

VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES:

1. Arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled service.
2. Park only in the parking lot designated and lock your car.
3. Leave everything in your car except your volunteer badge, your car key and what you will need to perform your service.

4. Sign in and out at the Front Security Desk at all TDOC locations on each visit. Be sure to indicate the location where you are going to provide your assigned service.
5. Go only to your scheduled service location. Stay with your group and escorting officer at all times.
6. Have your left hand stamped by the officer on duty upon entering the institution.
7. Do not bring anything out of an institution that you did not have with you when you first entered.
8. Only come to the institution for scheduled services. You will not be allowed in during those times you are not scheduled.
9. All materials used by your group for volunteer activities should be approved by the volunteer services coordinator, and approving authority prior to your visit.
10. Avoid becoming emotionally involved with inmates. Over involvement and over identification with an inmate are the most prevalent reasons for the downfall of a volunteer.
11. Follow all volunteer policies.
12. Stay in your area with your group at all times.
13. Resist doctrinal debates or degrading other religions or other programs.
14. Dress appropriately.
15. Ask for help if you are uncertain about what to do or say. It is always best to tell the inmate or parolee/probationer that you will seek others' advice.
16. Follow all directions given to you by staff.
17. Refuse to respond to an inmate's or parolee's/probationers request for legal advice or assistance.
18. Keep your professional distance.
19. Report any inappropriate behavior immediately to Staff.
20. Don't bring in money, gum, pictures, books, or anything else without prior written approval. Cell phones are prohibited inside TDOC facilities. Alcohol, all tobacco products, drugs, firearms, and explosives are strictly prohibited on the grounds of any correctional facility and their possession, on your person or even in your vehicle is a criminal offense. A person with a valid handgun carry permit holder may transport and safely store a fire arm or ammunition in a locked motor vehicle or locked container securely attached to the vehicle while on or utilizing the designated facility parking area. The firearm/ammunition shall be kept out of ordinary observation. This includes persons that may have firearms carry permits issued by the county, state and/or federal government but excludes law enforcement officers. All weapons in the possession of law enforcement officers must be checked into the facilities weapons holding portals. Please refer to Policy #506.06 if you have specific questions about what is permissible; also see Policy #112.11.
21. Don't give anything to, carry for, or take anything from, an inmate or parolee/probationer.
22. Don't argue with any TDOC Staff. You must obey directives regarding all TDOC rules at all times.

23. Don't make promises you will not keep, or send inmates or parolee/probationer's money or gifts through the mail.
24. Don't discuss problems concerning any TDOC location or personnel with an inmate or parolee/probationer. You are here for volunteer services only.
25. Don't make telephone calls or perform any services for an inmate or parolee/probationer unless approved to do so. Certain volunteers, such as approved mentors, may be involved in the inmate's transitional phase. This may include helping offenders with housing, employment, programming and mentoring outside the facility. This applies only to volunteers in approved mentoring programs.
26. Don't downgrade or criticize any religion or denomination.
27. Don't touch, shake hands, or hug inmates unnecessarily. Keep these contacts to a minimum. It is proper to show care and concern, but do not over do it.
28. Don't give an inmate any personal information about yourself, i.e. telephone numbers, and addresses. Only approved mentors will be able to give contact numbers
29. Don't enter into a romantic or financial relationship with an inmate or parolee/probationer.
30. Don't discuss an inmate's or parolee/probationer problems with other inmates or parolees/probationer.
31. Don't send an inmate anything from the outside that they might request.
32. Don't send or carry messages, written or verbal, to inmates' or parolees/probationers friends or family.
33. Don't accept inmates or parolee/probationers as friends on social media pages, i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, e-mail etc. Such actions are grounds for termination. If an inmate sends a friend request to you on social media, report it to the supervisor immediately as inmates are not allowed to have social media accounts.

KEYS TO SUCCESS FOR VOLUNTEERS

REMEMBER....

1. One of the easiest pitfalls for a volunteer is being on the inmate's or parolee/probationers side
2. Inmates and parolees/probationers may play one individual against another. "That Officer John Wayne's mentality - he's always nit-picking and tries to enforce all the meaningless rules. Not like you, who uses good judgment when it comes to dealing with inmates and parolees/probationers."
3. As a volunteer, your relationship and how you relate to inmates and parolees/probationers will be different than staff. Don't undermine any staff because of the role they must maintain.
4. No matter how good your intentions may be, TDOC staff knows more about an inmate or parolee/probationer than you.