



Volunteer and Internship Handbook

Welcome

Welcome to Little Friends! We are delighted that you have chosen to volunteer/intern with our organization. As you become familiar with our culture and mission, we hope you will take advantage of opportunities to enhance your skills and further Little Friend's goals.

You are joining an organization that has a reputation for outstanding leadership, innovation, and service to individuals with special challenges. Our staff uses their creativity and talent to transform lives every day. With your active involvement, creativity, and support, Little Friends will continue to achieve its goals. We sincerely hope you will take pride in being an important part of Little Friend's success because quite simply "what we do matters."

Please take time to review the policies contained in this handbook. If you have questions, feel free to ask your supervisor or to contact the Human Resources Department.

Mission, Vision, Values of Little Friends

Mission

Little Friend's mission is to empower children and adults with special challenges, and their families, to live, learn, work and thrive in the community.

Vision

Little Friends vision is to be recognized as the Premier Organization providing innovative programs for children, adults and their families living with special challenges to reach their fullest potential.

Values

■ What we do matters

- As individuals and together as teammates in the organization
- Our value statement drives who we are and how we do our jobs as staff of Little Friends

■ Expectations and Values

- ***Maintain Respect for the Individual...***
 - Everyone to be treated with dignity at all times
 - People will be free to speak and communicate in a manner that maintains respect for each other
 - Be aware of all confidentiality requirements and abide by these at all times
 - All organization services to be guided by our commitments to individual choice
- ***Conduct Business by the Golden Rule...***
 - Treat everyone the way you want to be treated
 - Clients
 - Clients Parents/Guardians
 - Outside Support Providers
 - Vendors
 - Peers
 - Strive to have people feel important and of value
- ***Have Integrity...***
 - Our word and commitments matter
 - Do the right thing and support the commitments we make
 - Be accountable for what you do
 - Be in compliance with all rules and regulations
 - Be ethical in our manner of conduct

- ***Be Reliable...***
 - Do what you say you are going to do
- ***Strive for Continual Improvement***
 - Work towards being the best at what we do...Be prideful and don't settle on doing just enough
 - Be willing to do what is needed to meet and exceed our clients' needs
- ***Embrace Change and Growth***
 - Be open-minded and willing to learn
- ***Always be Compassionate***
 - Be helpful to one another
 - Be kind to all that we work with

Licensure

Little Friends, Inc. is licensed or approved by the Illinois Office of Education; Department of Children and Family Services; Department of Public Health; Department of Human Services; Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities; and the U.S. and Illinois Departments of Labor.

Governance

A Board of Directors, composed of volunteers representing a cross-section of our community, governs the agency. The Board includes representatives from the fields of business, industry, the professions and consumer representatives.

The Board of Directors meets on a regularly scheduled basis in order to provide the governance necessary for the agency to fulfill its mission.

VOLUNTEER/INTERNSHIP PARAMETERS

Status

Staff at Little Friends, Inc. is considered all individuals who perform services on behalf of the Agency. This includes paid and unpaid positions. All volunteer and Intern staff members at Little Friends are unpaid status. Internship terms will be mutually agreed upon between the Agency, the Intern and the Academic Institution.

Equal Opportunity and Commitment to Diversity

Equal Opportunity

Little Friends provides equal employment opportunities to all employees, interns and volunteers without regard to race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, disability, gender identity, results of genetic testing, or service in the military.

Little Friends expressly prohibits any form of unlawful harassment or discrimination based on any of the characteristics mentioned above. Improper interference with the ability of other staff to perform their expected duties is absolutely not tolerated.

Any staff, with questions or concerns about equal opportunities in the workplace, are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Vice-President of Human Resources. The Agency will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise issues of equal opportunity. If a staff member feels he or she has been subjected to any such retaliation, he or she should bring it to the attention of the Vice-President of Human Resources.

Retaliation means adverse conduct taken because an individual reported an actual or perceived violation of this policy, opposed practices prohibited by this policy, or participated in the reporting and investigation process described below. "Adverse conduct" includes but is not limited to:

- (1) shunning and avoiding an individual who reports harassment, discrimination or retaliation;
- (2) express or implied threats or intimidation intended to prevent an individual from reporting harassment, discrimination or retaliation; or

Complaints of discrimination should be filed according to the procedures described in the Harassment and Complaint Procedure.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Reasonable Accommodation

To ensure equal opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, Little Friends will make reasonable accommodations for the known disability of an otherwise qualified individual, unless undue hardship on the operation of the business would result.

Staff who may require a reasonable accommodation should contact the Human Resources Department.

Commitment to Diversity

Little Friends is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which all staff have an opportunity to participate and contribute to the success of the Agency and are valued for their skills, experience, and unique perspectives. This commitment is embodied in Agency policy and the way we do business at Little Friends and is an important principle of sound business management.

Harassment and Complaint Procedure

Sexual and other unlawful harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), as amended, as well as many state laws. Harassment based on a characteristic protected by law, such as race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, religion, age, disability, veteran status, or other characteristic protected by state or federal law, is prohibited.

It is Little Friend's policy to provide a work environment free of sexual and other harassment. To that end, harassment of Little Friend's staff by management, supervisors, coworkers, or nonemployees who are in the workplace is absolutely prohibited. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual or other harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. Little Friends will take all steps necessary to prevent and eliminate unlawful harassment.

Definition of Unlawful Harassment. "Unlawful harassment" is conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; has the purpose or effect of substantially and unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or otherwise adversely affects an individual's opportunities because of the individual's membership in a protected class.

Unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to, epithets; slurs; jokes; pranks; innuendo; comments; written or graphic material; stereotyping; or other threatening, hostile, or intimidating acts based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation,

marital status, religion, age, disability, veteran status, or other characteristic protected by state or federal law.

Definition of Sexual Harassment. While all forms of harassment are prohibited, special attention should be paid to sexual harassment. "Sexual harassment" is generally defined under both state and federal law as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of any individual's employment or as a basis for employment decisions; *or*
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Other sexually oriented conduct, whether intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct that, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwanted sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comments about an individual's body, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing up against the body, sexual gestures, or suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; *and*
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

All staff should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of sexual harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated at Little Friends.

Complaint Procedure. Any staff who believes he or she has been subject to or witnessed illegal discrimination, including sexual or other forms of unlawful harassment, is requested and encouraged to make a complaint. You may complain directly to your immediate supervisor or department manager, a representative from Human Resources, or any other member of management with whom you feel comfortable bringing such a complaint. Similarly, if you observe acts of discrimination toward or harassment of another employee, you are requested and encouraged to report this to one of the individuals listed above.

No reprisal, retaliation, or other adverse action will be taken against an employee for making a complaint or report of discrimination or harassment or for assisting in the investigation of any such complaint or report. Any suspected retaliation or intimidation should be reported immediately to one of the persons identified above.

All complaints will be investigated promptly and, to the extent possible, with regard for confidentiality.

If the investigation confirms conduct contrary to this policy has occurred, Little Friends will take immediate, appropriate, corrective action, including discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

Conflicts of Interest

Little Friends expects all staff to conduct themselves and agency business in a manner that reflects the highest standards of ethical conduct, and in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This includes avoiding real and potential conflicts of interests.

Exactly what constitutes a conflict of interest or an unethical business practice is both a moral and a legal question. Little Friends recognizes and respects the individual staff member's right to engage in activities outside of Little Friends which are private in nature and do not in any way conflict with or reflect poorly on the agency.

It is not possible to define all the circumstances and relationships that might create a conflict of interest. If a situation arises where there is a potential conflict of interest, the staff member should discuss this with a manager for advice and guidance on how to proceed. The list below suggests some of the types of activity that indicate improper behavior, unacceptable personal integrity, or unacceptable ethics:

1. Staff is discouraged from accepting any form of gift or gratuity. An individual wishing to express appreciation can be encouraged to make a contribution to the agency. Cash or checks to the individual must be declined. Gifts with a cash value over \$50.00 must be declined.
2. Staff participating in civic or professional organization activities are forbidden from divulging confidential company information.
8. Staff is forbidden from engaging in practices or procedures that violate local, state or federal laws.

Confidential Information

Little Friends abides by all guidelines and provisions contained in the "Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act" effective January 1, 1991. All records, communications, photographs, or information regarding individuals we serve is considered strictly confidential and is not to be disclosed by any staff member or volunteer without the appropriate permission as outlined in the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act. Each staff member, volunteer, intern, board member, etc. is responsible for being aware of and following the specific provisions of the Act. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Dress and Grooming

Little Friends provides a casual yet professional work environment for its staff. Staff should remember that they are a role model for students and individuals we serve, and are a representative of the Agency. All staff are expected to dress in a manner consistent with good hygiene, safety, and good taste. Please use common sense.

Social Media Acceptable Use

Little Friends encourages staff to share information with co-workers and with those outside the company for the purposes of gathering information, generating new ideas, and learning from the work of others. Social media provide inexpensive, informal, and timely ways to participate in an exchange of ideas and information. However, information posted on a website is available to the public and, therefore, the company has established the following guidelines for employee participation in social media.

Note: As used in this policy, “social media” refers to blogs, forums, and social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, and SnapChat, among others.

Off-duty use of social media. Staff may maintain personal websites or weblogs on their own time using their own facilities. Staff must ensure that social media activity does not interfere with their work. In general, the company considers social media activities to be personal endeavors, and employees may use them to express their thoughts or promote their ideas.

On-duty use of social media. Staff may engage in social media activity during work time provided it is directly related to their work, approved by their manager, and does not identify or reference individuals served/students, family members, or vendors without express permission. The Agency monitors employee use of company computers and the Internet, including staff blogging and social networking activity.

Respect. Demonstrate respect for the dignity of the Agency, those served/students, their family members, and its staff. A social media site is a public place, and staff should avoid inappropriate comments. For example, staff should not divulge Little Friends confidential information such as Individuals served/student lists, or information restricted from disclosure by law on social media sites. Similarly, staff should not engage in harassing or discriminatory behavior that targets other staff or individuals because of their protected class status or make defamatory comments. Even if a message is posted anonymously, it may be possible to trace it back to the sender.

Post disclaimers. If an individual identifies himself or herself as an Agency staff member or discusses matters related to the Agency on a social media site, the site must include a disclaimer on the front page stating that it does not express the views of the Agency and that the employee is expressing only his or her personal views. For example: “The views expressed

on this website/Weblog are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of Little Friends.” Place the disclaimer in a prominent position and repeat it for each posting expressing an opinion related to the Agency or the Agency’s business. Staff must keep in mind that if they post information on a social media site that is in violation of company policy and/or federal, state, or local law, the disclaimer will not shield them from disciplinary action.

Solicitation

Staff should be able to work in an environment that is free from unnecessary annoyances and interference with their work. In order to protect our staff and visitors, solicitation by employees is strictly prohibited while either the employee being solicited or the staff member is doing the soliciting is on “working time.” “Working time” is defined as time during which staff are not at a meal, on break, or on the premises immediately before or after his or her shift.

Staff are also prohibited from distributing written materials, handbills, or any other type of literature on working time and, at all times, in “working areas,” which includes all office areas. “Working areas” do not include break rooms, parking lots, or common areas shared by employees during nonworking time.

Non-staff members may not trespass or solicit or distribute materials anywhere on company property at any time.

Computers, Internet, Email, and Other Resources

The company provides a wide variety of communication tools and resources to staff for use in running day-to-day business activities. Whether it is the telephone, voice mail, fax, scanner, Internet, intranet, e-mail, text messaging, or any other company-provided technology, use should be reserved for business-related matters during working hours. All communication using these tools should be handled in a professional and respectful manner.

Staff should not have any expectation of privacy in their use of company computer, phone, or other communication tools. All communications made using company-provided equipment or services including email and internet activity, are subject to inspection by the company. Staff should keep in mind that even if they delete an email, voicemail or other communication, a copy may be archived on the company’s systems.

Staff use of company-provided communication systems, including personal e-mail and internet use that are not job-related have the potential to drain, rather than enhance, productivity and system performance. You should also be aware that information transmitted through e-mail and the internet is not completely secure or may contain viruses or malware, and information you transmit and receive could damage the company’s systems as well as the reputation and/or competitiveness of the company. To protect against possible problems, delete any e-mail messages prior to opening that are received from unknown senders and advertisers. It also is against company policy to turn off antivirus protection software or make unauthorized changes to system configurations installed on company computers. Violations of this policy may result in termination for a first offense.

The company encourages staff to use e-mail only to communicate with fellow employees, individuals served/students/family members, or government agencies/vendors regarding agency business. Internal and external e-mails are considered business records and may be subject to federal and state recordkeeping requirements as well as to discovery in the event of litigation. Be aware of this possibility when sending e-mails within and outside the company.

All use of company-provided communications systems, including e-mail and internet use, should conform to our agency guidelines/policies, including but not limited to the Equal Opportunity, Harassment, Confidential Information, and Conflicts of Interest. So for example, staff should not engage in harassing or discriminatory behavior that targets other staff or individuals because of their protected class status or make defamatory comments. Similarly, staff should not divulge confidential information such as individual/student lists, or information restricted from disclosure by law on social media sites.

Because e-mail, telephone and voice mail, and internet communication equipment are provided for agency business purposes and are critical to the agency's success, your communications may be accessed without further notice by Information Technology

Workplace Safety

Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace

It is the policy of Little Friends to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free work environment that is safe and productive for staff and others having business with the Agency.

The unlawful use, possession, purchase, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of any illegal drug and/or the misuse of legal drugs while on Agency or client premises or while performing services for the Agency is strictly prohibited. Little Friends also prohibits reporting to work or performing services under the influence of alcohol or consuming alcohol while on duty or during work hours. In addition, the Little Friends prohibits off-premises abuse of alcohol and controlled substances, as well as the possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs, when these activities adversely affect job performance, job safety, or the Agency's reputation in the community.

Smoke-Free Workplace

Smoking is not allowed in company buildings or work areas at any time. "Smoking" includes the use of any tobacco products (including chewing tobacco), electronic smoking devices, and e-cigarettes.

Smoking is only permitted during break times in designated outdoor areas. Staff using these areas are expected to dispose of any smoking debris safely and properly.

Workplace Violence Prevention

Little Friends is committed to providing a safe, violence-free workplace for our staff. Due to this commitment, we discourage staff from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual or from behaving in a threatening or violent manner. Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any employee will not be tolerated. A threat may include any verbal or physical harassment or abuse, attempts to intimidate others, menacing gestures, stalking, or any other hostile, aggressive, and/or destructive actions taken for the purposes of intimidation. This policy covers any violent or potentially violent behavior that occurs in the workplace or at company-sponsored functions.

All Little Friends staff bear the responsibility of keeping our work environment free from violence or potential violence. Any staff member who witnesses or is the recipient of violent behavior should promptly inform their supervisor, manager, or the Human Resources Department. All threats will be promptly investigated. No staff member will be subject to retaliation, intimidation, or discipline as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this guideline.

Any individual engaging in violence against the company, its staff, or its property will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. All acts will be investigated, and the appropriate action will be taken. Any such act or threatening behavior may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Little Friends prohibits the possession of weapons on its property at all times, including our parking lots or company vehicles. Additionally, while on duty, staff may not carry a weapon of any type. Weapons include, but are not limited to, handguns, rifles, automatic weapons, and knives that can be used as weapons (excluding pocketknives, utility knives, and other instruments that are used to open packages, cut string, and for other miscellaneous tasks), martial arts paraphernalia, stun guns, and tear gas. Any staff member violating this policy is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal for the first offense.

The company reserves the right to inspect all belongings of staff on its premises, including packages, briefcases, purses and handbags, gym bags, and personal vehicles on company property. In addition, Little Friends may inspect the contents of lockers, storage areas, file cabinets, desks, and work stations at any time and may remove all Company property and other items that are in violation of Company rules and policies.

Commitment to Safety

Protecting the safety of our employees, individuals served/students and visitors is the most important aspect of running our agency.

All staff have the opportunity and responsibility to contribute to a safe work environment by using commonsense rules and safe practices and by notifying management when any health or

safety issues are present. All employees are encouraged to partner with management to ensure maximum safety for all.

All staff accidents that take place on agency property must be documented and reported to Human Resources. In the event of an emergency, notify the appropriate emergency personnel by dialing 9 for an outside line, then dial 911 to activate the medical emergency services.

Public Relations

Little Friends actively pursues a program of public relations and community education and encourages agency staff to participate in these efforts. Staff involvement can be an important source of ideas, contacts, and expertise that the agency wants to share with the public. Because of the need to convey a consistent image and assure the dissemination of accurate information, staff must first have the approval of Agency Advancement or the President/CEO before acting as a spokesperson for Little Friends. All staff are encouraged to share any items deemed newsworthy with Agency Advancement.

Mandatory Reporter

It is the policy of Little Friends that every individual must be accorded the protection and exercise of all rights: legal, human, and civil. Little Friends, Inc. strictly prohibits abuse of individuals we serve in any form including physical, mental, verbal or sexual. This includes the use of corporal punishment such as striking, hitting or slapping an individual that we serve. In your role as a volunteer/intern you are a mandatory reporter. As such, you are responsible for immediately reporting any suspected instances of abuse or neglect of individuals we serve to your supervisor.

RECEIPT OF VOLUNTEER/INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

I _____, acknowledge that I am a Volunteer/Intern at Little Friends, Inc. and that I have been provided with a copy of the Volunteer/Internship Handbook. I understand that I am obligated to read and familiarize myself with its contents.

I understand that this Handbook outlines the basic obligations of my Volunteer/Internship relationship with Little Friends, Inc., and that the specific obligations of the internship and volunteer requirements will be determined by my supervisor.

I further understand that the contents of this Handbook are subject to change, at the sole discretion of Little Friends, Inc. without prior notice.

NAME _____

DATE _____

