



**Department of Child, Family
and Adult Services**

**Volunteer & Student Intern
Program Handbook**

Office of Volunteer & Student Intern Services
9750 Business Park Drive, Suite 220, Sacramento, CA 95827
Phone: (916) 875-2027

Website: www.dcfas.saccounty.net

Sign me up!

Congratulations! Chances are that if you are reading this manual, you have already successfully completed the initial stage of the application and screening process. Following is a summary of this process:

Overview of the Application & Screening Process

Contacting the Office: An initial contact to the Office of Volunteer & Student Intern Services (VSI) starts the process. We will discuss your interests, skills, and goals in order to determine the volunteer or student intern placement that is right for you! Sometimes, this may include an initial meeting with the Department Volunteer Coordinator. Student interns may be referred to our office by a school internship coordinator.

Application Packet: The packet provides an opportunity for you to list your skills, interests, and educational background to help us determine the appropriate placement for you. The packet usually contains the following forms that must be completed and returned to the VSI office:

- ✓ **Application Form**
- ✓ **Confidentiality and Reporting Responsibilities Acknowledgement Form**
- ✓ **Department of Justice Criminal Life Scan Form** (see below)
- ✓ **HIPAA Policy Acknowledgement Form**
- ✓ **Information Technology Security Policy Form**
- ✓ **Vehicle Use Form** (completed if your placement involves driving on County business)
- ✓ **Volunteer or Student Intern Contract Form**

Eligibility Requirements: Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of our business, DCFAS requires all volunteers and student interns to be able to show proof of authorization to work in the United States.

Candidates who have accepted a conditional volunteer/internship position offer are required to submit fingerprints to the Department of Justice (DOJ and FBI) for purposes of criminal background check (exceptions may be made for volunteers under 18 years of age, or one-day, limited time volunteers with no client contact, or clinical volunteers with valid California medical license, such as registered nurses or physicians, who must present a current license or a photocopy of a current license for verification).

The background check may include personal and professional reference checks, professional license/registration verification, and driving history. Information obtained in the course of this background check will be considered by the appointing authority in the selection process.

The service is free of charge to long-term (three months or more commitment) volunteers and interns. The results of the background check are kept completely confidential. The Office of Volunteer and Student Intern Services follows all applicable laws and regulations concerning the review, retention and disposal of the criminal background checks. Any questions concerning this process should be directed to the Volunteer Services Office at (916) 875-2027.

Being a Volunteer/ Student Intern

Your Rights and Responsibilities

Your Rights...

- ✓ You have a right to receive initial and on-going training, supervision, and evaluation commensurate to your volunteer/student intern position.
- ✓ You have a right to a designated workspace to enable you to fulfill your duties as a volunteer or student intern.
- ✓ You have a right to review your personnel record as maintained by the Office of Volunteer and Student Intern Services.
- ✓ You have a right to receive work references for future employment or academic credit for work satisfactorily completed.
- ✓ You have a right to provide feedback, suggestions and recommendations to your supervisor and volunteer coordinators for increasing the effectiveness of the volunteer or student internship program.

Your Responsibilities...

- ✓ You are responsible to meet the time commitments that you have agreed upon with your volunteer/student intern supervisor. It is expected that you will report to work on time when scheduled and if unable to report, to contact your supervisor and provide adequate notice whenever possible.
- ✓ You are responsible to perform the tasks outlines in the job description to the best of your ability.
- ✓ You are responsible to maintain confidentiality and to report any illegal activity, suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of any child or adult to your supervisor and the proper authorities immediately.
- ✓ You are responsible to provide the supervisor or volunteer staff with information regarding problems, need for transfer, or other issues directly related to your placement.
- ✓ You are responsible to observe the same rules of conduct, ethical standards, and policies as paid staff. This includes treating your clients with dignity and respect, and to uphold all ethical, moral, and professional standards in the same way expected of paid staff.

Note that volunteers and student interns are prohibited from:

- ✘ **Sharing confidential information;**
- ✘ **Providing overnight accommodations to clients or their families;**
- ✘ **Making personal loans or money gifts or accepting such gifts from clients;**
- ✘ **Assisting clients with household moving;**
- ✘ **Providing political or religious advice; and**
- ✘ **Providing any medical, legal, or financial advice, unless this is specifically sanctioned by your volunteer/internship position.**

Confidentiality and Reporting Responsibility

Sacramento County DCFAS clients, including applicants for services, must be protected against identification, exploitation, or embarrassment. The Welfare & Institutions Code, Section 10850 supports, this policy of confidentiality. Names, addresses and all other identifying information concerning the circumstances of any individual for whom or about whom information is obtained is confidential and shall be safeguarded. This applies to all records, lists, papers, files, and communications pertaining to applicants and recipients of health or social services. No disclosure of any information obtained by a student or volunteer of the Department in the course of discharging his or her duties shall be made, directly or indirectly, other than in the administration of the given assignment. This includes acknowledgment that a person is receiving services.

Reporting Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation

DCFAS is the designated protective agency for children, seniors, and vulnerable adults. Volunteers and student interns of the Department are required to report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of any adult or child. Failure to report suspected child abuse is a misdemeanor punishable by six months in county jail and/or a fine not to exceed \$1,000. Failure to report suspected senior or dependent adult abuse is punishable by six months in county jail and/or a \$1,000 fine. A mandated reporter who willfully fails to report wherein the senior/dependent adult abuse results in death or great bodily injury is punishable by one year in jail and/or a \$5,000 fine.

***Reports on suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation may be made to:
Children's Protective Services (CPS) Emergency Response, 875-5437 (875-KIDS).***

***Reports on suspected elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation may be made to:
Adult Protective Services (APS) Emergency Response, 874-9377.***



You are a Partner!

As a volunteer or student intern you play a critical role as a second set of eyes and ears to the welfare and safety of our clients. You are in a position to observe anything unusual or out of the ordinary. We encourage you to share any concerns you may have about the clients you meet with your supervisor.

Volunteer/Student Intern Insurance – What is Covered?

In order to provide our volunteers and student interns with added protection and peace of mind our department participates in the Volunteers Insurance Program, a program of The CIMA Companies, Inc. Your volunteer packet should have contained a brochure outlining the provisions of this insurance program. Additional information concerning this insurance protection is outlined below, or you may contact _____ the _____ Volunteer _____ & Student Intern (VSI) Office for additional information.

Please note that in order to be covered under this insurance policy all volunteers and student interns **must be registered** with the VSI Office. Also, please note that the insurance protections apply only after your own insurance coverage has been exhausted.

Any incidents involving injury or any other accidents should be reported immediately to the VSI Office at (916) 875-2027, regardless of whether or not you plan to file a claim. The VSI Office can also provide you with a claim form to assist you in filing your insurance claim.

Automobile Liability Insurance

When a volunteer is requested to use a personal vehicle for County business the primary coverage for that vehicle is the volunteer's personal auto policy. The Department's insurance program is secondary to your coverage. This secondary insurance provides protection for bodily injury or property damage claims arising out of your activities with a combined single limit up to \$500,000.

This added protection does not apply to any damage to your vehicle. Additional provisions apply. Contact the VSI Office for additional information.

Personal Liability

This policy provides protections if you are liable for bodily injury or property damage arising out of the performance of your duties. Registered volunteers and student interns are provided with excess volunteer liability insurance at a limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence. Additional provisions apply. Contact the VSI Office for additional information.

Excess Medical

County volunteers and student interns are not covered by the County's Worker's Compensation Program. The Department retains insurance coverage that will pay up to \$25,000 for medical treatment, hospitalization, and licensed nursing care required as the result of a covered accident. This coverage is in excess of Medicare, Medicaid, and any other insurance that you have in place. Initial medical expenses must be incurred within 60 days of the accident. Expenses are then covered for a one-year period following the accident. Other provisions apply. Contact the VSI Office for additional information.

Reporting On-The-Job Injuries?

Volunteers and student interns are not covered by the County's Worker's Compensation Program. For information concerning insurance protection for any injury you may suffer please refer to the discussion on insurance which was covered on page 6. Also, please become familiar with our health and safety policies as discussed to reduce the risks of injury while on your work assignment.

In the event that you become injured while on your work assignment, please follow these steps:

1. Report the incident to your supervisor immediately.
2. Contact the VSI Office immediately at 875-2027. A "Volunteer Injury/Accident Report" will be provided to you. Return this form to the VSI Office as soon as possible and retain a copy for your records.
3. Supervisor completes the "Supervisor's Report of Volunteer Injury/Accident" and send a copy to the VSI Office.
4. The VSI Office will provide the volunteer/student intern with a "Proof of Loss" form for insurance claims.
5. Return the completed "Proof of Loss" form to the VSI Office immediately. Attachments, such as your medical provider's bill statements, may be sent as a separate attachment after medical services are rendered. Note that medical services must be rendered within 60 days of the accident.
6. The VSI Office will inform the Office of Risk Management and forward the signed insurance claim for processing.

Workplace Violence Incident Reports

If you experience any violent act or a threat of violence occurs in the workplace (i.e., verbal/physical abuse, bomb threat, robbery, property damage, or breach of security systems) please report this to your supervisor immediately.



Volunteer/Student Intern Policies

General Department Policies

The Department's Volunteer Services Program strives to involve students and volunteers whenever possible to strengthen the delivery of services. The program offers an opportunity for reinforcing and reflecting the goals of the Department and to bring about a greater public understanding of the Department and its goals.

The following are guiding principles for the Department's Volunteer/Student Intern Program:

- DCFAS Volunteer/Student Intern Services will be used to enhance and extend service delivery but will not displace or supplant paid staff.
- Clients receiving volunteer services will be treated with dignity and respect.
- The DCFAS Volunteer/Student Intern Services Program respects and affirms the differences among volunteers/student interns, clients, staff, and any individual with special disability needs as they interact within our program.
- The Volunteer/Student Intern Services Program will be administered with the consideration that volunteers/student interns play an integral role in service delivery to DCFAS clients and, as such, must represent our programs in the most ethical manner possible.
- Volunteers will closely adhere to all laws pertaining to confidentiality, client's right to privacy, and client's right to accept or refuse help offered by volunteers.
- Volunteer job assignments will be designed with mutual benefit to both Sacramento County and the volunteer ensuring that the work performed meets the needs of both.
- Volunteers must complete only that work which is specifically assigned by an authorized representative of the County.

VISION:

The Department of Child, Family and Adult Services Volunteer/Student Intern Service Program will maintain and foster volunteerism as a vital link between the Department of Child, Family and Adult Services (DCFAS) and the Sacramento Community.



Volunteer/Student Intern Attendance Policy

DCFAS appreciates and values volunteers and students for the time and services they offer to the Department. To make best use of your time it is important for DHHS staff to know when to expect you. While DCFAS is committed to work with the schedule you offer, there are certain expectations you must follow to ensure a positive experience on both sides. These expectations are similarly conferred upon our department employees.

Schedule:

DCFAS is flexible in setting up a schedule that works for you and the office needing your service. Be realistic about your schedule to ensure consistency in attendance.

Time off:

Requests should be made ahead of time for vacation, job interview, medical appointments, or school related time-off. DCFAS staff is committed to work around reasonable time off request. Please indicate dates or length of time to be off and anticipated date of return with the request.

Sick leave:

If you are sick on the day you are scheduled to work you must call in to your supervisor. Make sure you keep the contact number of your supervisor or his/her delegated staff.

Change of schedule:

If there is a conflict that warrants a change on your regular schedule you must make a request and discuss the new schedule with your supervisor. Once approved you are expected to follow the new schedule.

Resignation/Termination:

If you should become unavailable to continue your volunteer position or internship due to employment or school, or if you do not plan to return to your volunteer/internship position, you must notify the VSI Office at (916) 875-2027 and the supervisor you report to. Advance notice will be greatly appreciated.

Volunteers and student interns serve at the will of the department and may be dismissed at any time if the above policies are not followed.

We strongly encourage volunteers/interns to contact the VSI Office to discuss other opportunities in our department if your resignation is a result of a desire for other experiences. The VSI Office will assist you in exploring other possibilities within the department.

Volunteers/Students Who Drive on County Business

All volunteers and student interns who drive either a County vehicle or their personal vehicle during the course of their assignment to transport clients or related County business as instructed are required to be in possession of a valid California driver's license, proof of vehicle insurance, and an official driving record from the Department of Motor Vehicles. The use of privately owned motorcycles and other two or three wheeled motor-driven vehicles on the volunteer assignment is strictly prohibited.

Personal Car Use

- When a volunteer uses a vehicle on County business the primary coverage for that vehicle is the volunteer's personal auto policy. The County's insurance program is secondary to the Department's volunteer services program insurance and the personal auto policy (additional information on insurance on page 6). The volunteer insurance policy only comes into force when the primary auto policy reaches its stated limits.
- If you have an accident while driving your own vehicle on County business promptly notify your supervisor and of course your own insurance company. Our Form DPM-11, Driver's Report of Accident, is not required but it would give you a good idea of what your insurance company would need to know.

County Vehicle Use

Volunteer positions where home visits are frequently necessary will generally have access to a County vehicle. The following are some guidelines for the proper use of County vehicles:

- When you are driving a County vehicle drivers are on public display. Any discourtesy or violation reflects not just on the driver but also on the County.
- If a violation results in a citation it is the driver's responsibility. This includes citations for parking violations as well.
- County vehicles are used for County business only. County vehicles may not be used to complete personal business or errands. Do not transport any passengers or items such as furniture other than those designated by your supervisor.
- When checking out a vehicle from the motor pool, check its mechanical condition before leaving the lot. Check the breaks, horn, mirrors, turn signals, fuel, and tires. If there is a chance of rain or poor visibility check wipers and lights. Report anything not working properly to the motor pool dispatcher, and ask for another vehicle.
- Before returning the County vehicle remove all personal items and trash from the vehicle and report any safety/maintenance problems to the motor pool dispatcher.

Cell Phones & Your Safety:

When driving during your volunteer/student intern assignments, you should always carry a cellular phone in case of emergencies. Discuss the availability of a cell phone with your volunteer/intern supervisor. *You should always pull over to the side of the road and stop the vehicle before using your cell phone.*

Standards of Conduct, Grievance and Dismissal Policy

The following discussion covers DCFAS policies concerning standards of conduct, disputes between the volunteer or student intern and his or her immediate supervisor, and disciplinary procedures.

Standards of Conduct

As a volunteer or student intern with DCFAS you have a responsibility to the department, your fellow volunteers, and to your clients to adhere to certain rules of behavior and conduct. The purpose of these rules is not to restrict your rights but rather to be certain that you understand what is expected and necessary. These expectations are similarly conferred upon our department employees.

Volunteers and student interns serve at the will of the department and may be dismissed at any time. Immediate dismissal, without warning, may also be warranted if the volunteer or student intern commits a serious violation. Some of the more obvious unacceptable activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Being intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance while volunteering; the use, possession, or sale of controlled substances in any quantity while on agency premises, except medications prescribed by a physician that do not impair volunteer performance;
- Willful violation of security or safety rules or failure to observe safety rules or practices; failure to wear safety equipment, use seat belts, texting while driving, or tampering with safety equipment;
- Violation of confidentiality or removal of client files from the building without supervisor authorization;
- Insubordination or refusing to obey instructions properly issued by your supervisor;
- Theft of County property or the property of fellow volunteers, clients or staff, or use of County equipment or property for personal reasons or for profit;
- Willful falsification or misrepresentation of your volunteer/student intern application or altering DCFAS records or other documents;
- Sexual harassment, discrimination, or other inappropriate behavior against clients, other volunteers/interns, or department staff;
- Threatening, intimidating, or coercing behavior, or making threats of violence toward anyone on DCFAS premises or when representing DCFAS, or engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence;
- Failure to possess or keep in effect any license, certificate, or other similar requirement specified in the job assignment; and
- Any failure of good behavior either during or outside of duty hours that is of such a nature that it causes discredit to the Department or to his/her assignment.

Disciplinary Actions

Unacceptable behavior which does not lead to immediate dismissal may be dealt with in one or more of the following ways:

- Written Warning
- Disciplinary Suspension
- Dismissal

Written Warning

Written warnings include the reason(s) for the warning and any supporting evidence. Volunteers and student interns will have an opportunity to defend his or her actions and write a rebuttal: Send a copy of the written warning and any rebuttal to the VSI Office.

Disciplinary Suspension and Dismissal

Volunteers or student interns who do not adhere to the rules of the department or who fail to satisfactorily perform their duties are subject to disciplinary suspension or dismissal. No volunteer or student intern will be terminated until he or she has had the opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with supervisory staff (McCurdy, 1990).

Volunteers may be dismissed without warning at any time. DCFAS has the right to request a volunteer or student intern to leave immediately.

Grievance Procedure

The purpose of the volunteer grievance procedure is to provide a mechanism by which issues, problems and conflicts between the volunteer and the department can be considered. The grievance procedure is as follows:

1. Discuss the complaint with your immediate supervisor. Every effort should be made to resolve the issue at this level.
2. If not resolved at this level the supervisor may confer with his or her Program Manager.
3. If results are unsatisfactory contact the VSI Office (or liaison, if appropriate.)

Termination of Service

Supervisors are responsible to notify the VSI Office when a volunteer or student intern has ended his or her assignment prior to the agreed upon date as specified in the Volunteer/Student Intern Contract.

Volunteers and student interns must turn in their identification cards and building key card access badges when they terminate their assignment.

Receipt & Acknowledgement of the DCFAS Volunteer/Student Intern Services Program Handbook Service Contract & Code of Ethics

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of the Code of Ethics and DCFAS Volunteer/Student Intern Program Handbook.

Code of Ethics

- As a volunteer/student intern I realize that I am subject to a code of ethics similar to that which binds the professionals in the field in which I work. I, like them, assume responsibilities and expect to account for what I do in terms of what I am expected to do.
- I interpret “volunteer/student intern” to mean that I have agreed to work without compensation of money and having been accepted as a participant in this program. I expect to do my work according to the same high standards as paid staff does. I will finish the tasks assigned to me to the best of my abilities.
- I expect to bring to my work an attitude of open mindedness and to have a willingness to be trained for my volunteer tasks. I believe that I have an obligation to my work, to those who direct it, to my colleagues, to those for whom it is done, and to the public.
- In accepting this volunteer/student intern Code of Ethics, I accept my role as a volunteer/student intern to contribute towards the improvement of the human condition of the people we serve in the Department of Child, Family and Adult Services.

Receipt of Handbook

Please note this handbook serves as a guide, it is not the final work in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention.

- I have received and read a copy of the DCFAS Volunteer/Student Intern Program Handbook. I understand that the policies, rules, and benefits described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of DCFAS at any time.
- I understand that I am not an employee of the County of Sacramento and I am not entitled to any compensation or benefits related to the services I provide.
- I further understand that my volunteering is terminable at will, either by myself or DCFAS, regardless of the length of my volunteering.
- I am aware that during the course of my volunteering confidential information will be made available to me. I understand that this information is critical to DCFAS and must not be disseminated within or outside of DCFAS premises.
- I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements and have received a copy of the DCFAS Volunteer/Student Intern Program Handbook.

Volunteer/Student Intern Signature

Date



Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

Phil Serna	1st District
Patrick Kennedy	2nd District
Susan Peters	3rd District
Sue Frost	4th District
Don Nottoli	5th District

County Executive

Navdeep S. Gill

DCFAS Director

Michelle Callejas

Office of Volunteer and Student Internship Services

Tonja Edelman, MSW, Department Coordinator