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Introduction
The use of volunteers promotes community partnerships to protect children, develop youth, strengthen families, and build safe communities. Volunteers are valued at the Department of Children's Services (DCS) as additional resources who enhance programs, and help provide non-formal services for the children and families served by the department. Volunteers offer support in any area of the department where there are identified needs. Volunteers do not supplant DCS staff in providing services but contribute to the agency through offering their distinct talents, skills, and resources. The success of volunteer involvement is an integrative effort of agency staff and community members intended to promote the mission of the Department of Children's Services.

Qualifications for TNDCS Volunteers
- In DCS Regional Offices, volunteers are required to be 18 years old.
- In DCS Youth Development Centers (YDC), volunteers are required to be 21 years old.
- Immediate or extended relatives of children who are in the custody of DCS will not be allowed to serve as a volunteer with the department. Relatives are defined as parents, siblings, in-laws, aunts, uncles, or grandparents.

Volunteer Coordinators
Each DCS Regional Office/YDC has an assigned staff member designated as the Volunteer Coordinator to recruit, manage, and provide support to volunteers. The Individual Performance Plan of the Volunteer Coordinator must reflect responsibility and accountability for the Volunteer Service Program.

Volunteer Coordinator Duties:
1. Identify the needs for volunteers throughout the Region/YDC
2. Volunteer recruitment
3. Interview and screen potential volunteers
4. Perform background and reference checks
5. Provide orientation and training
6. Conduct supervision and activity planning
7. Maintain volunteer records
8. Act as liaison with community, DCS staff, and volunteers.

Volunteer Coordinators are responsible for assigning volunteers to DCS staff for supervision, monitoring activities, and help to provide support throughout this process.

Recruitment
Volunteer Coordinators will annually engage DCS staff about their needs for volunteers. Volunteer Coordinators are responsible for recruiting as determined by staff feedback about their needs. DCS values input from a wide variety of volunteers from all cultural and socioeconomic segments of the community. Volunteer Coordinators are encouraged to attend Community Advisory Boards and other community gatherings to promote a presence from DCS into the community. Visibility of the Volunteer Coordinators in the community connects community resources to DCS and raises awareness about the mission and values of the department.
Placement, Supervision, and On-the-Job Training
Volunteer Coordinators will identify a placement in a Regional/YDC Office for each volunteer based on the identified needs. Volunteer Coordinators will assign volunteers to DCS staff to be responsible for their direct supervision. DCS staff members who are assigned to supervise volunteers and the Volunteer Coordinators will be responsible for providing on-the-job specific training.

Volunteer Types

In-Service Volunteers
In-service Volunteers participate directly in the operation of DCS programs under the supervision of paid DCS staff and may have contact with children and families.

1. **Regular In-service Volunteers**: Serve in a DCS facility on a regular basis defined by more than three days a year. A Regular In-service volunteer must have background and reference checks, receive a DCS identification badge, go through orientation, receive PREA and Cultural Competency training, have a volunteer file containing all signed documentation, be assigned to a DCS staff member who acts as a supervisor, complete activity reports, and go through the volunteer separation process by turning in the ID badge and completing the exit survey. Regular In-service volunteer records must be filed at the State of Tennessee Division of Claims.

Sub-types of a Regular In-service Volunteer may include Interns and Title IV-E Tuition Program interns.

   a) **Interns**: College students who apply to be an intern with the department will go through the requirements of a Regular In-service Volunteer according to DCS Policy [4.30, Department of Children’s Services Volunteer Services Program](#) and the sponsoring college/university guidelines. This includes legal interns and all interns affiliated with a college or university.

   b) **Title IV-E Tuition Program Interns**: Title IV-E students are social work majors who have applied and who were approved by DCS regional leadership to intern with the department. IV-E students sign a contract to work for the department when they graduate and are therefore given a priority for intern placement so they may be trained in preparation of their future employment. IV-E students will go through the requirements of a Regular In-service Volunteer according to DCS Policy [4.30 Department of Children’s Services Volunteer Services Program](#), as well as, the sponsoring university guidelines.

2. **Occasional In-service Volunteers**: Occasional In-service Volunteers serve on occasion defined as less than three days a year and do not have direct contact with the children and families served by the department. Their responsibilities fall into the advisory or consulting category and direct supervision is not required. Volunteer Coordinators are not required to complete the TBI/FBI Fingerprint checks nor references but must complete the Internet Records Clearance, Local Background, Database Checks (SSMS and Current Child Welfare System), and sign the Confidentiality Form.

Occasional In-service Volunteers should complete the following forms:

- CS-0319 Application for Service as a Volunteer
- CS-0744 Employee Confidentiality Statement
- CS-0559 Authorization for Release of Information and Protected Health Information TO and FROM the Department of Children’s Services and Notification of Release
Scan and email these documents to Central Office via: DCS.Human.Resources@tn.gov for tracking and create a file for each Occasional In-service Volunteer to maintain in the Region/YDC.

**Job Shadow Volunteers**
Volunteers who request to job shadow with the department may do so for no more than three days a year, but they may have direct contact with children and families. Job shadow volunteers must be supervised by DCS staff at all times when in direct contact with children or families. Volunteers who wish to job shadow do not need to be fingerprinted but other background checks on form **CS-0687 Background Check and IV-E Eligibility Checklist** should be performed. Volunteers who job shadow should not have access to TFACTS or any confidential records. For volunteers who wish to shadow a DCS worker in order to gain understanding of the work performed by the department the following documentation is required:

- **CS-0319 Application for Service as a Volunteer**
- **CS-0744 Employee Confidentiality Statement**
- **CS-0559 Authorization for Release of Information and Protected Health Information TO and FROM the Department of Children’s Services and Notification of Release**

Scan and email these documents to Central Office for tracking and create a file for each Job Shadow Volunteer to maintain in the regional office/YDC.

**Foster Parents as Volunteers**
Foster parents do not need to be fingerprinted nor references checked but other background checks on form **CS-0687 Background Check and IV-E Eligibility Checklist** should be performed. The following documentation is required for Foster Parents who request to volunteer with the agency:

- **CS-0319 Application for Service as a Volunteer**
- **CS-0559 Authorization for Release of Information and Protected Health Information TO and FROM the Department of Children’s Services and Notification of Release**
- **CS-0551 Volunteer Job Description**
- **CS-0744 Employee Confidentiality Statement**
- **CS-0741 Database Search (SSMS and Current Child Welfare System)**

Scan and email these documents to Central Office for tracking and create a file for each Foster Parent to maintain in the regional office/YDC.

**Support Volunteers**
Support volunteers provide direct and indirect services to DCS and may or may not have contact with children and families. For example, Tennessee Promise Students who organize a playroom and individuals who help with the clothes closet provide non-direct supervision and Community Advisory Board (CAB) Members or individuals who help with Walk Me Home activities provide-direct supervision where DCS staff is present. Their responsibilities fall into the advisory or consulting category and direct supervision is provided by DCS Staff. Volunteer Coordinators will keep a list of contact information with name, address, and phone numbers of support volunteers in an ongoing Excel Spreadsheet. The adult leader over a group of students (under the age of 18) must sign a confidentiality statement.

**Liability**
Volunteers are not covered under the Worker’s Compensation Insurance. However, the Tennessee Claims Commission covers Regular In-service volunteers after their Volunteer Certification Letter is filed with the
Division of Claims. Volunteers who are registered with the board of claims shall be afforded the same protections, legal representation authorization and immunities as state employees pursuant to title 8, chapter 42, and § 9-8-307 for civil or criminal actions brought against them within the scope and course of their activities. If a volunteer incurs damages during their service and needs to make a claim they must complete TR-0235 Claim for Damages form and submit it to the Division of Claims.
Occasional and Support Volunteers are covered through the State of Tennessee Self-Insurance Program through the State Treasury Department, Division of Claims office. Volunteer Coordinators and DCS Central Office will have the “Certificate of Self Insurance” issued through the Division of Claims if needed to support all volunteers who are not Regular In-service volunteers.

File Guidelines
Files on volunteers are located in the Regional/YDC office or work location of the regional Volunteer Coordinator. Abbreviated files for Occasional In-service, Support, and Foster Parent volunteers will also be located in the work location of the Volunteer Coordinator. Youth Development Center files on volunteers will be maintained in their respective facilities.

Files are eligible for closure if the volunteer has not been active for six (6) consecutive months at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator with the exception of the IV-E Student. Inactivity after 12 months is deemed automatically for closure. Volunteer Coordinators will reclaim the identification badges of inactive volunteers. Inactive files will be maintained for two (2) years and then destroyed.

The file for any volunteer who is dismissed or denied from service will be archived at the Regional/YDC level and CO HRD. Information and files pertaining to an individual volunteer or to a group of volunteers are maintained according to all applicable DCS and State of Tennessee policies and procedures governing files and records.

Incomplete application(s) should be handled as follows:
- Send a notification letter to the applicant requesting the specific information required to be submitted within 30 days from the date the application was received.
- If the requested information is not submitted within 30 days from the date the application was submitted, the application can be filed “incomplete”.
- The incomplete application can be destroyed sixty-one (61) days from the date the application was submitted.

Procedure, Orientation, and Files for Regular In-Service Volunteers

A. Screening and Background Investigations
Regular In-Service Volunteers must go through the following procedure to become a Certified DCS Volunteer. Volunteer Coordinators will talk to the volunteer about their motivations, time frames, and availability. Pursuant to DCS Policy 4.1, Regular In-Service Volunteers must complete a thorough background investigation prior to their approval and service. The background investigation must be completed within sixty-one (61) calendar days from the date that the application was received. All background screens must be completed prior to the volunteer beginning their service.

The minimum requirements for a background investigation include:
- TBI/FBI Fingerprint Check
- Criminal Records Check (Local Law Enforcement)
• Current Valid Driver License and Moving Violation Records Checks
• SSMS and Current Child Welfare System Check
• Internet Records Clearance Checks
  o National Sex Offender Registry Clearance
  o Department of Health Abuse Registry Clearance

B. Certification
Upon completion of background investigations and approval of a new volunteer, the Volunteer Coordinator or designee must submit a photocopy of the approved CS-0319 Application for Service as a Volunteer, TBI/FBI Fingerprint Results, CS-0687 Background Check History and IV-E Eligibility Checklist (with document references), Waiver (if applicable) and other pertinent information that is deemed necessary to process the certification letter to the Central Office Volunteer Coordinator. DCS Central Office must submit the volunteer’s name, date of birth, and social security number to the State of Tennessee, Division of Claims for certification. DCS Central Office will issue a Volunteer Certification Letter to the Division of Claims and the regional/YDC Volunteer Coordinator. The application materials and Certification Letter must be on file in DCS Central Office and at the regional/YDC office in the volunteer’s file.
Please refer to the section, “Volunteer Types” for information about what is required in the files for other volunteers.

C. Files
Volunteer Coordinators will conduct an orientation to review the policies and guidelines with incoming Regular In-service volunteers. Volunteer Coordinators will review all required documentation with the volunteers. Regular In-service volunteers will read and complete applicable forms that will go into a file for each volunteer. Volunteer Coordinators will have each volunteer complete the following forms and create a file (six prong classification) to include the following:
1. CS-0319 Application for Service as a Volunteer
2. CS-0559 Authorization for Release of Information and Protected Health Information TO and FROM the Department of Children’s Services and Notification of Release
3. CS-0921 Waiver of Criminal Convictions (if applicable)
4. CS-0891 Disclosure Statement, Supervisory/Personal Telephone Reference Checks (3)
5. CS-0691 Fingerprint Card Information
6. CS-0751 Background Clearance Check (Local Criminal History)
7. Current Valid Driver License and Moving Violation Records Checks (IMVR and SMVR)
8. CS-0741 Database Search (SSMS and Current Child Welfare System Check)
9. Internet Records Clearance Checks
  o National Sex Offender Registry Clearance
  o Department of Health Abuse Registry Clearance
10. CS-0687 Background Check History and IV-E Eligibility Checklist
11. Volunteer Certification Letter
12. Volunteer Acceptance or Rejection Letter
13. Copy of Driver’s License
14. Copy of Vehicle Registration
15. Proof of Automobile Insurance
16. CS-0551 Volunteer Job Description
17. CS-1056 Verification of Policy Understanding for Interns and Volunteers
18. CS-0732 Employee Code of Conduct
19. CS-0126 Oath of the Department of Children’s Services
20. CS-0744 Employee Confidentiality Statement
21. CS-0748 Employee Conflict of Interest Statement
Volunteer Services Program (Procedures Manual)
22. **PR-0278 Employee Drug Free Workplace Acknowledgement**
23. **CS-0735 Employee Emergency Contact Information**
24. **CS-0731 Employee Acknowledgement - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)**
25. **CS-0733 Employee Acknowledgement – Valid Motor Vehicle License, Insurance, and Registration**
26. **CS-0320 Volunteer’s Activity Report**
27. **CS-0358 Employee Name and/or Address Change** (if applicable)
28. **Substitute W-9** (if applicable: A copy of this form should stay in the intern’s file and a copy should go to the Regional HR Analyst. Secure the W-9 from [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov))
29. Supervision Requirements for Volunteer (Intern/IV-E Students)
30. **CS-0925 Tuberculosis Self-Assessment for YDC Employees** (Only for YDC volunteers)
31. **CS-0940 Employee/Volunteer/Contractor Acknowledgement and Notification of Prison Rape Elimination Act** (Only for volunteers that have contact with Juvenile Justice and Youth Development Center youth)
32. Cultural Competency Certificate of Completion or Checklist
33. Copy of ID Badge with number
34. **Notice of Volunteer Termination for Voluntary Service** or **Notice of Involuntary Termination for Voluntary Service** (if applicable)
35. **CS-1067 Volunteer File Cover Sheet**
36. Exit Survey (if applicable)
37. 70FA-0080 Claim for Travel Expenses (if applicable)
38. **Volunteer Services Annual Update Letter**
39. **Volunteer Services Application Pending Letter**
40. **CS-1065 Regulations: Liability Statement**
41. **CS-0933 Volunteer Annual Assessment** (if applicable)
42. **CS-0724 Employee Monthly Training** (if applicable)

These documents are located on the server and on the shared confidential “L” Drive. The policies and guidelines that pertain to the Regular In-service volunteers are located in [4.30 Department of Children’s Services Volunteer Services Program](#) located on the server and the Volunteer Services Orientation Handbook located on the “L” Drive.

### D. Annual Background Checks

Pursuant to DCS Policy [4.1 Employee Background Checks](#), Volunteer Coordinators are required to conduct annual background checks on volunteers who have direct contact with children. The following is a detailed listing of the documentation and background checks that must be completed annually with results maintained in the volunteer’s file:

- Current Valid Driver License and Moving Violation Records Checks (IMVR and SMVR)
- Internet Records Clearance Checks
  - [Drug Offender Registry Clearance](#)
  - [TN Felony Offender Registry Clearance](#)
  - [National Sex Offender Registry Clearance](#)
  - [Department of Health Abuse Registry Clearance](#)
- Copy of Driver’s License
- Proof of Automobile Insurance
- Copy of Vehicle Registration
- Job Performance Plan
- Volunteer Annual Assessment/PE
E. The Volunteer File Audit
To ensure compliance with DCS and Council on Accreditation (COA), a volunteer file audit is held annually and a date/time is coordinated with the DCS Central Office Volunteer and the Volunteer Coordinator for the respective Region/YDC. A minimum of 25 files will be checked for compliance. During the exit interview, the Volunteer Coordinator will be given the template used for the audit, necessary guidance as applicable, as well as, a timeframe to bring files into compliance.

F. Identification Badges and Parking Decals
Identification badges are issued to Regular In-service volunteers and are numbered. All identification badges issued to volunteers are surrendered to the Volunteer Coordinator when the volunteer ends service with the agency. Volunteer Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that the identification badges are turned in to DCS. Identification Badges can be made at the Regional/YDC Level or secured from Tennessee Tower.
Steps for securing a white temporary id badge with expiration date:
- Take a photo (face pic) of the volunteer and email to contact name at: contact.name@tn.gov
- Upon completion of the ID Badge, it will be mailed to the Volunteer Coordinator at the applicable Region/YDC
- Follow-up on the status of the ID badge seven (7) days after forwarding the photo (face pic)

If the Volunteer/Intern resides in or near Davidson County, he/she can follow the steps below to secure their ID badge in person:
- Go to William R. Snodgrass Tennessee Tower Complex, 312 8th Avenue, 4th Floor, Nashville, TN 37243; Phone: (615) 532-6831
- Tuesdays from 9:00 – 11:00 AM CST or Thursdays from 1:00 – 3:00 PM CST
- Please carry some type of identification (for verification)
- The picture will be taken and the badge will be processed and given to the volunteer

Note: If the volunteer is on board and the expiration date on the badge has expired, provide your contact with the volunteer's name and new date. TN Tower Staff will print a faceplate with the new date on it that the volunteer can stick to the front of his/her current ID. The orange badges are no longer available.

Parking Decals (if needed) can be secured from William R. Snodgrass Tennessee Tower by completing the State Employee Parking Decal Information Form and submitting the same when securing the identification badge.

G. Training

Cultural Competency
DCS serves populations who are from a wide range of racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. DCS provides cultural competence training to all In-service Volunteers in order to promote their ability to work effectively in cross-cultural settings.

DCS is committed to soliciting and forming partnerships with volunteers from diverse neighborhoods and communities to foster and strengthen culturally responsive services and programs that reflect the diversity of each region of the State of Tennessee.
The Cultural Competency Training “Knowing Who You Are” online series is to be sent to the volunteer well in advance to complete prior to Orientation. During Orientation, the volunteer should be asked the questions on page 8 of the Facilitator’s Guide and write a small paragraph (about 5-6 sentences) as to what their take away is from watching the online series.

**Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)**

Federal law requires that volunteers who work directly with youth who reside in Youth Development Centers or have a case with the Juvenile Justice program receive training on the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). In-service Volunteers who may work with these youth will receive training on PREA guidelines and law. PREA Training will consist of the power point presentation (via computer or hard copies of the slides) that DCS staff reviews and completion of [CS-0940 Employee/Volunteer/Contractor Acknowledgment and Notification of PREA](https://example.com).

**H. End of Service**

Regular In-service Volunteers will surrender their identification badges to the Volunteer Coordinator. It is important that all identification badges that were issued are collected at the end of the volunteer’s service. Volunteer Coordinators are responsible for obtaining the identification badges and placing them in the volunteer’s files. Volunteer Coordinators will issue a Volunteer Termination Letter to all Regular In-service volunteers. Volunteer Coordinators will provide all volunteer types with an opportunity to complete an exit survey to provide feedback about their experience as a DCS volunteer.

**Travel**

Pursuant to [Tenn. Code Ann. § 37-5-106 (18) (A)](https://example.com) The department is specifically authorized to establish any programs for the use of volunteers who may be available to provide assistance to the department in any of the services that are vested in it by law or that it may provide as a necessary part of such services. To the extent funds are available, and if necessary and desirable, the department may reimburse such volunteers for actual travel or other reasonable expenses for their services. All reimbursement for travel expenses shall be in accordance with the provisions of the comprehensive travel regulations as promulgated by the Department of Finance and Administration and approved by the Attorney General and Reporter. Meals may be furnished without charge at department facilities if the scheduled volunteer assignment extends over an established meal period. The department may use any funds available, including federal, state or local funds or private donations, which it has for any expenses associated with these programs.

**Incident Reporting**

Inappropriate conduct, problems, or concerns on behalf of the volunteer needs to be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator and the Regional Administrator or Superintendent to determine the course of action. Volunteers will follow DCS Protocol for staff and IV-E Students will follow steps outlined with the IV-E Program.

**Volunteer Services at DCS Youth Development Centers**

All requirements, rights, and responsibilities, for DCS volunteers, also apply for volunteers at the Youth Development Centers (YDCs). However, there are additional specifications for volunteers at the YDCs.
Identification Badges at the YDC's
In DCS Youth Development Centers (YDC), identification badges are controlled through a central location and must be turned in on a daily basis. Identification badges are permanent property of the YDC and must not be removed from the premises. Each day of service, volunteers must provide a photo identification (i.e., driver's license) and be issued a volunteer badge before entering the facility and must surrender the badge when leaving the facility.

Tuberculosis Screening
Pursuant to DCS Policy 4.15, Employee Health Care and Communicable Disease Prevention and Control, volunteers who serve at DCS Youth Development Centers that have routine contact with youth must be screened for tuberculosis prior to service and annually thereafter. Volunteers may go to the local health department for TB screening. Volunteers must inform the health department that they will be working in a group home or congregate setting with four or more unrelated individuals to establish both cause and eligibility to obtain the TB screening. The health department may determine that a chest x-ray is needed. If the volunteer chooses a private physician, they must present DCS with a written statement from the physical that they are free from tuberculosis. DCS will not pay the costs to have the TB screening.

Citizen Involvement Council (CIC)
The Citizen Involvement Council (CIC) is a group that is established to provide assistance in stimulating positive citizen and community involvement and promoting volunteerism at each DCS Youth Development Center and Residential Program facility throughout the state. Activities of the CIC must comply with the Department of Children’s Services rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and statutes of the State of Tennessee. CICs serve as community liaisons to DCS of programs and community support. CICs promote the development of community resources for youth in the YDCs including, recreational, cultural, religious, social, and educational activities. CICs help to plan and implement community services for youth who reside in YDCs.

Participation
CIC members may be asked to serve by the Commissioner, YDC Superintendents, and Regional Administrators, Volunteer Coordinators or other DCS staff. All Volunteer Coordinators who work at the YDC facilities will serve as members of the CIC. Most CIC members will serve on the council for two (2) years.

Qualifications
- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Must be in good standing in the community.
- Must be willing to be actively involved in the support of children, youth, and DCS staff.

Travel-CIC
Members of the CIC are eligible to be reimbursed for travel according to the rules and regulations established by the State of Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, Comprehensive travel regulations. The CIC meets quarterly and may have specially called meetings. Members of the CIC are required to maintain confidentiality about the youth and families being served. CICs may organize as a non-profit corporation under Tennessee laws and have access to the Commissioner/designee, YDC Superintendent, and Regional Administrator.
Volunteer Coordinator Monthly Reporting
Each Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for developing a system for the collection of the volunteer activity report on a monthly basis and should use the information submitted on the activity reports to compile the monthly activity report. After completing the monthly report, the forms must be filed in each volunteer's permanent file. A copy of the monthly report must be forwarded to the Central Office Volunteer Coordinator by the 6th of each month.
The monthly report must include:
1. Names and last four digits of the social security numbers of all active volunteers
2. Number of hours of service for each volunteer
3. List of any donations received
4. List of all special events

The Volunteer Coordinator must maintain a monthly calendar of events. In YDCs, the Volunteer Coordinator must provide a copy of the monthly calendar to the Director of Children's Services Manager Security prior to the first day of each month. The Volunteer Coordinator will also provide the CSM of Security with a list of active volunteers. For other DCS offices and programs, copies must be provided to the supervisor or administrative management of the office or program.

Program Maintenance
The volunteer program maintenance is directly related to the success of the program and whether volunteers can be retained or chooses to drop out. The Volunteer Coordinator has the responsibility to see that the program is working toward the desired goals, and help to make the process a positive experience for staff and volunteers. This manual should be reviewed annually for applicable updates and edits.