

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Volunteer Program Supporter:

Payworks 



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children's
museum

ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The Children's Museum exists to spark kids' creative learning. As a non-profit charitable organization, we believe in the potential of all children and provide an interactive learning environment that nurtures the power of imagination and spirit of self-discovery. For over 30 years, we have been the place for families to play, laugh, learn, and grow.



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WELCOME

Welcome to the Children’s Museum. You are now part of a team that is over 150 volunteers strong, and we’re so pleased that you’ve decided to join us. Volunteers strengthen our organization and help make us shine!

The Children’s Museum is well-respected and appreciated by our community. We pride ourselves in delivering exemplary customer service and in offering a creative and educational location for children and caregivers to interact. The Children’s Museum is committed to providing a supportive environment in which our volunteers can learn and grow. We are confident you will meet our high standards of guest services and help us provide fun, creative, and safe experiences for our guests. This Volunteer Handbook is one of our resources that will help you do so, as is the Volunteer Information Portal (The VIP) housed on our website, our monthly eNewsletters, and our Volunteer Information Newsletters.

The experiences that we offer can be described with such words as creative, curious, dynamic, educational, engaging, exciting, fun, hands-on, interactive, and unique. Many of our volunteers and employees enjoyed visiting the Children’s Museum as children. If you did, you will remember having wonderful times during your visits – and you will now be helping to create these times for new groups of children and their caregivers.

Once again, welcome to the Children’s Museum. Thank you for sharing your energy, enthusiasm, and experience!

GENERAL INFORMATION

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Children's Museum supports both the intent and the spirit of the Canadian Human Rights Act which outlaws discrimination in employment, volunteering, and in providing services and programs to our guests.

We do not tolerate any behavior that would be deemed as harassment - including undermining someone's self-esteem, dignity, or safety. This includes anyone - staff, volunteers, or a member of the public - harassing another either openly or in private.

PRIVACY LEGISLATION

There are laws in Canada that respect the privacy of personal information. We have procedures that ensure we meet all applicable privacy legislation. We will be providing you with museum information and training as it relates to your volunteer role with the organization.



MUSEUM COMMUNICATIONS

The Children's Museum uses several different tools to communicate regularly with our volunteers.

These include:

Volunteer Information Portal (The VIP)

Our volunteers are Very Important People – and we have created a password-enabled VIP section on our website where you will find all the latest news and museum developments as they relate to the Volunteer Team. We encourage you to check The VIP before every shift with the Children's Museum, and also ask that you access The VIP frequently to ensure you have the most up-to-date information about volunteering with the museum.

Volunteer Lounge Information Board

While you're onsite at the museum, please check out the materials posted on the Information Board located in the Volunteer Lounge for current volunteer news and information.

Children's Museum eNews

Our eNews communicates information about all our upcoming special events and programming to an audience of over 8000+ subscribers.

Volunteer Information eNewsletters, Direct Emails, and Notices from Museum Staff and/or Departments

A volunteer-specific eNewsletter is circulated via email. You may also receive occasional requests and/or information via email, phone, or mail from museum staff or other museum departments. For more information or to opt-out of these communications, please see the Volunteer & Access Coordinator.



FACILITY POLICIES



ACCESS

Volunteers are provided access to the Children's Museum during their shifts, and are restricted to areas to which they have been assigned. It is appropriate for volunteers to ask, in advance, to give a friend or family member a tour of the Children's Museum when not scheduled to volunteer. Please speak with our Volunteer & Access Coordinator or with your immediate supervisor to arrange a tour.

PARKING

For all people working or volunteering onsite at The Forks, there are designated parking areas. A fee is charged for parking in these lots. Costs related to parking are incurred by the volunteer. If this proves to be an obstacle to volunteering, please speak with our Volunteer & Access Coordinator.

VOLUNTEER LOUNGE & LOCKERS

A volunteer lounge is available for use by our volunteers. You will find bottled water and have access to a fridge in this area. The lounge is kept clean by the volunteers using it. There are also lockers available for your use, though you are encouraged not to bring valuables with you when volunteering.

SMOKING POLICY & FRAGRANCES

The building and grounds of the Children's Museum are smoke-free. While the museum is not a fragrance-free facility, we encourage staff and volunteers to limit the use of fragrances that may cause allergic reactions in some visitors.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

The safety and well-being of our guests, employees, and volunteers is of highest priority. All museum staff and volunteers are required to provide satisfactory results from an Abuse Registry Check prior to their first shift.

If you are sick, please call and cancel your shift...we most likely would be sending you home anyway because others don't want to get sick too!

Staff members have been trained to handle emergency situations including first aid and building evacuations. A briefing will be provided to volunteers as to their roles in various emergency situations.

LOST CHILD

Occasionally, children wander away from their caregivers. The Children's Museum has procedures addressing how volunteers are to assist "missing children." A briefing will be provided to volunteers as to their roles in assisting missing children.

LOST & FOUND ITEMS

The Admissions Desk staff members handle lost and found items. Found items should be immediately brought to the desk.

MEDIA CONTACTS

There will be many times throughout the year when media will be interested in the Children's Museum. Only designated individuals may speak with the media as our communications must be accurate, consistent, and professional. If you are approached by the media, the important thing is to refer them to your supervisor. You should feel free to say, "I'm not authorized to speak about that, but I will find someone who is."

PUBLIC IMAGE

The Children's Museum has an established public image. As you volunteer you will be interacting with the public and will be required to present yourself in a professional, appropriate manner. Volunteers' name badges and uniforms demonstrate the professionalism of our volunteer team and should not be altered. Volunteers are required to have a clean, neat appearance at all times. Comfortable, clean clothing is appropriate. Shorts and skirts should be no more than three inches above the knees; sheer clothing is not acceptable, as are low-cut tops, or tops that do not reach the waist. All clothing is to be void of slogans or images. While volunteering you may be required to conceal tattoos and body piercings or change hairstyles deemed to be inconsistent with our public image. Another part of our public image has to do with our readiness to serve the public. In that this can happen at any time during your shift, eating, drinking, chewing gum, as well as the use of any personal electronic devices including cell phones, is not permitted while working with the public.

EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

AS PART OF A TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS YOU WILL:

- Actively contribute to our mission to **Spark Kids' Creative Learning**
- Commit to a minimum six-month and sixty-hour term
- Participate in on-the-job training and training workshops
- Be dependable, arriving as scheduled
- Be positive and enthusiastic taking pride in your role
- Provide your supervisor or the Volunteer & Access Coordinator with feedback
- Offer excellent customer service
- Respect museum policies and procedures by
 - Ensuring your volunteer time is devoted solely to the museum. No personal visitors or use of electronic devices including cell phones are permitted while volunteering
 - Respecting museum property
 - Signing in and out and updating your volunteer record in our logbook



VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

COMMUNICATION & AUTHORITY

From time to time difficulties may arise as part of volunteer experiences. It is important that you share your concerns with your supervisor so you can work together to improve the situation. Although problems with volunteers rarely occur, they are handled in the same manner as we do with our employees. Additional training and support may be offered with the intent of resolving the problem. If a problem with a volunteer's performance cannot be resolved, the volunteer opportunity will end.

SCHEDULES

Now that you have a volunteer position with the Children's Museum, you must be available to volunteer! Your supervisor will arrange your schedule with you and will give you plenty of notice as to your shifts. If you are unable to make your scheduled shift, you are required to advise your supervisor, giving as much notice as possible. Generally, schedules for volunteer shifts are consistent over many months, so two weeks' notice for schedule changes is required. The Children's Museum has a waiting list of volunteers, so if volunteers are not able to follow-through on their commitments, they may be asked to leave so another person will have the opportunity to volunteer.

SHIFTS

It's great to arrive 10 minutes before your shift. When arriving, first check-in at the Admissions Desk. After checking in, head to the Volunteer Lounge and record the date and time you arrive on your page in the logbook, then get your name badge and uniform. When set, report to your supervisor so they know you have arrived, and can brief you on the plans for your shift.

When your shift has ended, update your volunteer record on your logbook page, replace your nametag and uniform, collect your personal belongings, and check out at the Admissions Desk.



BREAKS

Breaks depend on the number of hours of your shift. If you are volunteering for more than a four hour shift, you are eligible for a break. If you are volunteering for fewer than four hours, but feel in need of a short break, speak with your supervisor. All breaks are arranged by your supervisor.

REVIEWS, APPRECIATION, AND RECOGNITION

We all want to know how we are doing as volunteers. Supervisors will be providing you with ongoing feedback—what you are doing well and also how you can improve. The Children’s Museum will provide you with training to enhance your current skills and to help you develop new ones. In appreciation of our volunteers’ contributions we provide recognition for service hour milestones, exclusive volunteer events, as well as an annual bursary draw open to volunteers who contribute a specific number of volunteer hours in a 12-month period.



CONTACT INFORMATION

GENERAL CONTACTS

Info Line/Admissions Desk • 204.924.4000

VOLUNTEER SUPERVISORS

Volunteer Department • 204.924.4002
Erin McIntyre, emcintyre@childrensmuseum.com

Education Coordinator • 204.924.4006
Allie Alsop, aalsop@childrensmuseum.com

Program Coordinator • 204.924.4013
Hong McLeod, hmcLeod@childrensmuseum.com

Museum Services Manager • 204.924.4007
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