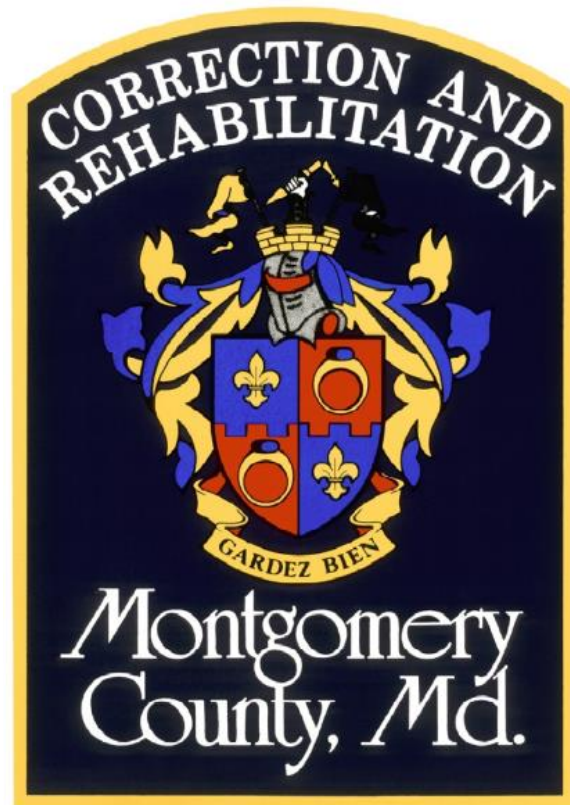


MONTGOMERY COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION AND REHABILITATION

DETENTION SERVICES DIVISION



MONTGOMERY COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Montgomery County Correctional Facility

The Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF) is responsible for the custody and care of male and female offenders who are either in a pre-trial status or serving sentences of up to 18 months. The facility is located in Boyds, MD. MCCF has a capacity of 1,028 incarcerated individuals. All incarcerated individuals are encouraged to participate in available programs and to utilize their time wisely and productively while at the facility. The incarcerated individual's eligibility and program interests are determined upon entry into the facility.

DEPARTMENT MISSION

The mission of the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (DOCR) is:

- To protect the public and citizens of Montgomery County by providing a wide range of constructive, professional correctional services for pretrial and convicted detainees.
- To ensure the safety and welfare of staff, visitors, and offenders by operating facilities and programs in a secure, humane environment which meets professional standards and constitutional requirements.
- To reduce the rate of reincarceration by providing offenders with the opportunity for self-improvement and the development of inner resources necessary to make a successful adjustment within the community.
- To meet the future correction and rehabilitation needs of the County by means of effective planning and responsible fiscal and resource management.



Montgomery County Correctional Facility
22880 Whelan Lane Boyds, MD 20841
Front Desk: (240) 773-9701
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cor

VOLUNTEERING

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with our incarcerated population. Volunteers are a valuable support for the DOCR as they work in conjunction with staff to address the rehabilitative and reentry needs of those in our care and custody. DOCR hosts a variety of programming in the areas of addiction, education, library service, life skills, mental health, parenting, religion, reentry, recreation, and workforce development. The need for volunteers fluctuates throughout the year as programming requests vary based on the interest of the incarcerated population. Volunteers are welcomed seven days a week during daytime and evening hours.

This MCCF Volunteer Handbook will provide guidance on the procedure of how to apply to become a volunteer, a brief overview of the policies and procedures specified for the volunteers, and guidelines related to conduct in a secure facility.

Our volunteers find the time of giving back to our population as extremely rewarding and satisfying. We hope that should you decide to become a volunteer, that you experience the same.

DONATIONS

MCCF welcomes material donations of items to help support and provide enrichment for our facility population. We have a specific list and registries of ongoing needs as well as specialty items to include in the winter holiday season gift bags.

Our ongoing needs include new, plain white socks, undershirts, and brief underwear for both men and women in various sizes. We also accept women's cloth sports bra without any metal wire.

Other Items Needed:

- Book donations of new or gently used paperback fiction, non-fiction, and faith enrichment books are also welcomed. All book donations **must be coordinated in advance**.
- New Word Searches – English and Spanish, Sudoku, Crossword Puzzles – English and Spanish, other activity books, no staples, paperback
- Stamps

Please contact Program Manager and Volunteer Coordinator, Kathy Guevara via email at Kathy.Guevara@montgomerycountymd.gov to learn about our current needs and next steps.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Individuals interested in volunteering at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility, should first complete a [Volunteer Interest Card](#) prior to completing an application. The Interest Card provides general areas of volunteer opportunities. After completing the Volunteer Interest Card, a staff member will reach out to further discuss the next steps.

Interested individuals must meet the following criteria to be considered eligible:

- Must be at least 21 years old.
- Complete a facility background process and have a clear criminal history of at least three (3) years.
- Possess positive attributes as a role model and transferable skills that an incarcerated individual can benefit from and should express a sincere commitment to aid the facility in any area of need.
- Commitment requirement is contingent on volunteer group size of each program; however, commitments range from weekly to monthly.
- After the first year of volunteering, an annual re-application and orientation is required.

The Volunteer Application link will be provided via email after confirming available volunteering opportunity.

Applicants should thoroughly read all questions and answer all questions as thoroughly and honestly as possible. While there may be some “negative” information in an applicant’s background, it may not automatically disqualify someone. However intentionally making a false statement or intentionally omitting information may be cause for disqualification.

The Volunteer Application has four (4) sections that must be completed:

- I. Applicant’s Biographical Data,
- II. Applicant’s Criminal and Legal History,
- III. Applicant’s Social History, and
- IV. Applicant’s Volunteer Interest and Abilities.

If an applicant is interested in joining a currently approved volunteer group, the individual must specify on the application under section “IV. Applicant’s Volunteer Interest and Abilities”.

A valid government issued photo ID should be uploaded with the application at the time of submission.

Applicants will undergo an extensive application process which includes screening, criminal history background check, an interview, and reference checks.

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION AND POLICIES

The policies that are implemented throughout the facility are for the safety and well-being of the incarcerated individual as well as of the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation staff, visitors, and volunteers. It is critical for all volunteers to be aware of facility expectations and processes to have a successful and safe visit.

Volunteer Orientation

All volunteers are required to attend the Volunteer Orientation that discusses policies and best practices while volunteering inside the correctional facility. Topics covered include facility-based programs, volunteer-based programs, understanding the population, manipulation, group facilitation and interaction, basic security considerations, attire, and communication with facility staff.

A representative from Custody and Security will be present during orientation to highlight any new or reoccurring concerns as well as address safety and security questions.

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Information

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003 was the first US federal law passed dealing with the sexual assault of prisoners. The law provides guidelines to detect, prevent, identify, and deter incidents of sexual abuse and sexual assault in detention facilities.

MCCF maintains a zero-tolerance policy relating to illegal sexual acts, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct in any facility or program. Volunteers are held to the same standard as facility staff and DOCR's zero-tolerance policy to protect the incarcerated population. Sexual harassment and misconduct are similarly not accepted from the incarcerated population. Volunteers should immediately report to the nearest Officer any information shared with them or directly experienced from a participant that relates to sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, or anything related.

Sexual misconduct is considered:

- A. Any sexual advance by another inmate or staff member
- B. Requests for sexual favors by another inmate or staff member
- C. Threats made by another inmate or staff member for refusing sexual advances
- D. Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature toward an inmate by another inmate or staff member
- E. Invasion of privacy beyond that reasonably necessary for safety and security
- F. Sexual harassment including demeaning and derogatory comments, jokes, or abusive, threatening or degrading sexual comments
- G. Acts/attempts to commit an act of sexual contact, intentional touching either directly or indirectly, with intent to abuse, humiliate harass degrade, arouse, or gratify the sexual desire of another
- H. Sexual assaults, sexual conduct, and sexual contact

Dress Code

Volunteers should dress in loose, conservative, business casual clothing. Tops must cover shoulders and midriff area. Jeans are permitted as long as they are not ripped or baggy.

The following is not permitted:

- Shorts or any clothing that is too short.
- Sandals, open-toe shoes, or crocs.
- Sleeveless dresses or sleeveless shirts
- Sweatpants
- Hoodies
- Spandex or anything too tight fitting
- Suggestive clothing
- Transparent or fishnet clothing
- Clothing that exposes undergarments
- Hats
- Anything with messaging, wording, or art that could impact the safety, security, and operational function of the facility.

The Officer at the Front Desk may deny entrance to a volunteer if they deem the volunteer is inappropriately dressed at the entrance.

Contraband

Contraband is any item, article, or material that is not authorized and may be harmful or present a threat to the security or general operations of the correctional facility.

Below is a list of items that may be considered contraband:

- Guns and firearms of any kind
- Ammunition
- Explosives
- Knives
- Tools
- Hazardous or poisonous chemicals and gases
- Unauthorized drugs and medications
- Medication that is not consumed or utilized in the appropriate manner/person
- Tobacco products
- Intoxicants including but not limited to liquor or alcoholic beverages
- Currency
- Stamps
- Stickers
- Gum
- Glass or Metal of any kind

ARRIVING AND ENTERING THE FACILITY

Volunteers should confirm start date and time with the Program Manager prior to reporting to the facility. Volunteers should always plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the program scheduled time. Arriving early permits the opportunity to move through the line at the front desk, should there be one, as well as to move about in the facility to the approved meeting space.

Volunteers should report only on the days and times that they are approved to volunteer. Reporting on a non-approved day will result in denied access. If a volunteer is late, it is possible that access may not be granted.

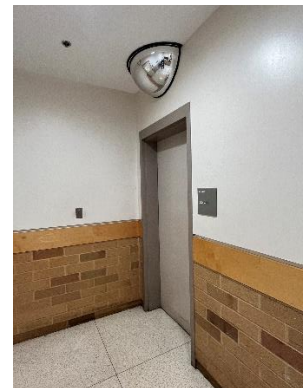
Volunteers should leave all personal belongings in their vehicle or in the lockers at the visitor station. Cell phones and smart watches are not allowed in the facility.

Volunteers will need to present a valid government issued photo ID to sign-in at the front desk (*see first photo below*). Volunteers will receive a Volunteer Badge. This badge must be visible and always worn above the waist and should be returned to the Front Desk when leaving the facility.

Volunteers will pick up the appropriate program list from the folder on the wall file (*see third photo below*) next to the Information Desk (*see second photo below*) on the right-hand side. If the group requires use of approved material, the volunteer must ask the Front Desk officer to open the Volunteer Closet (*see fourth photo below*) to retrieve the material.

Volunteers should report only to the assigned room and not any other area of the facility.

Upon completion of the program, volunteers should return the Program List back to the folder on the wall next to the Information Desk.



COMMUNICATION WITH FACILITY STAFF

Once you receive your volunteer assignment, you should continue communication with the Program Manager however you should also include any other DOCR staff if appropriate. For example, if you volunteer under a religious program, you should communicate with the Program Manager ***and*** the Chaplain.

Your commitment and consistent attendance help the incarcerated population, fellow volunteers as well as the functioning of the correctional facility. If you will be late or unable to make your hours for volunteering, it is important to notify the Correctional Facility as far in advance as possible. If you were able to find another approved DOCR volunteer to provide coverage, you must let the Program Manager know to approve facility entrance for that day.

If at any point, a volunteer becomes aware of someone they know to become incarcerated, they should let the Program Manager know as soon as possible.

Non-tradition Business Hours

If it is after the traditional business hours and you are unable to make an evening or weekend group at MCCF, you should notify the MCCF Shift Supervisor at (240) 773-9704 or the Front Desk Officer at (240) 773-9701.

Facility Closures

There may be instances in which the facility is closed due to operational reasons. You may call the Front Desk/Shift Supervisor to confirm if the facility is open for volunteers.

Inside the Facility

Upon entering the secure portion of the facility, Volunteers should greet, introduce themselves, and notify the Officer what they are there for to assist with the flow of operations and programming. Officers will not call for the group participants until the volunteer has checked in with them to confirm they are present and ready to receive the participants. Arriving early before the scheduled start time is important for this process.

Interaction with DOCR staff should be professional at all times. It is important to note that your conversations may be overheard by the incarcerated individuals. If ever a concerning issue presents itself between you and a DOCR staff member, please notify the Program Manager. You are also welcome to request to speak with the Shift Supervisor.

BASIC SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

Reporting to a secure facility comes with additional protocols. Below are some basic security considerations to keep in mind when volunteering with MCCF.

Volunteers Should:

- Use the restroom prior to entering the secure side of the facility.
- Respectfully and warmly greet both staff and the incarcerated population.
- Be professional, objective, and neutral in all interactions.
- Treat all communication with incarcerated individuals as confidential, but not privileged.
- Be patient as movement of individuals throughout the facility can take time.
- Always be observant and keep track of the time, attendance, and those incarcerated individuals under their supervision.
- Get an Officer's permission before allowing incarcerated individuals to leave the program area.
- Always follow an Officer's instructions.
- Notify the nearest Officer if an emergency arises including violation of institutional rules or suspicious activity.
- Be patient, supportive, and understanding that you may not see immediate changes, but can often have an impact further down the line.

Volunteers Should NOT

- Use or bring in: cell phone, food, drinks, gum, glass, metal, paperclips, binder clips, or staples.
- Share their home address, phone number, social media handles, date of birth, email address or any other personal details.
- Use profanity.
- Make promises to incarcerated individuals.
- Leave incarcerated individuals unsupervised.
- Report to the facility outside of their approved hours.
- Visit any incarcerated individual.
- Accept phone calls from incarcerated individuals or make phone calls on behalf of an incarcerated individual.
- Have any physical contact with any incarcerated individual.
- Provide or solicit personal favors, gifts, money, or extras for an incarcerated individual and/or their family members.
- Assume expectation of behavior, good or bad, or change behavior to occur.

If there are any questions or clarity required for any of the items listed above, the volunteer should contact the Program Manager.

GROUP FACILITATION

Volunteer -led programming is often held in a classroom setting (*see photo below*). Volunteers may move chairs and tables as needed but are required to return the room to the set up prior to them entering. All program rooms have cameras and intercoms that are connected to Central Control.



Classroom

To best use the allotted time, it is advised that volunteers start programming close to the scheduled start time and not wait for the majority of the incarcerated individuals on the program list to report.

Volunteer Expectations

Volunteers should keep track of all items and supplies brought into the space. If something is missing at the completion of programming, the volunteer should notify the Officer prior to releasing the group. Volunteers should notate attendance on the program list by circling the appropriate markers. Volunteers should set expectation and keep focus on the topic and purpose of the program. Volunteers should treat all incarcerated individuals equally, fairly and should not grant any special privilege. When the session is complete, the volunteer should walk to the door and notify the Officer that the incarcerated individuals are ready to return to their housing units.

If you are at all concerned about the emotional welfare or safety of an individual, please notify an Officer immediately. This is especially necessary if any expressed comments about suicide, other self-harm, or harm to others.

Incarcerated Individuals Expectations

Volunteer-led programming are self-referral programming options for our population. Incarcerated individuals are not expected to report however if they do, they be respectful. Active participation may look like not sharing out loud but instead solely listening. Incarcerated individuals are not permitted to take bathroom breaks, go to other groups, or go to and from their housing unit. If the volunteer observes behavior that is inappropriate (i.e. rowdiness, threats, touching, etc.), the volunteer should ask the Officer for assistance.

MANIPULATION

DOCR wants all volunteers that encounter an incarcerated individual to understand what manipulation may look like to be prepared if it presents itself. In a correctional facility setting, this may happen due to an incarcerated individual wanting personal gain, to showcase status to other incarcerated individuals or due to monotony. There may be instances in which an incarcerated individual may try to build a “you and me” situation. Some common methods to achieve manipulation may look like: touching, getting friendly, charming, sexual references, intimidation, flattery, crying, and helplessness to name a few.

If an incarcerated individual asks you to behave in a way that conflicts with DOCR policies and procedures but will benefit them, they are attempting to manipulate you. Volunteers should report any problems, suspicions, or feelings of uncomfortableness or pressure by an incarcerated individual to a Correctional Officer and the Program Manager.

Self-Awareness

If you are experiencing difficulties in your personal and/or professional areas and need to take a break from your volunteer commitment, please notify the Program Manager. If you notice a change in the way that you are feeling, whether good or bad, when you report to the facility it may be worth you checking-in with yourself or the Program Manager for further exploration and discussion.

SUPPORT AND EVALUATION

All volunteers must attend the Volunteer Orientation to become familiar with the requirements and expectations of a correctional setting. A tour of the facility you are assigned to will be provided with a staff member. Often, a new volunteer will be paired with an active and experienced volunteer for a shadowing phase. There will be observations by DOCR staff to ensure functionality is at its best. Should questionable behavior be observed, it may be addressed immediately with a follow-up phone call and email communication.

Volunteer Program Contact Information

For any questions that were not answered in the Volunteer Handbook, feel free to contact the Program Manager and Volunteer Coordinator:

Ms. Kathy Guevara

Office: (240) 773-9898

Kathy.Guevara@montgomerycountymd.gov