

## **VOLUNTEER VISITOR GUIDELINES (Rules of Conduct)**

**These are important rules of conduct. Violation may result in suspension and/or rescission of Volunteer Visitor status Department-wide and criminal prosecution. Remember:**

**Nothing in -Nothing out - Nothing personal  
(including cell phones).**

1. Know the name of your supervisor or the lead volunteer for your group. That person will answer questions you may have and is ultimately responsible for you while in this facility.
2. Facility Entry and Exit
  - Lock your vehicle and leave all items not authorized for your volunteer duties in your vehicle. Most, but not all facilities have lockers for your personal belongings. Cell phones, pagers, tobacco products and lighters/matches must be left in your vehicle.
  - You will be refused admittance if you are acting unruly.
  - Bring any personal items such as glasses and pen in a clear plastic container
  - A briefcase must be clear view and approved, in writing, by the managing official.
  - If you want to bring in a recording device or camera, speak with your supervisor or lead volunteer to seek approval. (Pictures inside the facility, as well as outside, are not permitted without the prior permission of the managing official or unit head.)
  - Contact your supervisor or lead volunteer to determine if any items have been disapproved for entry.
  - If there is no facility entry paperwork when you arrive, ask the officer to contact the shift commander. The shift commander's office should have a copy of the paperwork.
  - Sign in as instructed.
  - Routine search procedures are listed below. Failure to cooperate will result in instruction to leave the premises and you may lose your volunteer privileges.
    - Belongings search.
    - Search of pockets of outerwear and clothing.
    - Search of headwear, including religious headwear.
    - Walk-through metal detector (a metal implant may require documentation from your physician).
    - Handheld metal detection wand.
    - Clothed pat-down search.
    - Drug detection dog.
    - Vehicle search.
    - Fast ID (electronic fingerprinting devices for preliminary record checks).
  - Go directly to your assigned location. It is imperative not to deviate from your route.
  - Refrain from having conversations with offenders until you have reached your assigned location. Continue moving and do not stop on the compound to talk with offenders. This may place the facility or office at risk and cause a security issue.
  - When leaving the facility:
    - Make sure you have everything you brought in with you.
    - Do not take out anything you did not bring in with you.
    - Return volunteer visitor identification.
    - Sign out as instructed.

3. Arrive about 20 minutes early (or an appropriate amount of time for the location of your volunteer assignment).
4. Inquire about the policy regarding late arrival for activities.
5. If you know you will be late, please call ahead and staff will do their best to accommodate your arrival. However, you may be denied entry if you arrive late.
6. Understand that your activity may be cancelled or you may be refused admittance to a facility or office without notice or explanation due to security needs. While every effort will be made to contact you so you will not make an unnecessary trip, sometimes this is not possible. If you travel a long distance you are always encouraged to call ahead to see if there is a reason you may not enter the facility, such as lockdown.
7. Always follow instructions, suggestions and requests from any correctional officer or staff member. Uncooperative behavior will result in dismissal from the volunteer program and the facility or office.
8. Never interfere with a correctional officer or staff member acting in the line of duty. While every attempt will be made to not interrupt any program, from time to time an officer will enter your program to account for offenders, to call an offenders or for other purposes.
9. Remain in your designated program area. Try to seat yourself between the door and the offenders. Do not leave the assigned area to confer privately with an offender.
10. Do not give offenders anything not authorized for use in your program. Non authorized items such as candy, gum, a note, a newspaper are considered contraband in a facility.
11. Limit physical contact with offenders to a handshake and program exercises that include all offenders in the group.
12. Respect the confidentiality of what offenders share with you about feelings and personal events. Do not ask an offender about his or her crime unless you have been instructed by your supervisor and/or lead worker as part of your volunteer position. **Remember, what you see and hear here stays here.**
13. Proselytizing and making disparaging remarks about a faith or someone's faith are prohibited.
14. Do not engage in any significant interaction with any offenders other than those in your program.
15. Report to the correctional officer or staff member if you have any information about a planned act of homicide, assault, suicide, disturbance, drug or contraband smuggling, hostage taking, escape or any other act that may threaten the safety of others or the security of the facility or office.
16. Do not accept anything from offenders or their families. This includes gifts, favors, articles or items. Report attempts to give you something to a correctional officer or staff member.
17. Do not accept phone calls from offenders unless you have written authorization from your supervisor. All offenders' calls are collect.
18. Do not place money in an offender's account.
19. Report to your supervisor or the lead volunteer any offender requests to mail a package or letters, deliver messages, contact friends or family, etc. on his or her behalf.

20. If an offender asks you to do something you know or suspect is prohibited, some suggested responses are to say that you:
  - Don't think you are allowed to do that, but you will ask your supervisor about it, or
  - Are not allowed to do that, or
  - Do not want to do that, as your interest is working with the group as a whole and not assisting offenders with individual needs.
21. You may not have contact with an offender's family or friends.
22. Never give offenders or their families any personal identifying information about you; other volunteers or participants; or your family members. This includes last name, address, phone numbers, social security number, work locations, marital status, family details, personal interests or date-of-birth.
23. Do not send anything to an offender.
24. You may not volunteer at a facility where a friend or relative resides.
25. You may not be on a visiting list of an offender currently incarcerated in a federal, state, or local correctional facility or living in a household with an individual under home detention.
26. Volunteers may not perform marriage ceremonies.
27. Dress professionally and conservatively; follow the Department's dress code. Leave excess jewelry at home.
28. Conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times.
29. You may not smoke, be under the influence of alcohol or be under the inappropriate influence of prescription or non-prescription drugs while on State of Maryland property.
30. Respect the confidentiality of all Department staff, offenders, ex-offenders and volunteers. Do not share any information or photographs you have access to while performing volunteer service. This includes but is not limited to friends and family, the media, and social media sites such as Face Book, Twitter, Linked-In, Instagram, etc.
31. The Department has an Internal Investigative Division (IID), responsible for investigating alleged acts of criminal and administrative wrongdoing. If you are suspected of engaging in or knowing about such acts, you may be interviewed by IID staff, in which case your full cooperation is expected.
32. If you want to apply and be screened to be a full volunteer, talk with your supervisor or lead volunteer about the next steps. You may not engage in any activity you have not been screened and approved to participate within the facility.
33. The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003 is a federal law which established a set of standards designed to prevent, detect and respond to sexual abuse in confinement facilities. After the standards were finalized in 2012 the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services committed to integrating these standards into its operating procedures. The Department demonstrates compliance with these standards through a series of independent audits conducted at each facility on a three year cycle.
  - The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services has a ZERO Tolerance policy regarding sexual misconduct. Any form of sexual conduct, consensual or otherwise, is prohibited in a correctional facility. This includes inmate on inmate as well as staff (including volunteers) on inmate contact, coercion or sexual violence. Zero Tolerance means no excuses, no jokes, and no brushing aside as

unimportant or ignoring any incidents or inmate complaints. Inmates have the right to be free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

- All participant volunteers must understand it is their duty to report all acts of sexual misconduct. If you observe an act of sexual misconduct in progress, report the incident to the nearest correctional officer immediately. Do not attempt to intervene in a situation that can be confrontational or dangerous. Your responsibility is limited to reporting the incident.
- If you otherwise become aware of or suspect acts of sexual misconduct you must report that information immediately. You can make the report to your supervisor, the most senior staff in the area, a chaplain, a medical practitioner, the volunteer coordinator, or a social work, psychology or case management staff member. You may also call the Internal Investigative Division complaint number at (Give Current Number). The report may be verbal, written, anonymous or third party. The information will be kept strictly confidential. Allegations of sexual misconduct will be thoroughly investigated and may be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials in accordance with DPSCS policy. Prompt reporting assures effective investigations, facilitates the collection of evidence, improves crisis intervention and affords specialized mental health services to victims.
- Retaliation against victims, witnesses, and individuals reporting sexual abuse is not permitted. PREA standards require that individuals involved in an investigation be protected from all forms of retaliation.
- A volunteer accused of sexual misconduct will be prohibited from contact with inmates until an investigation is conducted. If the accusation is substantiated the individual's volunteer status will be terminated and the individual will be subject to criminal prosecution if the behavior is deemed to be criminal in nature.