the Chief, Voluntary Service. Only the Chief, Voluntary Service has the authority to accept gifts and donations for the benefit of the facility and its patients. Gifts and donations accepted through Voluntary Service channels will be for the sole purpose of meeting particular needs and requirements for the welfare and comfort of all patients.

When any gift or donation is made to VA Medical Center at Memphis, ownership passes from the donor to the VA at the time of acceptance.

Checks are to be made payable to VA Memphis and should be earmarked for a specific purpose in the memo section of the check. Prior to making a donation, contact Voluntary Service to verify the need. A needs list is available upon request.

FIRE AND SAFETY PROGRAM

The personal safety of volunteers and the prevention of accidents and fires will result in better service to veteran beneficiaries. Familiarize yourself with the location of the fire alarm pull station in the area in which you are assigned. Instructions appear on the pull station for activation.

In Case of Fire - The acronym **RACE** will be used to implement procedures.



R - Rescue any people in danger or needing assistance.
A - Activate alarm and dial '0' providing the following information: Building/Location, Nature of Emergency
C - Close windows and doors.
E - Extinguish fire or evacuate area.

After this, move horizontally away from the area, then down the nearest stairwell. Evacuation routes are posted at each fire alarm pull station. **DO NOT USE ELEVATORS.** Volunteers are subject to the control of their assigned supervisor.

Emergency Notification –

"CODE BLUE" (Medical) or "CODE RED" (Fire)

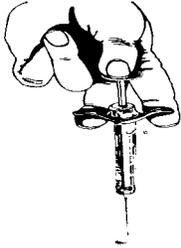
Dial ext. '0' and provide the following information:

Building/Location

Nature of Emergency



**Blood borne
Pathogens
Hepatitis B
HIV/Aids
Virus**



Infection Surveillance, Prevention and Control - It is the policy of this facility to provide a safe and healthy environment in order to prevent and control the spread of infection. Frequent hand washing is the best way to prevent the spread of disease. Hand washing between patient contacts is essential. Wash your hands upon reporting to duty, before and after patient contact, or after contact with contaminated articles, prior to and after eating and after use of the lavatory.

Standard Precautions - Precautions will be used as the first line of defense to protect oneself from both recognized and unrecognized sources of infections. These Precautions apply to contact with blood, all body fluids, secretions and excretions (except sweat), non-intact skin and mucus membranes, regardless of whether or not they contain visible blood.

Disaster Plan

INTERNAL DISASTER: An internal disaster is an event that causes or threatens to cause physical damage and injury to the facility, patients or personnel within the facility. Examples of internal disasters are fire, explosion, radiation accident, telephoned bomb threat, tornado, flood, utility failure, communication failure, snow emergency and hazardous material incidents.

ACTION: An individual who observes an incident or condition that could result in a disaster will immediately call the telephone operator (extension "0"), giving pertinent information on the condition or incident including its location. The operator will immediately notify the senior officer.

EXTERNAL DISASTER: In the event of a major external disaster where there is no major damage to the facility, action will be taken to assist the community. Examples of external disasters are tornadoes, major fires, floods and hazardous material incidents.

ACTION: All on-duty volunteers will be requested to extend their normal working hours, when their supervisor indicates a need. Off-duty personnel will be recalled, as needed. All personnel should have their identification available when reporting for duty.

CENTER BOMB THREAT: Any communication (letter, note, telephone call or person) that conveys a threat against the government, personnel, visitors or government property or that states intent to interfere with government activities by use of threat to use an explosive device is considered a bomb threat.

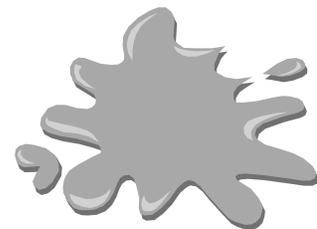
ACTION: The person receiving the threat will promptly notify the Director or person(s) in charge at the time.

SNOW EMERGENCY: A snow emergency occurs when an excessive amount of snow and blowing snow has accumulated to a depth of over eight inches and closes all roads to and from the health care facility preventing vehicular traffic, supplies and staff from entering the facility.

ACTION: All staff on duty at the time of a snow emergency will remain on duty until authorized to leave by the service chief/department manager or designee.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL RESPONSE: Unplanned releases of toxic or hazardous chemicals may threaten the health and well being of employees, volunteers, patients and visitors, as well as the surrounding community. When a hazardous material is spilled or released, it will be cleaned up and disposed of by the user in accordance with the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet), when permitted.

Spills



ACTION: All personnel are responsible for notifying their supervisor of potentially hazardous conditions.



What you see here, what you hear here, remains here.

CONFIDENTIALITY – Information concerning the care of a patient is always personal in nature and, therefore, any information about his/her condition, care, treatment or personal data is absolutely confidential and must not be discussed with anyone other than those directly responsible for care and treatment. **ONLY DESIGNATED EMPLOYEES OF THE FACILITY MAY RELEASE INFORMATION ABOUT PATIENTS.** Unauthorized release of information about patients, due to carelessness or thoughtlessness is unethical. We urge you to be discreet in conversations. Computerized information is password protected. Passwords may not be shared. Computer hacking or attempting to enter an additional system cannot and will not be tolerated. A violation of confidential information is a violation of hospital ethics. A volunteer may be terminated for violating confidentiality.

SPECIAL INCIDENTS - Volunteers witnessing any special or unusual incidents involving patients should report such incidents immediately to their VA supervisor or the person in charge of the activity site. Examples of special incidents include:

1. Patients missing from their assigned activity.
2. Injuries to patients.
3. Patient abuse.
4. Attempted suicide.
5. Patients damaging personal or government property.

STANDARDS OF CARE – PROVISIONS FOR AGE-SPECIFIC CARE – The Joint Commission requires that all employees and volunteers who work with or around patients be cognizant of how to deal with the different age groups. This is what is referred to as “age-competency.”

- Neonate/Infant (0-1 year old) - Provide protective environment, ensure warmth, cuddle/hug to develop trust and bonding. Involve parents and keep parents in infant's line of vision. Babies feel pain-swaddle, hold or give pacifier. Provide with age appropriate toys.

- Child/Pediatrics (2-8 years old) - Literal, honest and magical thinkers, short attention span, sense of will, attached to security objects and toys. Keep parents near by procedures and care. Pain/illness/injury considered punishment. Use distraction

techniques. Never leave unattended. Allow choices if possible. Explain unfamiliar objects/procedures. Award prizes for courage and provide with age appropriate toys.

- Pre-Adolescent (9-12 years old) - Body image, self-esteem, privacy, control, Independence and choices. Speak with parents privately about child. Explain in easy to understand terms, provide pain scales and choices for pain management. May want their parent to be near during procedures. Instruct on safety measures.

- Adolescent (13-17 years old) - Body image, self-esteem, privacy, control, independence and choices. Communicate on an adult level. Use appropriate terms and language. Explain procedures to patient and their parents. Involve in planning and decision-making. Provide pain scale and pain management options and patient's responsibilities. Instruct on safety measures and responsibilities. May need to question females regarding pregnancy.

- Adult (18-69 years old)- Explain the importance of procedures, medications and care to patient, including the why and why not. Allow as much control in decision-making as possible. Encourage self-care. Show consideration for family, work and financial obligations. Allow time for questions and to state how patient learns best. Address patient with respect and dignity. Involve patient and significant others in care. May need to question females regarding pregnancy/menopause. Provide information on safety measures, pain scale, pain management options, medication effects and side effects, and patient's responsibilities.

- Late Adulthood (70+ years old) - Provide protection for skin care. Do not leave alone if disoriented unless alternatives have been put into place. Address patient with respect and dignity. Communicate clearly, directly facing patient. May need help with assistive devices. Include support system in care. Provide sufficient warmth, comfort, nutrition, assistance as needed. Provide a safe environment. Instruct on pain scales, options for pain management and monitor or treat for side effects from pain meds.

BODY MECHANICS - Proper posture and body mechanics can help to protect the body, especially the back, from pain and injury. Back injury is usually the result of a number of contributory factors. Poor posture and faulty body mechanics are generally involved.



- Proper Lifting Techniques - Squat to lift and lower. Do not bend at the waist. Keep your low back bowed in while bending over. Keep the weight as close to you as possible. Bow your back and raise up first with your head. If you must turn, turn with your feet, not your body. Never jerk or twist. Put the weight down by keeping your lower back bowed in. Keep your feet apart, staggered if possible. Wear shoes with non-slip soles.

- Sitting Posture - Do not slump-sit. Sit close to your work. Use a chair that supports your back in a slightly arched position. Sit with your feet flat on the floor and your knees below your hips.

- Standing Posture - Do not wear high-heeled or platform shoes for long periods of time. Do not stand in one position too long. Put one foot up and change. Do not lock your knees. Keep your stomach muscles tight. Do not stand bent forward at the waist or neck with your work in a position. Keep work at a comfortable height.

- Pushing and Pulling - Size up the load. You can safely push more weight than you can pull. Keep your back straight. Apply push with your rear leg. Use stable spine and pull with your front leg.

- Reaching - Maintain low back arch and do not twist. Keep your back as straight as possible. Hinge hip instead of flexing back.

- Helpful Tips - Maintain an arched lower back as you use your powerful leg muscles to come to a standing position. As you lift, keep the object as close to your body as possible to prevent any unneeded strain on your back. Eliminate the combination of twisting and lifting.

- Buddy Lift Tips - Keep head high, chin tucked in and back arched (think of professional weightlifters). When the load is too heavy or awkward use two people and make sure you both know where you are going and the path is clear. Communicate with each other, assign a leader.

- Carrying Techniques - Support the load on your shoulder when carrying for long distances. Carry most of the load to the front. Pivot with your feet, don't twist your back. Allow for clearance of large loads. Change direction when you are carrying an object by stepping and turning the whole body. Make sure your pathway is clear.

Section 9 HARASSMENT

The City of VA Memphis provide equal opportunity to all patients, volunteers, students, and employees regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or status as a parent and to maintain a work environment that is free of any form of unlawful discrimination, including all forms of workplace harassment (both sexual and non-sexual).

SEXUAL HARASSMENT - Any form of deliberate, repeated, unsolicited and/or unwelcome verbal comments, gestures or physical contact of a sexual nature is sexual harassment. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior, which may include but are not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual advances.
- Offering benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
- Visual conduct: leering, making sexual gestures, displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters.

- Verbal conduct: making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes.
- Verbal sexual advances and propositions.
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal comments about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations.
- Physical conduct: touching, assaulting, impeding or blocking movement.

This health care facility has **zero tolerance** for this behavior. Any volunteer who feels mistreated in this manner is urged to contact Voluntary Service immediately for assistance. The Chief, Voluntary Service may dismiss any volunteer who mistreats others by sexual or racial harassment.

Section 10 INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

Characteristics of Inclusion: Employees and volunteers are unique individuals with different life experiences. Our unique characteristics are the things which set us aside from others here in the City of VA Memphis. Each day we come into the City of VA Memphis as employees or volunteers united by the commonality of the organization's values as expressed in its goal to become the "employer of choice" and its mission "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphan." Inclusion appreciates the individuality that each person brings to fulfilling VA's goal and achieving its mission.

Inclusion recognizes a number of factors that are referred to as primary and secondary characteristics of diversity. Primary characteristics are central to our identity. They are important to our sense of self and usually do not change. Primary characteristics include religion, nationality, disability, sex/gender, age, race and color.

Secondary characteristics describe who we are; they may not be as essential to our sense of self as primary characteristics because they can vary in importance at different points in life. Secondary characteristics include socioeconomic status, education, profession, military experience, political beliefs, sexual orientation, physical characteristics, marital status, parental status, women's issues, language/speech and geographic location.

America's workforce is changing. It is believed that in the next several years, about 75 percent of those entering the job market will be women and persons of color. By the turn of the century, one-third of all U.S. citizens will be members of what has been traditionally referred to as "minorities."

Managing inclusion is a formidable challenge for VA. It requires an understanding by all employees and volunteers that each individual is unique with various life experiences which are an asset to making this organization more efficient and effective in accomplishing our mission. Understanding and successfully managing inclusion will benefit all employees, volunteers and our patients/customers through increased productivity, an improved work environment and greater cooperation.

Section 11 COMPLIANCE AND BUSINESS INTEGRITY

What is Compliance & Business Integrity (CBI)?

The Medical Center has a Compliance Policy that outlines the implementation of the facility Compliance & Business Integrity (CBI) Program. The CBI Program provides internal oversight of VHA's Revenue and Business Operations in order to:

- Uphold compliance with applicable laws and standards
- Foster the highest standards of business integrity and quality
- Support the early detection and prevention of non-compliant practices
- Demonstrate our commitment to accountability and stewardship

Employee decision process for addressing compliance concerns:

1. Ask yourself some key questions.
 - Would you feel good about yourself if you did it?
 - Would you be comfortable discussing this with your family, friends, patients, and community?

If you answered "no" you should go to the next step.

2. Discuss your concerns with your supervisor. If you are not comfortable discussing this issue with your supervisor, go to the next step.
3. Discuss your concern with a higher-level manager. If you are not comfortable with this, go to the next step.
4. Discuss your concern with your Memphis VAMC Compliance Officer, Rebecca England. Mrs. England's office is located on the ground floor, Room CWG20, and she may be reached by phone at (901) 577-7522.

Or, call the CBI HelpLine at 1-866-VHA HELP (1-866-842-4357) The CBI HelpLine is available Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily; each caller is given a pin number to remain anonymous if they wish.

Preserving veterans' trust is the heart of our mission.



FEDERAL CODE OF ETHICS

Principles of Ethical Conduct for Government Officers and Employees

U.S. OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS, WASHINGTON, D. C. 2005

1. Public Service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.
2. Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.
3. Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.
4. An employee shall not, except pursuant to such reasonable exceptions as are provided by regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.
5. Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.
6. Employees shall make no unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.
7. Employees shall not use public office for private gain.
8. Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.
9. Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

10. Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.
11. Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.
12. Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those--such as Federal, State, or local taxes--that are imposed by law.
13. Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.
14. Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards promulgated pursuant to this order.

EXPLORING BOUNDARIES – ETHICS FOR ALL OF US

Patients – they are the reason we are here. Regardless of our individual duties, the patients are always here and always a reality for us. Patients are just that – people seeking medical care; people with medical problems. As caregivers, we have certain standards we must maintain and certain ethics we must follow. These rules are in place to protect our patients who cannot care for themselves.

We are called upon to follow a high standard of conduct because we often deal with patients who, despite appearance, cannot help themselves. We are required to avoid not only impropriety but also the appearance of impropriety. If it looks wrong, it is wrong. Appearances are how we are judged. If this seems to be a high standard, it is. Our patients deserve the highest. Our community needs to know that our patients are receiving the best possible care.

Avoid bending the rules, even a little. Avoid even the appearance of doing so. If you will be consistent in treating our patients fairly, you will do your job better, and the better you do your job, the more help you will be able to give our patients.

Section 11 CUSTOMER SERVICE

The 'Customer' is everyone (inside or outside of the facility). The patient's perception of the treatment received is a major indicator of how he/she rates their care. Other customers also evaluate the entire health care system by the way in which they are

treated. Volunteers are in the “frontline.” The manner in which you interact with all patients and guests has a tremendous impact.

The customer is not always right, BUT the customer is always the customer.

“Customers don’t care what you know... They want to know that you care!”

IMAGES - Every day, there are many ways we can effectively respond to the needs of those we serve and those with whom we work. These small gestures and statements do not take much time and the return on our investment is very gratifying.

PATIENT BILL OF RIGHTS

We respect the rights of the patient, recognizing that each patient is an individual with unique health care needs, who has the right to considerate, respectful care focused on their particular needs.

The following Patient Rights are assured for each patient unless medically contraindicated.

I. Respect and Nondiscrimination

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.
- You or someone you choose have the right to keep and spend your own money. You have the right to receive an accounting of VA held funds.
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident you may wear your own clothes and keep personal items. This depends on your medical condition.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to social interaction, and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether or not to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights.
- As a long-term care resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients and staff you are asked to respect other patients and staff and to follow the facility’s rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

II. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

- You will be given information about the health benefits that you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying for your portion of the costs associated with your care.
- Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (i.e., State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your records. This will be provided except in rare situations where your VA physician feels the information will be harmful to you. In that situation, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.
- You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any injuries caused by your medical care. You will be informed about how to request compensation for injuries.

III. Participation in Treatment Decisions

- You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you have the responsibility to understand the possible results to your health. If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan you have a responsibility to notify the treatment team.
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.
- You will be given, in writing, the name and professional title of the provider in charge of your care. As a partner in the healthcare process, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient. This includes your participation in decision-making and care at the end of life.
- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over the counter and herbals) and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you don't understand something about your care. This will help in providing you the best care possible.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.
- You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.
- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Committee and/or other staff knowledgeable about health care ethics.
- If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.

IV. Complaints

- You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team and/or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process available to you. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.

Section 13 RULES AND ETHICS



- Log-in immediately upon coming on duty. Monday through Friday administrative tour-of-duty volunteers must register in the Voluntary Service office; evening and weekend volunteers will register on the sign-in sheet on the Voluntary Services door.
 - Be punctual and dependable.
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- Notify your assignment supervisor if you cannot report as scheduled.
 - Wear your identification badge. The badge must be visible at all times while volunteering. No person may borrow or loan an identification badge. The identification badge is the property of the facility and should be returned to the Voluntary Service office when you no longer volunteer.
 - Be properly groomed, use good personal hygiene and dress conservatively. Dress appropriately according to your position description.
 - Smoking is permitted outside in designated areas only.
 - Volunteers may not accept gifts from patients directly or indirectly. Volunteers may not borrow, lend money or make personal transactions with or for patients.
 - Gambling, being under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, bartering or soliciting are prohibited.
 - Use of profane language or creating a disturbance is prohibited.
 - Damage, theft, destruction, loss or misuse of VA property or that of patients, employees or other persons is prohibited.
 - Interference with treatment and comfort of patients is prohibited.
 - Distribution of religious material is prohibited; this is a designated responsibility of Chaplain Service.
 - VA telephones are for VA business only.
 - Liquor, narcotics, firearms, ammunition, knives, other weapons, lighter fluid, and straightedge razors are prohibited.

- Do not show favoritism among patients.
- Do not under any circumstances enter a room that is posted "No Visitors" and check with a nurse before entering a room that is posted "Isolation."
- Do not make suggestions to patients about medical treatment or suggest remedies.
- Show an interest but do not become inquisitive about the patient's illness or personal affairs.
- Photography in facility and photographing of patients is strictly prohibited without the written authorization of the patient. Publicity for publication should be discussed with the Chief, Voluntary Service who will assist you with submitting such articles.
- Do not become personally involved with a patient.
- Do not question facility rules publicly. If you feel that a rule is wrong, discuss it with your supervisor or with Voluntary Service staff.
- Report to your supervisor any unusual requests, i.e. alcohol and drugs, or conversation regarding suicide or other threats, etc.
- Report to your supervisor if a situation arises which you cannot handle.
- Avoid showing pity to a patient. Be cheerful. If a patient wishes to talk to you, be a good listener.
- Be very careful to avoid discussing religion, politics or other controversial subjects with patients. Inappropriate questions from a patient should be brought to the attention of staff.
- Do not discuss veteran benefits eligibility information with patients. Refer all questions on pensions, compensation or treatment procedures back to the unit team for clarification between staff and patient. Good communication is very important.
- Do not lend or borrow money from patients or employees, cash patients' checks or act as an intermediary in cashing patients' checks. Refer the patient to his unit medical clerk regarding money matters.
- Shopping for patients and/or transporting patients by vehicle are prohibited unless proper accountability and liability protections are established prior to assignment. Volunteers may be held liable for losses if established procedures are not followed and neglect exists.
- Do not lean or sit on a patient's bed.

- When writing letters for patients, be sure to sign the patient's name not yours. Do not mail letters for patients; return mail to unit medical clerk for mail processing.
- Do not give your home address or telephone number to a patient.
- Notify the Voluntary Service office immediately whenever your name, address, telephone or emergency information changes.

Section 14 GENERAL INFORMATION

- Solicitations - Sale of raffle tickets, various commercial products or soliciting organizational memberships are activities considered inappropriate for volunteers on duty.
- Witnessing Signatures - Volunteers are discouraged from participating as witnesses in the signing of various official papers that are to be notarized.
- Comfort Articles - Patients should be encouraged to purchase their own comfort articles when possible. Indigent patient requests can be obtained from the Voluntary Service office with the proper request form. NOTE: Nothing is given out to a patient without a written request.
- Volunteers may use the Library facilities.
- Food - Check with unit staff before offering patients food. All patients are not allowed all foods.
- Service animals are permitted for the benefit of a person with a disability.
- Holidays - Offices are closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas.



"To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived – that is to have succeeded."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Section 15 GUEST RELATIONS

These are some of the ways that volunteers can show that they care about our patients, their families and one another:

Be Friendly

- Stop what you are doing, make eye contact, smile and say “hello”
- Introduce yourself first
- Use people’s preferred names
- When on the telephone, use a friendly greeting with a smile in your voice
- Shake hands wherever appropriate

Listen With Empathy

- Let others talk; show a sincere interest
- Listen eagerly and with an open mind
- Be receptive to comments, suggestions, questions and complaints

Be Responsive

- Take the initiative and offer to help – whether asked or not
- Respond quickly; speed of service is the key to satisfaction
- Explain in the listener’s words
- Commit – without promising more than can be delivered
- Refer customer complaints to Patient Representative
- Follow up to ensure satisfaction

Show Respect

- Preserve the dignity and privacy of others
- Assure the customer of confidentiality
- Use everyday courtesies: “Please,” “thank you” and “excuse me”
- Treat people as individuals – and as you would like to be treated

Be Professional

- Show your professionalism
- Dress and act with pride
- Remember that positive actions receive positive responses
- Make only complimentary comments about the staff and the health care facility

Say Thank you

- Use praise more than criticism
- Share positive comments from others
- Thank someone for calling
- Say “Thanks” – for responding quickly, for helping me out, for visiting our facility.