



Volunteer Program Policies and Procedures

Overview

The mission of Peace House Foundation (PHF) is enhanced by the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, PHF accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers in meaningful roles at Peace House Secondary School (PHS) in Tanzania. These policies are meant to provide overall guidance and direction to PHS volunteers. PHF reserves the right to change any of these policies due to changing circumstances, and will expect volunteers to adhere to any changes once informed of them.

Volunteers choose to perform services for PHS without compensation or expectation of compensation (beyond reimbursement as explained below) and perform tasks at the direction of or on behalf of PHS. All volunteers must be officially accepted and enrolled by PHF prior to any volunteer service or program. Although volunteers are not employees of PHF, their actions reflect on the organization, and they are expected to act appropriately. Volunteers should actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and remain loyal to PHF's mission and procedures.

PHF accepts the service of volunteers with appreciation and the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of PHF, not to be initiated independently by the volunteer. Either the volunteer or PHF may, at any time, for whatever reason, decide to end the volunteer relationship. Notice of such a decision on either part should be communicated as soon as possible to the other.

Volunteer Management Procedures

Representative of the Organization

Volunteers may not represent PHF or position themselves as PHF representatives. Volunteers must seek approval from appropriate staff prior to any action or statement which might affect or obligate PHF. These actions may include, but are not limited to: public statements to the press in all forms, including verbal, print, and any other types of media; coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations; or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all appropriate or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as volunteers, whether this information involves staff, volunteers, or other persons, or involves overall PHF business. Failure to maintain confidentiality could result in ending the volunteer's relationship with PHF. Likewise, PHF keeps information on volunteers confidential and will not release names or identifying information without permission of the volunteer.

Safety

The safety of its staff and volunteers is very important to PHF; therefore, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the safety of all volunteers. However, volunteers should recognize that traveling to and working in a developing country is not without inherent danger or risk. In the course of volunteering, participants may be asked to work outside in hot and humid conditions, or to walk over rough terrain on the campus site. Participants may also be exposed to diseases, severe climactic conditions, or other hardships consistent with traveling in a developing nation. PHF will not be held responsible for any injuries that occur during any program. Volunteers are required to provide their own personal medical insurance, which must include emergency medical evacuation and coverage abroad. Volunteers who are injured or who are involved in an accident during their program should discuss their situation immediately with their PHS project supervisor to determine whether or not volunteer activity can continue. If an early return to the United States is deemed necessary, assistance will be negotiated on an individual basis.

Volunteer Recruitment, Assignment, and Development

Volunteer Assignments

The availability of certain volunteer assignments will vary based on the most pressing needs of staff and students at Peace House Secondary School, the academic calendar, and the unique abilities of individual volunteers. All volunteers should be aware and accepting of the fact that their specific duties during the course of their volunteer project may change depending on current needs. While a volunteer's preferences will always be taken into consideration, the final say in what they do will be decided by PHS staff and based on the considerations explained above.

Application

To participate in a PHF overseas volunteer program, all prospective volunteers must complete a formal application and sign the Agreement and Release form 90 days prior to the planned travel date. For the safety of our students, reference checks will be made and for those serving more than 14 days, background checks will also be conducted. Unfortunately, if an applicant refuses such a check, we can not accept them into any PHF program. A \$100 application fee is due with the submission of the application. This fee is non-refundable, but is applied to the total program cost for the volunteer.

Long-term Volunteering

Applicants interested in volunteering at PHS for longer than 90 days must apply for a special visa and work permit from the Tanzanian government. Because of these requirements, applicants must begin the application process with PHF at least 12 months prior to departure. As part of the application process, a meeting and interview will be arranged so that PHF can ascertain the volunteer's suitability for and interest in any particular assignment.

Professional Services

For long-term volunteer teaching positions, a current teacher's license is required. A copy must be sent to PHF along with the application under consideration. For medical, dental, nursing or other professional volunteering, copies of current licenses will be required with the application. In addition, two professional references are required.

Orientation and Training

Before departing the United States, one or more orientation sessions will be provided by PHF. This will be an opportunity for volunteers to ask questions, and review policies and procedures, as well as confirm travel plans. Upon arrival in Arusha, volunteers will participate in a general orientation on the nature, purpose, and mission of PHF; the Secondary School; the culture of Tanzania; and the volunteer program. Volunteers will receive training by PHS staff to provide them with information on (a) the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment; (b) the operation of the program encompassing their volunteer activity; and (c) the purpose and requirements of the assignment. This training will be provided in general during the orientation and more specifically as needed based on the activities planned each day.

Volunteer Feedback and Evaluation

Volunteers will be asked to evaluate their experiences in Tanzania and in PHS's Volunteer Program. All feedback received by PHF will be kept confidential and serve to help PHF improve its Volunteer Program.

Volunteer Support

Reimbursement of Expenses

Unless there is a special case of spending that is approved prior to expenditure, there is no reimbursement of expenses incurred by volunteers before or during their volunteer experience. For specific questions about this, email info@peacehousefoundation.org.

Refund of Expenses

Should a participant have to cancel a planned trip, PHF must receive notice of this cancellation in writing. All refunds given will be based on the date that PHF receives this notification.

The \$100 application fee is non-refundable under all circumstances. If an applicant cancels more than 60 days prior to the beginning of any program, the entire program fee (or as much has been paid) will be refunded. If an applicant cancels between 30 and 60 days prior to the beginning of the program, they will forfeit 50% of their program fees. If the cancellation occurs within 30 days of the starting date, 75% of the program fees will be forfeited. No refunds will be given if the cancellation occurs within 10 days of the starting date for any reason, including illness or injury. No refunds will be given once the program begins, for any reason.

PHF reserves the right to cancel a trip for any reason. In the unlikely event that this occurs, PHF will refund all participants their program fees but will not be responsible for any other expenses incurred by the participants in preparation for the trip (airline tickets, visas, immunizations, travel insurance, etc). PHF encourages all participants to purchase trip cancellation insurance through an outside vendor.

PHS staff reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's time on campus if PHS staff feels that the volunteer experience is not mutually beneficial to the organization and the participating volunteer. The PHS staff will make an effort to rectify any conflicts of interest before making such a decision. In such a case, the volunteer will forfeit their entire program fee.

Recognition

PHF loves its volunteers! The work of PHF volunteers is appreciated and acknowledged throughout the year through volunteer appreciation events, our website and our newsletter. In addition, all volunteers who work more than 40 hours per year will be named in that year's PHF Annual Report and receive VIP recognition at our annual "Colors of Hope" gala.

Other Policies

Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, and Illegal Substances

While on PHS grounds, volunteers will be expected to follow school guidelines on the use of tobacco and alcohol. There is to be no possession or use of illegal drugs, and no possession or use of firearms, while on the school site. Because PHS students are not allowed to use tobacco or alcohol, volunteers will be restricted in where and when they may use these substances. Repeated failure to adhere to these guidelines could result in a request to leave the program early, with any costs incurred at the responsibility of the volunteer. Exact guidelines will be distributed by PHS staff upon the volunteer's arrival at the school.

Harassment

PHF believes that every staff member and volunteer has the right to work in an environment free from harassment and will not tolerate harassment based on race, color, creed, religion national origin, sex, sexual preference or orientation, disability, age, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance. In addition, PHF carefully guards the students entrusted to its care and will not tolerate any abuse or harassment of any student by anyone at any time.

PHF does not tolerate sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (a) submission of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a staff member's employment or volunteer's placement; (b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by a staff member or volunteer is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the staff member or volunteer placement; or (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a staff member's or volunteer's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. If a staff member or volunteer feels harassed or offended by another staff member or volunteer, a supervisory or management person, or any other person whom s/he encounters in the course of employment or volunteer placement, whether the opposite sex or same sex, and does not want to deal with the problem directly, the volunteer should contact his/her appropriate supervisor.

General Harassment includes unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward a staff member or volunteer because of his/her status in relationship to a class defined above when such conduct (a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; (b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a staff member's or volunteer's work performance; (c) otherwise adversely affects the staff member's employment opportunities or volunteer placement; or (d) the employer knows or should know of the existence of harassment and fails to take timely and appropriate action. General Harassment does not include negative effects a staff member or volunteer may experience as a result of actions taken by a supervisor that are within the scope of the supervisor's responsibilities and would be considered reasonable and appropriate actions.

Any reasonable suspicion of any harassment towards a student will result in immediate separation of the volunteer from the school site, pending further investigation. To guarantee the safety of the students, PHF will take immediate steps to protect them while the situation is examined.

Zero Tolerance of Violence

PHS will not tolerate violence on or around its premises either by or against staff members, students, volunteers, or members of the public. Violence includes, but is not limited to, verbal or physical intimidation, contact, or threats. Any incidence of violence should be reported promptly to the appropriate supervisor. Reported incidents are subject to investigation or corrective action. Staff members and volunteers are expected to treat other human beings with respect and dignity. Any staff member or volunteer who does not comply with this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal and expulsion from any program.

If PHS staff or directors believe a volunteer to have been the cause of a harassing or violent situation, s/he will be required to leave PHS immediately. Transportation to the airport will be arranged. All program fees will be forfeited, and any charges resulting from changed travel plans will be the responsibility of the volunteer.

Political, Religious, and Civic Activities

PHF recognizes the right of every staff member and volunteer to participate in political, religious, and civic activity. However, all such activity must be conducted on the staff member's or volunteer's own time and without the use of PHF's name or materials unless specific approval has been granted by PHF's Board of Directors. As a general rule, all political, religious, and civic activities should be conducted outside of the person's volunteer assignment.

Thank you for reading these policies. It is the responsibility of each volunteer to be aware of these policies and to follow them. PHF is always open to suggestions and comments about the policies and its volunteer program. To receive further information, or to ask questions or make comments, please contact the PHF office, amy@peacehousefoundation.org, or by telephone, 952-465-0050.