



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!

SENIORS

Useful Terms

Social Isolation: The National Academies Press describes social isolation as the absence of social interactions, contact and relationships with family and friends, with neighbors and with 'society at large'.⁸

Facts and Figures

Many seniors feel isolated and lonely, which can have negative effects on physical and mental health. Below are some facts about the nation's senior population in hopes of giving you an idea of how widespread the problem of isolation and loneliness can be.

- 48% of socially-isolated seniors anticipate needing help with transportation, and only 36% say their community currently meets this need.⁹
- 43% of socially-isolated seniors with chronic conditions report receiving little or no support from their friends, family, or spouse to help manage their health.¹⁰
- Researchers have demonstrated that extreme loneliness and feelings of isolation can be twice as unhealthy as obesity for older people.¹¹
- Lonely people are more likely to engage in unhealthy behavior. A study found that people who are socially isolated or lonely are more likely to report risky health behaviors such as poor diet, lack of physical activity, and smoking. Conversely, social support can help encourage seniors to eat well, exercise, and live healthy lifestyles.¹²

Dos and Don'ts of Volunteering

DO be aware of personal space.

DON'T touch, move, or lean on mobility aids (such as a walker or wheelchair), unless asked or trained to do so.

DO remember that people have different preferences and abilities.

DON'T make assumptions about people based on their age or their disabilities.

DO ask questions. If you have a question about what to do, what language to use, or what assistance to offer, ask. That person should be your first and best resource.

DON'T assume you know what someone wants, feels, or what is best for them.

DO talk to someone on their level. If you will be speaking for some time with a person in a wheelchair, sit down so that you are at eye level with them so they don't have to strain their neck to look up at you.

DON'T ignore people's physical limitations when you are talking to them.

What You May Need While Volunteering

Specific details vary based on organization and project

- Pants, jeans, or skirts (no shorts) – must go past your knees – leggings not recommended
- A top with sleeves (no tank tops)
- Activity supplies (coloring, crafts, games, reading materials etc.)