



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

San Francisco VA Health Care System



Topics

- Steps to take to become a volunteer
- About the San Francisco VA Medical Center
- ICARE
- Introduction to Voluntary Service
- Voluntary Service Team
- 5 Basic Aspects of VA Voluntary Service
- Qualifications of a Volunteer
- Supervision

Topics Continued

- Dress Code
- Logging Hours
- Parking
- Map of SFVAMC campus
- Donations
- Gifts, Holidays and Volunteer Recognition
- You as a Member of the Medical Center Team

Step 1

Complete the following forms:

[Volunteer Application](#)

Email back forms: Tommy.Mendoza@va.gov

Or Mail to

Tom Mendoza (135)

VA Medical Center

4150 Clement Street, San Francisco, CA 94121

Step 2

Voluntary Service responds with a follow up email and submits application to prospective supervisors.

If potential volunteer doesn't receive a call back from assigned supervisor, please email Tom Mendoza at Tommy.Mendoza@va.gov

or call
415-750-2144

When placement is identified, volunteer and supervisor will sign off on application and position description.

Step 3

Immunization and TB testing

- Volunteer will need to have 2 TB tests completed
- Volunteers will need to bring in immunization record
- Volunteers will need to hand carry the Occupational Health Information Sheet

(Ask Voluntary Service Staff for this form)

Occupational Health will honor both TB tests and chest x-rays administered from other facilities in the last year as long as the volunteer can show proof.

After volunteers have been cleared from Occupational Health, please return the Occupational Health Clearance form to Voluntary Service office.

(TB tests need to be done annually)

Step 3 continued

Fingerprint/Background Check

Voluntary Service will provide volunteers with the signed fingerprint request form that needs to be hand-carried to the Personal Identification Verification (PIV) Office.

PIV office is located at
Building 4, 2nd floor, Room 2A-102.

Volunteers will need to complete form [OF306 Declaration of Federal Employment](#)

Step 4

Volunteer Orientation and Training

Volunteers will need to read and sign that they understand both the Volunteer Orientation Handbook

**Volunteers will need to complete the Talent Management System (TMS) enrollment form.
(Voluntary Service staff will provide this form.)**

Non Computer access TMS training modules

Step 5

Volunteers in Research or Volunteers with computer access

Volunteers must complete all the TMS courses assigned by the TMS Coordinator.

Once the volunteer completes the TMS training, the volunteer will notify their supervisor.

Supervisor will have to put in an EPAS request to their service ADPAC. **(TMS training is done annually)**

Step 6

Volunteer PIV Badge

- Volunteers will need to complete the PIV badge form
- Volunteers will need to bring **2 forms** of government issued ID i.e., Driver's License, Passport, Social Security Card, Birth Certificate to the PIV Office located in Build 4, 2nd Floor, Room 2A-103
- Volunteers will get their badge/s **ONLY** after all steps have been completed

Step 6 continued

In accordance with Medical Center policy, all volunteers must wear their identification badge at all times during VA related volunteer assignments.

Lost identification badges should be reported to the Voluntary Service Office immediately. A volunteer is required to return their PIV badge to Voluntary Service Office when their volunteer assignment is finished.

Volunteer Transportation Network and Golf Cart Drivers Only

Information you will need to provide:

- Current Driver's License
- Proof of current auto insurance
- Current DMV printout with
- no points on record for the last 5 years
[\(DMV record request form\)](#)

You will also need to:

- Have a driver physical with VA Occupational Health
- Complete driver training and Fleet Card training
- Take training tests at Voluntary Service

About the San Francisco VA Medical Center

- Established in 1934, the San Francisco VA Medical Center (SFVAMC) has a long history of conducting cutting edge research, establishing innovative medical programs, and providing compassionate care to Veterans. The Medical Center has 124 operating beds and a 120-bed Community Living Center. Primary and mental health care is provided at outpatient clinics in: Clearlake, Santa Rosa, Eureka, Ukiah, and San Bruno. There is a specialized homeless Veterans clinic in downtown San Francisco.
- SFVAMC has several National Centers of Excellence in the areas of Epilepsy Treatment; Cardiac Surgery; Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; HIV; and Renal Dialysis. It has many other nationally recognized programs including: the Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Center; the Hepatitis C Research and Education Center; the Mental Illness Research & Education Clinical Center; and the Western Pacemaker and AICD Surveillance Program. The Medical Center was selected to head the Southwest Regional Epilepsy Center of Excellence. This Center provides epilepsy care, supports the training and educational needs of the network, and manages a VA epilepsy registry. It has recently been designated as one of only five VA Centers of Excellence in Primary Care Education and selected as a Community Resource and Referral Center, one of only 12 locations designed to serve homeless and at-risk for homeless Veterans and their families.
- The Medical Center has been affiliated with the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), School of Medicine for more than 50 years. All physicians are jointly recruited by SFVAMC and UCSF School of Medicine. SFVAMC has 189.2 residency and fellow positions and 40 allied health professionals. Annually, more than 700 UCSF trainees from 36 programs rotate through the Medical Center.
- SFVAMC has the largest funded research program in the Veterans Health Administration with \$90.2 million in research expenditures. Areas of particular interest are: prostate cancer, aging, oncology, cardiovascular disease, Hepatitis C, breast cancer, PTSD, substance abuse, neurological diseases, health services research, and advanced medical imaging. The Medical Center is one of the few medical centers in the world equipped for studies using both whole-body magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and spectroscopy, and is the site of VA's National Center for the Imaging of Neurodegenerative Diseases.

ICARE Core Values

- **Integrity:** Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.
- **Commitment:** Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.
- **Advocacy:** Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
- **Respect:** Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.
- **Excellence:** Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

Introduction to Voluntary Service

- VA Volunteers bring to patients a part of the outside world, a feeling of belonging and not being isolated because of hospitalization. This friendly interest and personal contact are very important for the patients' wellbeing. Your presence and your service are key factors in maintaining a positive atmosphere of hope and cheer. The patients and staff of the San Francisco VA Medical Center thank you for your friendly interest and faithful service.
- What is VAVS? "VAVS" stands for the US Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service. VAVS is a plan for community participation in the VA's program for providing health care and treatment to our nation's veterans. Through this plan, community volunteer efforts are brought together and made a meaningful part of the program for patients in VA health care facilities. The Chief of Voluntary Service plans with management and staff for the appropriate placement of individuals, groups, gifts, and resources so as to meet hospital-wide patient needs.

Voluntary Service Team

1. Chief, Voluntary Service – Owetdia Dupree
2. Deputy Chief, Voluntary Service – Jim McDermott
3. Volunteer Respite/TMS/ADPAC Coordinator – Tony Le Roy
4. Voluntary Service Specialists – Tom Mendoza
5. Budget Technician – Arthur Dapo
6. Program Support Assistant - Susan Timmerman

- **VAVS Committee**

This committee will advise and actively assist the Chief, Voluntary Service in planning and operation of the VAVS program.

- Director of Public Affairs , Chairman
- Chief, Voluntary Service, Deputy Chairman
- Officially certified representatives of national organizations which are identified with the VAVS program on the national and Medical Center level.
- Appointed representatives of other organizations as deemed advisable by the chairman of the local committee.

Five basic aspects of VA Voluntary Service should be clearly understood if volunteer participation is to be successful:

- **VAVS is VA Directed**
The VA coordinates and integrates community volunteer participation in its medical care programs. VA Voluntary Service is responsible for volunteer participation of individuals and organizations from the community.
- **VAVS is Jointly Planned**
The VAVS plan has been developed in collaboration with the VA Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee. Representatives of our country's outstanding voluntary groups continually advise and counsel with the VA so as to plan and develop our program of community volunteer assistance.
- **VAVS Provides Supplemental Assistance**
Volunteers supplement the service of paid staff; VA volunteers do not replace paid staff. Emphasis in VAVS is on service; gifts and donations, while important, are incidental to service.
- **VAVS Allows Volunteers to Serve in Many Areas**
Volunteers play vital roles in most services within the Medical Center such as Administration, Customer Service, Rehabilitation Medicine, Recreation Therapy, Research, Nursing, Pharmacy, Food and Nutrition, Office of Information and Technology, Regional Counsel, Patient Transportation Drivers and a host of other services. Assignments range from direct patient interaction to a variety of administrative support functions.
- **VAVS Provides a Two-Fold Service**
Volunteers provide a direct service to this Medical Center by participating in programs designed for patient welfare under VA supervision. They provide an equally important indirect service to the Medical Center by acting as public relations ambassadors to our community. They inform their friends and neighbors about the Medical Center's medical care and treatment programs and the role of the community in assisting these programs.

Qualifications of a Volunteer

- Sincere interest in rendering service and helping Veterans
- Businesslike approach to work
- Uphold CORE Values
- Sense of humor
- Responsibility and dependability
- Ability to work well with others
- Tact, congeniality, patience, warmth and kindness
- Physical ability to perform assignment
- Sense of pride in volunteerism

Summer Student Volunteers

- **Age requirements**
The minimum age for volunteers is 14.
- Apply to volunteer before your summer break.
(March or April)
- Commit to at least 40 hours in the summer or 100 hours per year.
- Write an essay about your experience with a chance to win a scholarship for education.
- Come have fun and gain valuable experience for your future.

Supervision

- **Supervision**
All volunteers work under the supervision of a VA employee. You will be introduced to your supervisor when you begin your assignment. If you have any questions concerning the performance of your assignment, discuss them with Voluntary Service and your supervisor. Paid Employees cannot volunteer in the service/department where they work.
- **Position Description**
There is a printed Position Description for every volunteer assignment. Know your permitted duties and adhere to them. Both the Supervisor and the Volunteer sign the Position Description, so there is a clear understanding of the volunteers duties.
- **Change of Assignment**
Assignments are based on the volunteer's interests and Medical Center needs. If you are not satisfied with your assignment or would like an additional assignment, you need to discuss with the Voluntary Service Specialist.
- **Attendance**
Dependability is important for all volunteers. However, if you cannot report for your assignment, please call your supervisor directly. Your supervisor would like to know in advanced if you plan to be away or on vacation to reschedule your volunteer hours as needed.
- **Conclusion of Assignment**
At the conclusion of your volunteer assignment, please clear through the Voluntary Service office and complete the **clearance form** to ensure continuity of service to our veterans.

Dress code and Personal Hygiene

- Personal hygiene is imperative in a hospital environment. Volunteers are required to wear clean, conservative and appropriate clothing at all times. Some services may require volunteers to wear specific attire.
- Voluntary Service provides volunteer uniforms. Our Veterans appreciate volunteers and this is a way to identify you as a volunteer.
- Regular handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent transmission of germs. Also at most clinical areas, hand sanitizing stations are available if you are unable to immediately wash your hands.

Logging Volunteer Hours

- **Recording of time:**

Volunteers are required to record their hours. The volunteer kiosk is located at the Voluntary Service office in Building 7, 1st Floor, Room 120 (office hours are Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please sign in every day you are volunteering. If you are volunteering at one of our Community Based Outpatient Clinics check with the Administrative Officer (AO), who will inform you of the location of the volunteer kiosk.

- **Meals:**

Meal are provided to volunteers who work 4 hours or more.



Transportation

- Public transportation is available via Muni 38 bus. However, if you choose to drive you will need a parking decal that is issued by the VA Police. Volunteers interested in riding the [Bauer bus](#) will need to present their PIV badge.



Donations

- We welcome donations for the comfort and wellbeing of our Veterans. Monetary donations can be made personally or [electronically](#).
- For those who wish to make a non-monetary donation please contact the Voluntary Service Office Budget Technician Arthur Dapo. He can be reached directly at (415) 221-4810 ext. 22440 or arthur.dapo@va.gov .

Gifts, Holidays and Recognition

- Gifts – Volunteers cannot accept gifts of any kind. Many Veterans appreciate your help. If someone offers a gift, respectfully decline. Volunteers shall not handle other people's money during their volunteer assignment.
- Holidays – The majority of Employees are off during federal holidays. Only essential employees work during this time. Please check with your direct supervisor.
- Volunteer Recognition – Volunteers provide an immense amount of support to our Veterans and Medical Center. We can never properly thank you enough for your generosity. We also host a Volunteer Recognition Ceremony Luncheon annually and present awards for different benchmarks of volunteering.

YOU AS A MEMBER OF THE SAN FRANCISCO VA HEALTH CARE TEAM

You will gain the respect of your fellow team members by:

- Knowing and observing the hospital rules and regulations
- Being dependable and faithful in your assignments
- Reporting on time and staying until assignment is completed
- Follow the instructions of your immediate supervisor
- Display excellent service to everyone
- Avoiding involvement emotionally or personally in patient's problems
- Remembering that all personal information, which you learn from or about a patient is confidential.
- Conduct yourself with the dignity and assurance of a qualified member of the team performing a needed service in a pleasant and efficient manner

Identification Badges (PIV Badges)

- Volunteer ID badges will be issued **after** the volunteer has completed the checklist at the beginning of this Handbook. The Voluntary Service Staff will give you guidance on what you need to complete to become a Regularly Scheduled Volunteer.
- In accordance with medical center policy, all volunteers and staff members must wear their identification badge **at all times** during VA related volunteer assignments. Lost identification badges should be reported to the Voluntary Service Office immediately. A volunteer is required to return their PIV badge to Voluntary Service Office when the volunteer assignment is finished.

We know you have many choices of where to volunteer and we thank you for choosing the San Francisco VA Medical Center for your volunteer experience.

Through your volunteerism, you are making a difference in the lives of our treasured National Heroes!

Volunteer Handbook Test *(Circle best answer)*

1 of 2

- **When a placement is identified, who signs off on the application and position description?**
 - a. Security
 - b. Volunteer and their supervisor
 - c. Environmental Management
- **How often do you need to update your TB test?**
 - a. Once a year
 - b. Every 5 years
 - c. Every two years
- **How often do you need to update your Annual Training?**
 - a. every year
 - b. every 6 months
 - c. every 2 years
- **Where do you go for getting fingerprinted?**
 - a. Voluntary Service
 - b. Customer Service
 - c. Building 4, 2nd floor, room 2A-102
- **How often do you complete the Talent Management System (TMS)?**
 - a. Every 4 years
 - b. Every year
 - c. every 6 months
- **Which 2 forms of identification are needed for getting your PIV badge? (Circle all correct answers)**
 - a. Driver's License
 - b. Library Card
 - c. US Passport
 - d. Birth Certificate
- **When do you wear your PIV Badge?**
 - a. just at lunch
 - b. only special events
 - c. all times you are at your assignment
- **What year was the San Francisco VA Medical Center established?**
 - a. 1920
 - b. 1934
 - c. 1962
- **What is the name of the Chief of Voluntary Service?**
 - a. Owetdia Dupree
 - b. Dewitt Hawkins
 - c. Yosemite Sam
- **What does VAVS stand for?**
 - a. Veterans Access Visibility Standard
 - b. US Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service
 - c. Volunteers Are Volunteer Service
- **What does the Core Value "ICARE" stand for:**
 - a. Information, Computers And Responsible Equipment.
 - b. Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy , Respect , Excellence
 - c. Innovation, Counseling, Assessment, Resolution, Efficiency
- **What is not one of the Five basic aspects of VA Voluntary Service?**
 - a. Voluntary Service is self-directed
 - b. VAVS allows volunteers to serve in many areas
 - c. VAVS provides supplemental assistance
- **Where do you sign in to log in your hours?**
 - a. Voluntary Service
 - b. Service Assigned
 - c. Online

Volunteer Handbook Test (Circle all correct answers)

2 of 2

- **Where do you record your daily volunteer hours?**
 - a. PIV Office
 - b. Personnel Health
 - c. Voluntary Service Office
- **Whom do you direct inquiries regarding Voluntary Service programs?**
 - a. Customer Service staff
 - b. Voluntary Service Staff
 - c. Information Desk
- **Regular handwashing and use of sanitizing station is one of the best ways to prevent transmission of germs?**
 - True
 - False
- **When is a volunteer allowed to accept any form of donation?**
 - a. When on duty only
 - b. Anytime
 - c. Never
- **Where can a volunteer park a Personally Own Vehicle (POV) ?**
 - a. Patients and visitors parking area
 - b. anywhere there is a vacant space
 - c. Employee and volunteer parking areas
- **At the conclusion of your assignment, who do you let know?**
 - a. Direct supervisor
 - b. Voluntary Service
 - c. PIV Office (HRMS)

I have read all of the Volunteer Handbook in paper or online version and understand I need to review and complete annually.

(Bring printed copy to Voluntary Service Office).

Print Name

Signature

Date