

**INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Policy Number: GA-15

Effective Date: July 1, 2013

Version: 2.0

POLICY TITLE: VOLUNTEERISM

OVERVIEW: The Department of Child Services (DCS) will provide guidance and direction to individuals engaging in volunteerism. The use of volunteers shall be consistent with DCS Mission, Vision, and Values. Volunteers perform tasks within DCS without compensation or expectation of compensation. They are not considered employees of DCS. Volunteers complete tasks under the supervision of DCS employees.

I. DEFINITIONS

A. Volunteer: A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of DCS. A volunteer must be 18 years of age or older and officially accepted and trained as a volunteer by DCS prior to performance of the task. Volunteers are not considered employees of DCS.

1. Level One (1) Volunteer: A volunteer who has contact with children and/or families who are under DCS supervision.
2. Level Two (2) Volunteer: A volunteer who does not have direct contact with children and/or families who are under DCS supervision, but may have access to some DCS records/files.

Note: This policy does not apply to those individuals who occasionally assist DCS with projects and/or public events that do not include direct contact with children and/or families and access to DCS records/files (e.g., collecting and distributing Books for Youth).

B. Confidentiality responsibility for volunteers: Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer whether this information involves a staff member, volunteer, client, or other person involved with DCS. A confidentiality statement shall be signed before a volunteer begins his/her service with DCS. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer relationship with DCS and/or possible legal action.

II. REFERENCES

[IC 31-33-18: Disclosure of Reports: Confidentiality Requirements](#)

III. STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

- A. Volunteers must not have an adverse effect on DCS operations.
- B. Volunteers must complete a volunteer application and sign a volunteer contract.
- C. The Deputy Director, Regional Manager (RM), Local Office Director (LOD), Division Manager, Program Director, or Practice Development Group Attorney has the authority to approve all volunteer requests and will determine the volunteer's level.
- D. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of children and families, volunteers are prohibited from making any decision that may affect the safety and/or well-being of children. Examples of prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:
 1. Making decisions or recommendations on the removal of a child from a home;

2. Making decisions or recommendations on the placement of a child;
 3. Making decisions or recommendations on Termination of Parental Rights (TPR);
 4. Providing verbal and/or written reports to the court (this does not include subpoenaed testimony);
 5. Conducting assessments of families/children, including home studies; and
 6. Transporting a child in either a personal or state-owned vehicle.
- E. A Level One (1) prospective volunteer must complete (at the volunteer's expense) the Volunteer Application, a Fingerprint-based National and State Criminal History Check through the DCS approved contract vendor, Sex Offender Registry check, local Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) records check, and Child Protection Services (CPS) history check in every state the applicant has lived within the last five (5) years prior to beginning volunteer activities. See separate policy, [13.3 Conducting Background Checks for DCS Contractors](#).
- F. A Level Two (2) prospective volunteer must complete (at the volunteer's expense) the Volunteer Application, a CPS check and Sex Offender Registry check in every state the applicant has lived within the last five (5) years prior to beginning volunteer activities. See separate policy, [13.3 Conducting Background Checks for DCS Contractors](#).
- G. Volunteers shall receive training by a DCS staff member on ethics, confidentiality, and any other training deemed necessary by supervising local management staff. A PeopleSoft ID is needed for the volunteer to access State on-line training.
- H. DCS reserves the right to terminate the Volunteer Agreement with or without notice.

IV. PROCEDURE

- A. Each Deputy Director, RM, LOD, Division Manager, Program Director, or Practice Development Group Attorney utilizing volunteer services shall interview potential volunteers, ensure all paperwork (including PeopleSoft ID) and background checks are completed, ensure the volunteer receives necessary training, assign tasks, and provide supervision.
- B. Each volunteer shall be assigned to a supervisor who will have the primary responsibility for overseeing the volunteer's activities within DCS.
- C. The volunteer contract, which includes a confidentiality agreement, liability release, and Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) Information Resource Use Agreement, will be signed by the volunteer and the supervisor. This contract will clearly state the tasks the volunteer will complete, anticipated volunteer schedule and the desired outcomes of the tasks assigned.

V. FORMS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- A. [Volunteer Application](#)
- B. [Application for Criminal History Background Check \(SF53259\)](#) for LEA records check
- C. [Request for Child Protection Service \(CPS\) History Check \(SF 52802\)](#)
- D. [Volunteer Contract](#)
- E. [Indiana Office of Technology Information Resources Use Agreement \(IRUA\)](#)
- F. [PeopleSoft ID Request Form for Non-State Employees](#) – Available by e-mailing a request to the DCS HR inbox at DCSHR@dcs.IN.gov.

DATE: April 1, 2013
 John Ryan, Director
 Department of Child Services
 A signed copy is on file.