

# **YMCA of Snohomish County**

## **Volunteer Handbook** For Program Volunteers

**The YMCA of Snohomish County Mission Statement:**

*The YMCA of Snohomish County is composed of people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds and religious affiliations united in sharing the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility through programs that build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.*

**Effective as of September 14, 2000**

# YMCA of Snohomish County

## Volunteer Handbook

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# YMCA of Snohomish County

## Volunteer Handbook

“At the heart of this organization, at the heart of its heritage of mind, spirit and body, there is that little element of love that transforms routine work into meaningful activity, that makes a person feel important even when they don’t think they are. That’s the business of the YMCA. That’s what you do when you give your skills and your talents to another generation.” *Andrew Young, from the YMCA’s Seven R’s of Volunteer Development*

### Section 1 Welcome to the YMCA

Welcome to the YMCA of Snohomish County. We're glad you are volunteering with us! We've designed this handbook to provide you and other volunteers with a general source of information about the YMCA of Snohomish County. Your immediate supervisor at the YMCA can answer most questions you may have.

### Section 2 About the YMCA

#### 2.1 Mission

The YMCA is a worldwide organization that is committed to providing programs that help members and participants develop in spirit, mind, and body. The YMCA of Snohomish County mission statement is:

*The YMCA of Snohomish County is composed of people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds and religious affiliations united in sharing the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility through programs that build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.*

#### 2.2 YMCA Values

Character development is integral to all YMCA programs. We are guided by our four core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. In child care, the gym, at day camp, at the check-in counter we strive to develop character values in ourselves, our members and participants. We believe strongly in our mission to promote and model these character-building values in all that we do.

#### 2.3 History

The YMCA was founded in London, England in 1844 and came to the United States in 1851. YMCAs spread fast and were soon serving boys and men of all ages. After WWI, women and girls became an active part of the YMCA and today over half of all YMCA members and staff are women. The YMCA is an international organization with YMCAs in over 130 different countries.

In December 1899, 87 men came together to form a YMCA in Everett where they could meet in a wholesome and Christian environment to help improve the moral conditions of the community. On October 19, 1900, a constitution and bylaws were adopted. Construction of the YMCA building began in January 1901 and was completed in May 1901 at a cost of \$3,426. Accepted as charter members were 142 men and boys. The first girls were given use of the Y in October 1901. By 1903, the Everett High School girls' basketball team practiced at the Y and became one of the outstanding basketball teams in the country.

Fire destroyed the Y on March 30, 1920. While the Y was still burning, a movement got under way among those watching the fire to raise funds for a new building. An "all or nothing" \$152,000 campaign was launched, and in 4 weeks, \$183,013 had been committed to build a new Y which resulted in our "20s Building" at the Everett Y. In 1922, the Y set up a boys' camp at Lake Roesiger and the next year at Lake Goodwin. Then in 1924 the camp moved to Lake Chapman and was one of the finest camps in this area. Unfortunately, in 1930 the City of Everett took over the lake for a settling basin and water storage reservoir. In 1931, the Y officially took over community programs for women and girls when the depression forced the YWCA to discontinue its work here.

YMCA programs grew through the years. So, in 1960, a second gym, a second swimming pool (with special effects for teaching disabled individuals) and two additional locker rooms were added at the Everett Y. Another addition took place in 1980, which added a third gym, a new pool, sports courts, membership service and courtesy counter areas.

In 1988, the Everett YMCA changed its name to YMCA of Snohomish County. In 1993, the YMCA launched "Partnership '93", the largest capital campaign in the history of Snohomish County which raised over \$7 million in pledges. The campaign helped fund the construction of the Marysville/No. County YMCA; renovation of the Everett YMCA Child Care Center and Adventure Zone; construction of the gym and Child Care Center at the Southeast YMCA; and purchase of the land for the Mukilteo YMCA. "Expansion '98" Capital Campaign raised over \$3 million to fund the construction of an addition to the Marysville YMCA and the construction of the Mukilteo YMCA facility.

In 1999, the Monroe YMCA became an operating branch of the YMCA of Snohomish County, together with the Everett Y, Marysville/North County Y, Mukilteo Y, and Southeast Y. In 2000, the Teen Services Branch was decentralized and the branches assumed program operations as a result of the successful growth in teen programs. In 2001, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Snohomish County became a branch of our YMCA. In 2005 over 62,000 different people participated in a variety of programs. The Y continues to be the largest child care provider in Snohomish County serving kids at over 25 sites in 7 school districts and 52 schools. In 2006, the Y's annual budget was \$17.7 million and about 500 people are employed as the Y continues to build strong kids, strong families and strong communities. The "2005/2006 Building Strong Communities" capital campaign raised nearly \$15 million to purchase the land and construct a new facility for the Monroe/Sky Valley region; expand the Mukilteo Family Branch; construct an indoor pool and multi-purpose room for the Southeast Family Branch; purchase

downtown property for the Everett Family Branch; site purchase and construction of BBBS offices.

## **2.4 Invest In Youth & Heritage Club**

You are strongly encouraged to participate with other volunteers in YMCA special events and the annual Invest In Youth Campaign, the principal fund-raising activity of the YMCA. Each year the YMCA raises funds to support youth activities and enable participation by those who could not otherwise afford it. Your Invest In Youth campaign support can make a real difference to the community. Also, you may desire to participate in the YMCA Heritage Club. The Heritage Club is made up of friends who want to ensure that valuable character-building programs will be continued today and for future generations. Heritage Club Members have made a contribution or planned gift to the YMCA Endowment Fund, often in their will, charitable trust, life insurance, retirement asset gift, or outright gift of cash, stocks, or property. Through this, the YMCA will enjoy greater long-range financial stability, enabling it to continue building strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

# **Section 3 Volunteering**

## **3.1 Volunteerism**

Volunteers are the backbone of the YMCA. Volunteers not only founded the YMCA, but also operated it in its entirety in the early days. The involvement today of thousands of talented, committed individuals greatly extends the range, quality and variety of YMCA programs.

The YMCA defines a “volunteer” as anyone who, without financial compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the YMCA of Snohomish County.

To avoid misunderstandings, volunteers may not work in an employed YMCA position in the same capacity (or a similar capacity) to their volunteer responsibilities. This applies to all YMCA branches in the YMCA of Snohomish County.

*We do want you to know that during your volunteer work with the YMCA, any photos taken of you may be used in future promotional materials*

## **3.2 Volunteer Records**

In order to keep your volunteer records current, you should notify your YMCA supervisor immediately of changes to your name, address, telephone number or emergency contact information.

## **3.3 Benefits**

The YMCA does not provide insurance and related benefits to volunteers. As an example, there are no insurance plans for volunteers, including no medical, accident, dental, workers compensation, disability, or other coverage. The YMCA does not offer free memberships to volunteers. Volunteers may not trade their time for free or reduced cost program participation.

### **3.4 Expenses**

Reasonable expenses incurred by volunteers on authorized YMCA business will be reimbursed subject to prior approval of the volunteer's YMCA supervisor. When required, receipts must be kept and properly submitted with the expense claim.

### **3.5 Use of Supplies and Equipment**

YMCA supplies and equipment, including copy machines and postage meters, are for YMCA business use only. Equipment and supplies purchased by or donated to the YMCA belong to the YMCA, and not to individuals.

### **3.6 YMCA Property**

Personal locks may not be placed on YMCA property. The YMCA may retrieve, inspect and review both business and personal information and items stored on or in YMCA property, such as computers, diskettes, desks, lockers, cabinets, and YMCA vehicles. You are discouraged from bringing valuables to the YMCA, as the YMCA does not assume responsibility for loss, theft or damage to volunteers' personal property.

### **3.7 Use of Personal Vehicles**

State law requires adequate personal auto liability insurance. Not carrying insurance, or having a high deductible, does not release you from financial responsibility for loss or damage to others should an incident happen. Volunteers may be required to show proof of auto insurance or to have a motor vehicle record check done.

## **Section 4 Safety**

### **4.1 Safety and Health Rules**

Volunteers are to observe all safety and health rules and use care to prevent accidents. The following list is not inclusive:

- ~ Observe all hazard warning and no smoking signs.
- ~ Use all safety equipment required for your assignment, including wearing appropriate personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head, hands, and other extremities.
- ~ Know the location of fire/safety exits and evacuation procedures.
- ~ Keep all aisles, walkways, working areas, and emergency equipment free of obstacles.
- ~ Refrain from running, fighting, horseplay, or distracting others.
- ~ Observe safe operating procedures for all equipment; make sure that all guards and other protective devices are in their proper places prior to operating the equipment; and operate only equipment for which you are authorized and properly trained.
- ~ Do not wear frayed, torn or loose clothing, jewelry or long unrestrained hair, near moving machinery or electrical equipment.
- ~ Follow proper lifting procedures at all times.
- ~ Use seat belts when driving or riding in vehicles while volunteering for the YMCA.

## **4.2 Bloodborne Pathogens**

The YMCA subscribes to the concept of "universal precautions," which means that all human blood or other body fluids must be treated as if it were contagious. Universal precautions mean that you are expected to use certain procedures and to use personal protective equipment when necessary.

## **4.3 Child Abuse Prevention**

A principal endeavor of the YMCA is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of children. Thus, the mistreatment or neglect of children, and the resulting severe effects, is of primary concern to the YMCA. Child abuse is mistreatment or neglect of a child by parent(s) or others resulting in injury or harm. Abuse can lead to severe emotional, physical, and behavioral problems. Because of our concern for the welfare of children, the YMCA has developed policies, procedures, and training to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse. All volunteers whose activities involve regular access to children must undergo criminal background checks. Some of the guidelines you are expected to follow are:

- ~ At all possible times avoid being alone with a single child where staff or other adults cannot observe you.
- ~ You may not relate to children who participate in YMCA programs outside of approved YMCA activities without the advance written approval of your Branch Executive Director. For example, baby-sitting, weekend trips, foster care, etc. are not permitted.
- ~ Dating a program participant under age 18 is not allowed.
- ~ Children may not be disciplined by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
- ~ Verbally, physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing or punishing children is not allowed.
- ~ Children may be informed in a manner that is age appropriate to the group of their right to set their own "touching" limits.
- ~ Children should only be released to authorized persons.
- ~ Any information regarding abuse or potential abuse should be documented in writing.
- ~ At the first reasonable cause to believe that child abuse exists, it should be reported to your YMCA supervisor or YMCA Branch Executive.
- ~ In the event that the YMCA has reason to believe that a volunteer abused a child, his or her conduct will be reported to the appropriate authorities, and the volunteer's YMCA involvement will be ended.
- ~ Confidentiality of information related to child abuse is crucial and should be limited to the YMCA immediate supervisor, Branch Executive, and/or designated member(s) of the Association office.

# **Section 5 Conduct**

## **5.1 Misconduct**

Volunteers are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the YMCA mission, values and goals. The YMCA does not tolerate misconduct. Some examples of misconduct include:

- ~ Discriminatory behavior or harassment.
- ~ Child abuse, molestation, or indecent exposure.
- ~ Failure to report arrest or criminal conviction, if required to do so.
- ~ Mistreatment or neglect of members, guests or YMCA participants.
- ~ Falsification of any YMCA records.
- ~ Theft or willful damage to YMCA property or to the property of others; or the removal of property without permission from YMCA management.
- ~ Dishonesty in any form.
- ~ Abusive or profane language.
- ~ Fighting or threatening to harm another person; possession of a weapon.
- ~ Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on YMCA premises or at a YMCA program.
- ~ Possessing, distributing or manufacturing controlled substances.
- ~ Horseplay, unsafe or dangerous behavior.
- ~ Violation of any stated rules, or of commonly accepted rules of responsible personal conduct.
- ~ Conduct that does not support the stated purpose of the YMCA.

This list is not inclusive.

## **5.2 Harassment**

All individuals at the YMCA are expected to work actively to maintain an environment which is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment, and to conduct themselves in such a way as to ensure that no illegal discrimination or harassment occurs by employees, or other parties, including members, suppliers, and volunteers.

Harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact; display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender or to racial, ethnic or religious groups. Sexual harassment is a type of harassment and occurs when this type of verbal or physical conduct is sexual in nature or is gender based; that is, directed at a person because of their gender.

If you feel you have been subjected to harassment of any kind, you are encouraged to immediately identify the offensive behavior to the harasser and request that it stop. If the behavior does not immediately stop, or if you prefer not to address the behavior directly with the harasser, you should immediately bring the situation to the attention of your YMCA supervisor, branch executive or the Human Resources Director at 425.258.9211 x104.

## **5.3 Conflict of Interest**

Volunteers are expected to refrain from giving the impression that the personal views and positions they express regarding economic, political or religious issues are those of the YMCA.

## **5.4 Political Activity**

Due to Internal Revenue Service regulations for tax exempt organizations such as the YMCA, the YMCA does not permit campaigning for a candidate or other political activities on YMCA premises, or using the resources of the YMCA for political activity.

This prohibition includes, for example, wearing clothing or buttons with political slogans, and displaying stickers and other political items at the YMCA.

## **5.5 YMCA Information**

Information regarding membership lists, participant files, donors, financial aid, planning, medical conditions and other information is confidential and should be kept within the YMCA, and should be shared within the YMCA only with those who have a legitimate need-to-know, as determined by management.

## **5.6 Arrest or Criminal Conviction of a Volunteer**

A volunteer is required to report an arrest or criminal conviction to the YMCA, when the volunteer's activities at the YMCA involve children under 16 years old. The report should be made promptly, within five days of when the arrest or conviction occurred or prior to any additional volunteering, whichever comes first. The report should be made in writing to the YMCA branch executive, and include the exact charge or conviction, the location or court and the date of the arrest or conviction. Failure to report arrests or convictions as required may be considered misconduct.

## **5.7 Volunteer Solicitation and Distribution**

The YMCA limits solicitations, surveys, petitions, and distributions on its premises. Unrestricted activities of this nature present a safety and security hazard, interfere with normal YMCA operations, and are intrusive and annoying to members and others. Except for legitimate YMCA purposes (e.g., Invest In Youth and United Way) *and* with the prior permission of a member of the YMCA Executive Management Team, volunteers (and other individuals not employed by the YMCA) may not at any time solicit, survey, petition or distribute literature on YMCA owned or operated sites.

## **5.8 Alcohol and Drugs**

The YMCA is committed to maintaining an alcohol and drug free environment. This is particularly important since many volunteers are responsible for the safety and welfare of children and youth. Therefore, the YMCA prohibits the use, sale, manufacture or possession of alcohol or drugs (except those properly prescribed by a physician and used in accordance with the physician's instructions) by any volunteer while volunteering for the YMCA, and/or while in any YMCA facility or vehicle.

## **5.9 Smoking**

The YMCA is committed to providing a smoke-free, safe, and healthy environment. Smoking is not permitted in any of our facilities.

# ***Section 6 Communication***

## **6.1 Complaints**

If you have a complaint or problem at the YMCA, in most circumstances, the best course of action is to discuss the matter with your immediate supervisor at the YMCA. If your supervisor is unable to resolve the matter to your satisfaction, you should discuss your complaint or problem with the next level of YMCA supervision.

## **6.2 Computer Software and Data Use**

Laws about the use of software are very strict. You may not copy YMCA software, or bring a copy of software from home or another place of business and place the software on a YMCA machine.

All data stored on computer disks and magnetic media purchased by the YMCA of Snohomish County is the property of the YMCA and may not be used for personal reasons.

## **6.3 Voice Mail, e-mail and Internet**

Use of data sent and stored on YMCA computer and communications systems is the property of the YMCA. These systems include telephone, facsimile, voice mail, electronic mail ("E-mail"), and Internet systems. Messages sent, stored or printed on YMCA equipment is also the property of the YMCA. There can be no expectation of privacy in using these systems.

These systems are for business use. Examples of inappropriate use of these systems include the use of ethnic slurs, racial epithets, sexually explicit images, jokes, cartoons or anything that may be construed as harassment. It is also inappropriate to use these systems for non-business information such as soliciting or proselytizing for commercial ventures, religious or political causes or other outside concerns.

## **6.4 Media Relations**

Communications with media is managed through the YMCA CEO/President (425.258.9211 x109) or, in his/her absence, the Director of Human Resources (425.258.9211 x104). Volunteers should refer all media inquiries to their YMCA supervisor, including non-emergency and emergency communication situations.

# **Section 7 Volunteer Training**

## **7.1 Safety Related Certifications**

Safety training, including CPR and first aid may be required for volunteers in certain positions. You are expected to take personal responsibility to ensure that your required certifications are always current.

## **7.2 Orientation and Training Programs**

Each new program, administrative and support volunteer is strongly encouraged to complete a YMCA orientation session within the first sixty days of volunteering with the YMCA. Please see your YMCA supervisor for details.

Many YMCA training events, such as program certification training, may be open to participation by volunteers, provided that it is related to the volunteers' YMCA responsibilities. You should direct your training requests to your YMCA supervisor.

***Questions?  
Consult your YMCA supervisor or  
Branch Executive, or call the YMCA  
Human Resources Department at  
425.374.5704***

***Thanks for sharing your  
time and talent with the  
YMCA of Snohomish  
County.***