



## VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

1. **Confidentiality** – Any patient/family information obtained because of your work as a hospice volunteer is to be kept confidential. If there is an inquiry about a patient, politely state that you cannot divulge confidential information and have the person contact the patient/family directly.
2. **Transportation** – Volunteers cannot transport patients or family members. For volunteers who drive as a part of their volunteer duties, these volunteers must have current automobile insurance and driver's license information documented in their volunteer file.
3. **Documentation** – Volunteers must document their activities per the Volunteer Tracking and Recording policy.
4. **Personal information** – Patient care volunteers may give patients/families their personal telephone number to be more readily available if the volunteer chooses. Volunteers should remind patient and family members that, if the patient or family member has a question, they should contact the LCFL main number.
5. **Communication** – Volunteers should report medical concerns (such as pain or symptom issues), emergency situations, concerns regarding abuse/neglect/exploitation, suicidal/homicidal ideation, and special circumstances to either the Nurse, Social Worker, Volunteer Services Coordinator, Volunteer Programs Coordinator, or the Director of Community Engagement. If after hours, volunteers should utilize the on-call number to communicate this information.
6. **Name Tag** – Volunteers must wear their official LCFL name tag when providing a volunteer service.
7. **Gifts** – Small gifts may be accepted/given by volunteers from/to patients and families, but this does not obligate reciprocation on the part of the volunteer. No monetary gift is to be accepted. Volunteers are to encourage donations to LCFL in the patient's name.
8. **Food** – Volunteers are not to provide food to patients/families without first checking with the nurse. Volunteers are not to feed patients.
9. **Physical Activity** – Volunteers should not become involved beyond their capabilities, including lifting, carrying, etc. Lifting/moving/transferring of patients should be avoided.

10. **Errands** - Volunteers may run errands for patients and families. Whenever possible, patients and families should purchase items ahead of time so that volunteers would not have to handle/manage payment. If this is not feasible, volunteers should discuss with the volunteer coordinator and/or social worker regarding how to pay for a patient's purchase/service. Volunteers should not pick up prescriptions for a patient.
11. **Medicine/Medical Activities** – Volunteers are not to give medical advice, assist in administration of drugs, or participate in other medical activities for patients
12. **Dress Code** - Volunteers are to dress in a comfortable, yet appropriate, manner, keeping in mind that patients/families may have different beliefs. Clothing with religious references, advertisements, and questionable pictures/language are to be avoided. Volunteers should avoid wearing perfume/cologne, or using hand sanitizers and moisturizers with fragrances when visiting with patients. Volunteers should wear comfortable footwear. Volunteers should avoid wearing excessive jewelry.
13. **Safety** – Please follow these safety recommendations:
  - a. If possible, carry a cell phone.
  - b. Leave purses in the car.
  - c. Don't break up disturbances/fights.
  - d. Schedule visits.
  - e. Be aware of the environment.
  - f. Beware of pets.
  - g. Report weapons, drugs, etc., to a team member.
  - h. Maintain boundaries.
  - i. If uncomfortable, tactfully excuse yourself and call a team member.
14. **Smoking/Alcohol** – Volunteers are not to smoke in the presence of hospice patients/families and are not to consume alcohol prior to nor during any hospice volunteer experience. This includes the use of vape pens, e-cigarettes, and smokeless tobacco. Volunteers are not to be under the influence of any medications or illicit substances when conducting volunteer work.
15. **Witnessing Legal Documents** – If comfortable, volunteers may be used as witnesses to health-care related documents such as Living Wills, etc, but are free to refuse for any reason. Volunteers shall not serve as a witness to documents related to financial/legal matters. Volunteers should not serve as a witness to any documents for patients/families to which they are assigned with whom they have had a prior or existing relationship.
16. **Health Care/Power of Attorney Agents/Executors** – Volunteers may not serve as a patient's or patient's family member's health care/durable/general power of attorney agent, or as a patient's or patient's family member's executor of the estate. If a patient or family member requests this, the volunteer will direct the patient and family member to discuss with the assigned social worker.

## VOLUNTEER SUGGESTIONS

1. **Be proactive** – Offer tangible assistance to patients/families. Many people are afraid to ask something of a volunteer, but if it is offered, they will accept it. Also, they might not understand what a volunteer can even do...give them some options.
2. **Be prompt** – Set up a time to visit (starting and ending time) and be on time. Before leaving, let the family know when you will be back in contact with them. Don't let too much time go by between contacts.
3. **Be honest** – If asked a question you don't know, admit it, but tell them you will find out the answer. Use the Hospice staff as consultants and resources to give the best possible care to our patients.
4. **Be a good listener** – Everyone has a story and most people like to share it. Ask open ended questions and wait for an answer. Don't be afraid of silence...they may be thinking of a response. Also, don't be too eager to offer your advice or opinions.
5. **Be visible** – If volunteering at a nursing home, the Hospice Care Center, or other Hospice offices, introduce yourself to the staff that's there. When out in public, share your experiences and the Hospice philosophy (keeping confidentiality, of course).
6. **Be objective** – Volunteers are encouraged to build relationships with patients and families. However, a professional distance must also be maintained. A volunteer will give the best support if he/she is able to stay objective and somewhat detached from the situation.
7. **Be patient** – The world of Hospice is an ebb and flow process. Some weeks will have numerous needs, patient care, administrative, fund raising, etc. Others will be much slower. Volunteer opportunities do not present themselves on a nice, scheduled basis. If time goes by without Hospice contact, feel free to give a call, realizing that all volunteers are important and Hospice tries to meet each of their needs.
8. **Be current** – If possible, volunteers should try to keep up with the latest news in end-of-life care. Health reports, community classes, and Hospice in-services and support meetings are excellent ways to keep informed.