



Center for
ASD

Helping Special Needs Families

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK 2023

Welcome!

You are joining an organization that has a reputation for outstanding leadership, innovation, and expertise. As a volunteer at the Center for ASD, you are special. You are willing to give your time, energy, and talents to those who need a little extra help and support. You are choosing to help families in the community lead more satisfying and independent lives. Your efforts will bring happiness to others and a sense of personal fulfillment that you will find hard to beat.

Our volunteers use their creativity and talent to invent new solutions, meet new demands, and offer our community the most effective services. With your active involvement, creativity and support, the Center for ASD will continue to achieve its goals. We sincerely hope you will take pride in being an essential part of the Center for ASD's success.

This handbook is meant to assist you with your journey as a volunteer with the Center for ASD. Please take time to review the policies contained in this handbook. Continue to use it as a reference as your volunteer experience develops. If you have questions, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator. Of course, you are also encouraged to talk to any staff member if you have questions or concerns.

Thank you for choosing to serve! We look forward to having you as part of our team!

OUR MISSION

To deliver lifelong support for the well-being of the special needs community.

OUR VISION

A community integrated Center that allows everyone to reach their maximum potential.

OUR VALUES

We Are Safe

We Empower

We Are Community

We Serve with Excellence

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Methods of Communication

Email: Any communication regarding volunteer opportunities will be sent through email via the Volunteer Coordinator.

CASD Website: The website for the Center of ASD is <https://centerforasd.org>. The website houses program information, event information (dates, themes, activities, etc.), community outreach opportunities, and more.

Social Media: CASD utilizes various social media platforms to increase awareness and reach surrounding communities and families who may need support. All images shared on social media are shared with permission from each parent/guardian via a release document completed during the registration process. Volunteers are encouraged to share these posts on their personal pages to assist the CASD with its reach.

CONFIDENTIALITY

CASD treats its data on all participants as confidential and safeguards all information in its possession to ensure its integrity. Please note, you are allowed to make general statements on how the CASD provides support for all participants in our care. However, you are not allowed to discuss or provide any specific personal information to anyone who does not already have privileged access to participant information. Do not use participant names or give any identifiable information to non-staff.

CASD COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEERS

As volunteers, you are committing yourself to the service of our participants and their families. CASD recognizes this and offers the following as commitments to you in return.

As a Volunteer you have the right to:

- Be kept informed of all events, updates, programs, and changes.
- Be informed of changes that may affect your assignments.
- Serve in an atmosphere that is safe and comfortable enough to ask questions.
- Have all tools and materials needed to complete your tasks and assignments effectively.
- Receive training and continual support throughout the length of your service.
- Learn and grow in your role.
- Be treated as a member of the CASD team and not as free help.
- Be trusted and respected by every member of the CASD team.
- Be treated as a person of value who makes contributions unique to you and your character.
- Receive job duties and responsibilities communicated clearly to you in a way you understand.
- Know all the risks that are associated with your role and have them explained clearly.

Benefits of Volunteering

Our volunteers give their time, talents, and service. Here is what happens in return because of your act of service.

- Participants receive better care and individualized attention.
- Working with CASD gives you a better understanding of the special needs community.
- You can share with others how the special needs community creates an impact of its own.
- Your service gives staff the opportunity to spend more individual quality time with participants.
- As a volunteer, you gain job skills and experience that can be added to your resume.

Volunteers wishing to improve their level of skills are encouraged to contact our Volunteer Coordinator to discuss what options are available for your position.

Recognition

CASD is grateful for volunteers and the work they have chosen to do in support of CASD and its participants. We appreciate the time you give in service to others. Volunteers who are consistent in their attendance and provide exemplary service will be chosen throughout the year to receive rewards and recognition.

Center for ASD Code of Conduct

- I will respect myself, other people, other people's property, and CASD property.
- I will be an encourager. I will not be one who ridicules, makes fun of, bullies, or criticizes others.
- I will participate and contribute in a positive way and accept the direction and guidance of the CASD staff. I will deal with every situation in a peaceful manner.
- I will be an example and show respect by participating, encouraging participation, and by not causing disruptions.
- I will use language that reflects a positive attitude. I will not use curse words or any foul language.
- I will limit my use of cell phones, iPads, or any other electronic devices during my time of service at CASD.
- I will not have or use any of the following products while on CASD property- tobacco products (including vape devices), marijuana, non-prescription medication, alcohol or any other mind-altering substance.
- I will stay with my assigned group or in my assigned area, at all times.
- I will be aware of where all my participants are, at all times, and keep an accurate head count of everyone within my assigned group.
- I will check in/check out on time each day. I will wear and be responsible for my badge.
- I will let my lead & Volunteer Coordinator know if there are any changes to my schedule.
- I will not pass out any candy or food unless it has been directly provided by CASD. I will not eat any candy/food or consume any drinks (except water) in the presence of participants if they are not also having the same.
- I will not pick up or carry any participants without the approval of the CASD staff.
- I will leave all discussions concerning participants' behavior to CASD staff.
- I will not download any apps or software on participant's personal devices, including social media.
- I will not take any pictures of participants, staff, or other volunteers unless I am explicitly asked to do so by CASD staff.
- I will not use participants' names or give any identifiable information to anyone who does not have privileged access to participant information.
- **I will ensure I fully understand what I am being asked to do, before beginning any tasks. I will seek clarification from my lead if needed.**

INTERNAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Attendance

CASD believes participants thrive when consistency and structure are balanced with flexibility and care. If, as a volunteer, you are late or anticipate being absent, or must leave early please inform the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible so they can make alternate arrangements for the work scheduled to be completed.

Sign In/Sign Out

Please ensure that you sign in/out on the volunteer sign-in sheet and list the number of hours completed. If there is a formal volunteer document that you need to have completed (i.e. – National Honor Society), this is the method we use to track your hours and complete your form. Please note, CASD will sign off/complete the form on your behalf once you have completed the assignment, not before or ahead of.

Breaks

Breaks should be scheduled and agreed upon by the volunteer and the supervisor/Volunteer Coordinator before they are taken. The length of time and frequency is dependent on the number of hours the volunteer is engaged.

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When taking breaks, please ensure your supervisor and/or Volunteer Coordinator is aware that you are leaving your designated area and when you will return.

Dress Code

- All volunteers are expected to dress appropriately for their assignment.
- Closed-toed shoes are mandatory for your safety.
- Shirts/tops must be sleeved and fully cover chest, mid-section, and arms.
- Shorts and skirts must be of an appropriate length.
- Please avoid heavily scented lotions and/or perfumes due to sensitivities of participants.
- Any clothing with vulgar language or images should not be worn.
- All volunteers should take care of their hygiene.

Non-Fraternization

CASD does not encourage inappropriate social interactions between participants, and it does not condone staff/volunteer relationships. Public displays of affection (kissing, inappropriate touching, hand holding, sitting on laps, etc.) are not allowed at the Center for ASD or any sponsored events.

Personal Affects

When arriving at the Center, volunteers may store their personal belongings in the main office for the duration of their assignment. Volunteers are cautioned not to bring valuables. CASD is not responsible for the loss or damage of any personal items.

Drug & Alcohol Use

CASD is proud to remain alcohol and drug-free. Volunteers are not to be found in possession of any alcohol, illegal substances, or any substances that are prescription in nature. Any prescription medications that are needed during volunteer hours should be discussed with the Volunteer Coordinator. If any volunteer is suspected to be or found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they may be relieved of their duties and removed from the volunteer program.

Badges & Radios

Every staff member and volunteer is required to wear an ID badge in plain view while on CASD premises and when attending CASD-sponsored events. In addition, there may be instances where volunteers are assigned handheld radios. These are the property of CASD and must be handled with care. Any lost or stolen badges and/or radios must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible for record keeping and replacement. If a volunteer reports more than two as lost/stolen, they may be subject to a replacement fee.

Weapons

Pursuant to section 30.06 and 30.07 of the Texas Penal Code, CASD prohibits participants, families, staff, and volunteers from carrying any concealed or unconcealed firearms (licensed or otherwise) onto CASD property and/or CASD-sponsored activities. CASD prohibits all participants, their families, staff, and volunteers from carrying any sharp objects that may be identified as weapons. This includes but is not limited to pocketknives. In addition, violation of this policy may be grounds for immediate dismissal from any or all CASD programs in place now or in the future.

Performance Issues

If a volunteer's performance falls below standards or violates the Code of Conduct, CASD through the Director of Programs, will work with the volunteer to address the issue. If the issue is considered serious the volunteer may be dismissed from the program.

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

CASD faculty and staff take the health and safety of each participant seriously. This section outlines the measures each volunteer should take daily to keep participants safe.

Physical/Emotional Safety

Volunteers witnessing child abuse, sexual abuse, physical, mental, and/or sexual harassment must report it immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator or the Director of Programs. The Center for ASD has a duty to report per federal and state regulations. In addition, the Center for ASD does not condone and will vigorously prosecute any such incidents that occur in its facility or at any CASD-sponsored events. If you have any questions regarding what constitutes abuse or harassment, please contact the Director of Programs.

Infection Control

Hand washing is the single most important and effective measure against the spread of germs. All volunteers should wash hands –

- Before prepping food or assisting with lunch and snacks
- After using the restroom
- After handling any contaminated articles (paper towels, Kleenex, etc.)

In addition, volunteers are asked –

- To assist participants with hand washing before lunch and snacks
- To remain at home if they feel ill or contract any form of contagious illness

Daily Safety Guidelines

To keep our participants safe and to ensure a safe environment for all, the following must be adhered to.

- Do not attempt to physically assist any participants unless you have received formal training and instruction from a staff member or the Volunteer Coordinator. Techniques vary from participant to participant.

This includes, but is not limited to –

- Walking
 - Getting up from a chair, lounge or couch
 - Sitting down
 - Pushing and/or moving a wheelchair
- Always obtain adequate help with a task. If you are unsure, ask for help!
 - Always help supervise and keep your eyes open for any situation that may be potentially unsafe.
 - Check floors often. Assist in removing obstacles, keeping the halls clear and cleaning any spills.
 - All participants should be supervised. No exceptions.
 - Try to anticipate the participant's need to allow adequate time for bathroom breaks, cleanups, etc. This keeps from unnecessarily rushing participants and causing them stress.
 - Alert staff if a participant needs to leave their assigned area to use the bathroom, or if they require assistance.
 - If you or someone else is injured while serving at the Center or a CASD-sponsored event, it must be reported immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator or the Director of Programs.

Contagious Illness

CASD supports all participants in their health and wellness. If you are not feeling well, we ask that you please stay home, rest and receive the care you need to recover.

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To protect participants from contagious illnesses, if you have any of the following symptoms –

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Unrecognizable or undiagnosed rash
- Discoloration and/or drainage of eyes

Volunteers must remain at home until they are –

- Fever free for at least 48 hours without fever-reducing medication.
- Are in full control of bodily functions.
- Are on prescribed medication for at least 24 hours.

*This list is not exhaustive and the CASD team may use judgment where needed to assess a volunteer's ability to return to the Center. *

For an extensive breakdown of the Center for ASD's contagious illness or COVID-19 protocols, please refer to the Employee Handbook.

Emergency Management

Inclement Weather

CASD follows the Burleson ISD school district guidelines for all weather-related issues. There is a plan in place for all weather-related emergencies.

Emergency Management

Everyone plays an important role when emergencies occur. It is imperative that all situations be taken as seriously as possible for the safety of all participants, guests, and staff in the building. Emergencies do not occur often, but when they do, CASD expects volunteers to support the staff by remaining calm and acting quickly. If you are in the presence of an emergent situation, it should be immediately reported to the closest staff member or dial 911 if the situation involves a serious threat.

Please notify a staff member if you notice a participant and/or staff member appears differently from what you normally have observed. This may look like –

- Appearing startled or confused without solid justification as to why
- Extreme or unexplained behavioral change
- Inability to speak clearly (if you know they are usually able to)
- Having unusual or extreme pain
- Having sudden weakness in a limb or on one side of their body, or any perceived weakness

CLOSING STATEMENT

We appreciate your willingness to volunteer with the Center for ASD. We sincerely hope each volunteer enjoys and values their experience. As you learn your volunteer duties feel free to ask questions. CASD staff are happy to help you. It is your commitment and the commitment of our community partners that allow the Center for ASD to most effectively serve our participants and their family's needs. Thank you.