



Jewish Volunteer Connection

JEWISH VOLUNTEER CONNECTION MANUAL



Welcome to Jewish Volunteer Connection's (JVC) volunteer manual! We created this guide to help prepare you for your upcoming volunteer assignment by providing important information, as well as key Dos and Don'ts for your project. Without help from volunteers, our community service partners would not be able to do the important work they do.

Thank you for your passion and commitment!

About JVC

JVC is the hands-on volunteer branch of The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore. Like a match-maker, we develop relationships within both the Jewish and general community, identifying vital community needs and connecting volunteers with opportunities to make a difference.

We connect volunteers with organizations throughout Greater Baltimore (nonprofits, schools and service agencies) based on their interests, skills and the needs of the organizations. Recognizing a fundamental gap between organizations that need consistent commitments from volunteers and most volunteers' difficulty in making a long-term commitment, we developed innovative strategies to connect volunteers to the on-going needs of the community while making volunteering accessible, easy and flexible for the volunteer.

Our goal is for people to be inspired by each volunteer experience and to be motivated to build on their service over time.

Mission: Jewish Volunteer Connection engages volunteers to meet vital community needs and live with purpose through meaningful service.

Vision: Strong, connected communities supported through purposeful and committed volunteering.

This volunteer experience is just the first step!

We sincerely hope you have a meaningful volunteer experience that leaves you wanting to do more! If that is the case, please contact JVC to find ways to incorporate service into your everyday life.

E-mail us:

JVCBaltimore@associated.org

"Like" us:

[Facebook.com/jvcbaltimore](https://www.facebook.com/jvcbaltimore)

[Instagram.com/jvcbaltimore](https://www.instagram.com/jvcbaltimore)

Call us:

410-843-7490

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10 Qualities of a Great Volunteer

Energetic

The number one thing you can bring to the table is energy! When you are enthusiastic about a cause, your energy will be contagious. You will not only feel fantastic, but you will find that your positive spirit can motivate others to act on behalf of the cause as well.

Willing to Learn

Go into each volunteer opportunity with a willingness to learn about new people, unfamiliar issues and circumstances, and to truly listen to those around you. Be open and be willing to leave your assumptions at the door. If you listen, you are guaranteed to learn something new.

Flexible

Organizations recruit volunteers for roles of all kinds, and new needs pop up constantly. Your willingness to jump in and help with any tasks that may arise will open doors to new experiences and allow you to make a difference in a variety of ways. Remember, while JVC aims to plan out most details and keep you informed, there is only so much we can control. Be flexible and you will have a great experience!

Reliable and Committed

If you make a commitment to volunteer, make sure you can follow through! These organizations count on your commitment. Of course, as with all things in life, situations can happen that prevent you from volunteering. Let us know when things come up and remember that our nonprofit partners rely on you so if you don't show up, it can have a big negative impact.

Good Communicator

Make sure to keep a good line of communication open with JVC, the organization you are volunteering with, and other volunteers joining you. You should expect the same good communication from us as well. Once your volunteer experience is over, please continue to keep in touch. Let JVC know how your experience went. What did you love and what could have been improved? The more you communicate, the better we are able to improve your experience in the future.

Passionate

When you align your passions with your volunteer work, you are unstoppable. Your passion can help make a big impact on an organization or individual. Remember that passion is just as infectious as energy. It will have a positive effect on people volunteering with you, as well as clients.

Team Player

Being a part of a team is essential to volunteering. The world is very rarely changed by just one person. It's the collective efforts of a group of committed individuals (both staff and volunteers) working together that makes the difference. Stay friendly, respect all opinions, be compassionate and you can achieve something wonderful with your team!

Respectful

Being respectful of people you encounter while volunteering is key to making sure everyone has a good experience. Remember to respect the staff at the organization. They work incredibly hard to make sure everyone has a good experience so respecting their rules and wishes can make their job just a bit easier! Respect other volunteers and remember that they are there to help just like you. Most importantly, make sure to respect all clients/patients/guests. Your respect can go a long way in making a difference.

Take Direction Well

Don't forget that you are volunteering to help the organization. When you are volunteering, please respect the policies and procedures set in place by the organization. Listen to the staff member who is in charge. Each organization has certain methods of doing things and it is important to respect that.

Kind

Last, but not least, don't forget to be kind. Be kind to everyone you meet, and you can't go wrong!

ENVIRONMENT

Useful Terms

Urban Garden: Urban gardening is the process of growing plants of all types in an urban environment.¹⁹

Facts and Figures

Your work as a volunteer can help provide clean air and water, healthy food, and beautiful spaces for our community.

- According to psychologists, exposure to nature helps us shrug off societal pressures, allowing us to remember and value more important things like relationships, sharing, and community.²⁰
- Water pollution causes flooding due to the accumulation of solid waste and soil erosion in streams and rivers.²¹
- Community gardens can mitigate some of the problems that are common in urban areas. They can be a beneficial addition to many communities by increasing the availability of nutritious foods, strengthening community ties, reducing environmental hazards and creating a more sustainable system.²²
- Gardens in urban areas are positively correlated with decreased crime rates.²³

Dos and Don'ts of Volunteering

DO respect the community members who feel ownership over the urban green spaces.

DON'T make assumptions about the community space you are working in.

DO respect the critters living outside.

DON'T intentionally disturb any bugs or animals that make their homes in the environment.

DO a tick check when you finish volunteering.

DON'T forget to put on sunscreen and bug spray (even in the cooler months).

DO stick to designated paths.

DON'T wonder off without permission of the organization's staff.

What You May Need While Volunteering

Specific details vary based on organization and project

- Closed-toed shoes
- Long pants
- Hat
- Water bottle
- Bug spray and sunscreen
- Clothing that can get dirty