



Louisiana Children's Museum

Volunteer Program

2019 Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. LCM Mission Statement
2. Why a Children's Museum?
3. Volunteer Program
4. LCM Volunteer Staff Policies
5. Communication
6. Customer Service
7. Accident Policy

FORMS to be signed and returned:

Acknowledgement of LCM's Volunteer Handbook

Acknowledgement of Drug Free Workplace

Parental Consent/Emergency Information Sheet

1. All about the Children's Museum

Vision

Louisiana Children's Museum envisions a world where communities value children, strengthen and support families, and improve life outcomes by ensuring access to safe, innovative, learning, and play experiences.

Mission

Louisiana Children's Museum contributes to the region's future prosperity by engaging children's potential through play, shared explorations, and in dialogue with adults.

2. Why a Children's Museum?

You won't find any echoing hallways, glass cases, grumpy guards, or "DON'T TOUCH" signs in this museum! Instead you'll find hands on opportunities to engage and explore the way YOU want to explore. **Learning through play is what a children's museum is all about.**

It's a dynamic environment where families and school groups learn about the arts, sciences, humanities, and the environment—without even knowing it. It cultivates the curious mind, creates life-long learners, and *that* is what education is all about!

3. Volunteer Program

The Louisiana Children's Museum's Volunteer Program is for the young adults of the New Orleans metropolitan area. THE PROGRAM'S GOAL IS TO ASSIST IN THE FULFILLMENT OF THE MUSEUM'S MISSION.

A. Program Objectives

- To provide volunteers with an opportunity to give back to the community
- To provide volunteers with an educational and professional experience
- To enhance the visitor's experience by having additional Museum representatives

B. LCM Volunteer Staff Requirements

- You must be at least 15 years old or in your second semester or your freshman year of high school.
- Commit to volunteering a *minimum of 40 hours*
- **Enjoy working with children**
- Ability to follow instructions, but also to think independently
- Good judgment and level-headedness

C. LCM Volunteer Staff Expectations

- Be respectful
(Ex. Show all children, guardians, directors, fellow volunteers, etc. with kindness)
- Be responsible
(Ex. Arrive at the museum on time and ready for your shift)
- Be prepared
(Ex. Come dressed in your uniform and looking your best)
- Be positive
(Ex. Be ready to do tasks that you might not have expected to do! Museum work comes with unexpected but exciting challenges!)

4. LCM Volunteer Staff Policies

A. Uniform

The volunteer uniform is a plain white, black, or red t-shirt (no writing on the shirt), pants, and closed toed shoes. Part of being prepared, is being dressed in uniform.

To create a professional environment we ask you do not wear jeans, shorts, leggings, tank tops, flip flops, sandals, clogs or Crocs. The Museum will provide nametags and aprons for you to wear to complete your uniform. Nametags and aprons are to be left at the Museum.

B. Sign-In/Service Hours

- One aspect of being responsible is signing-in and out with your name in the Summer Volunteer Binder on the Volunteer desk outside of the employee break room. You will need to sign in and sign out to help us keep an accurate record of your service hours.

- If you do not sign in or out we may not have an accurate record of your service.
- **If your school requires that you use their specific form or letter, please make that available to the Volunteer Manager (volunteer@lcm.org) at least two weeks before it is due to the organization.**

C. Punctuality

Punctual volunteers are both **responsible** and **respectful**. Please arrive 5-10 minutes before your shift is scheduled to start.

- Please contact the camp directors as soon as possible if you are going to be late or can no longer make a shift. This is **respectful** of their time and lets them know you are safe and/or on the way.
- An official notice of tardiness and unexcused absences will be documented and included in your volunteer staff file. 3 documented unexcused tardys or absences will lead to an automatic dismissal from the volunteer program.

D. Automatic Dismissal

The following offenses will result in an AUTOMATIC DISMISSAL. There will be no second chances.

1. Theft, dishonesty, or any criminal or intentional action that damages any Museum property
2. **Three write ups:** unexcused tardiness and/or absences or any misbehavior that does not meet expectations
3. Drugs or alcohol:
 - Possessing, consuming or distributing a controlled substance on the premises of the Museum
 - Reporting to work under the influence
 - The use of tobacco products during work hours on Museum property
4. Possession of firearms
5. Sexual harassment or other form of harassment or sexual abuse, such as harassment based on race, religion, national origin, age or physical condition

E. Strikable Offenses

The following actions will be written up in a volunteer's permanent file. Three violations will result in being dismissed from the Volunteer Program.

- Any unexpected tardiness and/or absences (three is dismissal)
- Insubordination, failure or refusal to perform work as instructed
- Anything that may distract the guests of LCM from an enjoyable experience or diminishes the image of the Louisiana Children's Museum in the eyes of the public. An example is inappropriate language or behavior.

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO USE OF CELL PHONES DURING YOUR VOLUNTEER SHIFT.

Use of Cell Phone other than while on lunch break is grounds for dismissal. For those volunteers 18 or younger, your cell phone will be immediately taken from you and returned at the end of your shift. If there is an emergency and you need to be contacted during your shift, parents call the front desk at 504-523-1357 and the Museum will deliver a message. Alert your supervisor that you need to step away to address the issue.

F. Safety

- Be **prepared** for emergencies and accidents. Safe play is our number one goal! As a volunteer, please encourage safe, cooperative play. **If an injury occurs, report the injury to an LCM staff member.**
- In the event of a fire alarm, please leave the building calmly and quietly via the nearest exit with the visitors. Remain there until the "All Clear" is given.

G. Courtesy

- **Be respectful** every time you speak with a visitor as LCM volunteer staff, you are representing yourself and the Museum.
- If a visitor approaches you with a complaint of any kind, promptly find a supervisor or staff member to handle the situation. **It is not your responsibility to handle such situations.** But remain respectful even if the visitor isn't.

I. Breaks and Break Room

- Every volunteer who works up to 8 hours will be scheduled a half-hour lunch.
- **The half-hour lunch will be taken in the break room only, NOT in the first floor public snack area and NOT offsite. Volunteers are not allowed to leave the museum for lunch or breaks.**
- If you are scheduled a break, then it will be 15 minutes.
- Your lunch and break are NOT a time to wander around the Museum to chat with your friends. That behavior does not set a positive, professional image of the Museum.
- Lockers are provided for you in the break room to leave coats, bags, lunches, etc., in during your shift. If extra room is needed, you may use the Operations Director's office.
- **You are encouraged to leave your cell phone in your locker because you may not use it on the floor. If you use it during a shift we may take it from you until the end of your shift.**
- For your convenience, a refrigerator, microwave, and soda machine are also available in the break room. Other vending machines with juice, water and snacks are in the snack area of the museum.
- When using the break room, please be respectful of others and leave those areas the way you found them (spills cleaned up, no dirty dishes in the sink, empty soda cans disposed of properly).

5. Communication with children

During your time in this museum, you will be interacting with children on a regular basis. Try to think of POSITIVE ways to talk to children that will help and encourage them. When in doubt, think about how you would want someone to speak to you.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Using phrases like "Please walk" instead of "Don't run" are easy ways to effectively communicate with our visitors without making them feel like we are punishing them. Another good example of this is when there is a long line of children waiting to shop in the Lil' Winn-Dixie, you can say something like "It is so nice to see how patiently you are all waiting for your turn that makes things go much faster." This gets across our expectations for the appropriate behavior without sounding harsh.

INSTEAD OF ...

YOU CAN SAY...

Don't run!

Please walk!

Get with your chaperone right now!

Do you need help finding your chaperone?

Why don't you watch where you're going?

Please be careful of where you're headed.

The bathroom's around the corner.

Here, I'll show you where the bathrooms are.

Get off that right now!

Let's let someone else have a turn.

What part of NO don't you get?!

Did you have a question about the rules?

You can't do anything right!

Try this and see what happens then!

So what if you think it's not fair?

We have rules so we can all play safely.

Shut up now or we're leaving!

I'll wait until everyone's listening.

6. Customer Service

How can you create a **positive** customer service?

This museum exists for our visitors. It is up to us to ensure that our visitors have the best experience possible in whatever time they have here.

- **Smile!**
- Simple courteousness
- Take the initiative.
- If the crowd and time permit, please escort a visitor to the restrooms.
- Engage the visitors by asking questions that look for comparisons, measurement, responses, solutions, and specifics.
- Be mindful.
- Get in the habit of using positive reinforcements.
- Refrain from yelling.

7. Incident/Accident Policy

As a volunteer, the **VERY FIRST** thing you do in the case of an accident is find a Museum staff member. The floor or administrative staff will take care of the injured party. If the injured party is a camper, find the Camp Director.

1. The first responsibility is to care for the injured party.
2. The Museum staff and supervisor attend to the injured party.
3. NEVER apologize for an incident unless YOU directly caused the incident (You knocked a child down).
4. NEVER go to the hospital with the injured. Consult a Supervisor or Director. Remember, every child must be accompanied by an adult. No child should be completely alone: a drop-off visitor, unless the child is in an LCM Camp.
5. NEVER say anything about paying the hospital bill.
6. Do not let the injured party go all the way down stairs to get help. (If the incident is on the second floor, it is better to get the child to a birthday room or some other quiet place.) Or take the elevator!
7. Do not let a group (visitors or staff) gather around the injured party.
8. Please remember, our first responsibility is to get the necessary help for the injured party!

Some Last Thoughts Before Your First Day! (Summer Camp Counselors, and Volunteers assisting with Museum Exploration Time and Before/After Camp)

- ❑ **Make sure campers always have a guardian.**
- ❑ Know the rules and use positive language and reinforcement to help campers follow the rules.
- ❑ Time-outs, warnings and other disciplinary techniques are for the Camp Directors to use. If you are having a problem with a particular camper, talk to the Camp Director.
- ❑ Avoid yelling and do not use any kind of physical force. You may restrain a child from harming themselves or others, but you must report such action to the camp director immediately.
- ❑ **Make sure you aren't alone with a camper. Always stay in a group and when going to the restroom, make sure there are 2 counselors.**
- ❑ **Campers can't sit on your lap and do not pick them up.**
- ❑ During activities engage with campers and/or participate in the activity. Campers enjoy and appreciate you paying attention to them.
- ❑ Always speak positively about campers or other volunteers.
- ❑ Make sure you are not sitting or resting if you are needed to help out, don't wait to be asked.
- ❑ **Campers are not allowed to play in museum except at designated Museum Exploration time. Before and After Care is in the Theatre, until the Museum opens or closes.**
- ❑ Encourage campers to make friends and to treat everyone with respect and courtesy. Demonstrating these qualities is important.

Thanks!

Our staff is looking forward to having you volunteer; we're depending on you!

We hope you enjoy your time with us as much as we enjoy having you here

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE LAST THREE FORMS BELOW BEFORE YOUR FIRST DAY VOLUNTEERING.

Acknowledgement of LCM's Volunteer Handbook

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide. **The provisions of this Handbook may be changed at any time at the discretion of the Louisiana Children's Museum.** No changes in policy or rule will be made without due consideration of the mutual advantages, disadvantages, and responsibilities such changes have on you as a volunteer and on the Louisiana Children's Museum.

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of the Louisiana Children's Museum Volunteer Handbook.

1. I have received and read a copy of Louisiana Children's Museum Volunteer Handbook. I understand that the policies and rules described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Louisiana Children's Museum at any time.
2. I understand that, should the content of this Handbook be changed in any way, Louisiana Children's Museum may require additional signature from me to indicate that I am aware of and understand any new policies.
3. I understand that, if I do not fulfill my commitment of 50 volunteer hours to the Louisiana Children's Museum, I will not receive a record of service hours. Unless arranged with the Volunteer Coordinator or Supervisor at the time I signed on as a volunteer.
4. I affirm that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements, that I have received a copy of the Louisiana Children's Museum Volunteer Handbook, and that I will comply to the best of my ability with the Handbook's provisions.

Volunteer's printed name

Volunteer's signature

Parent's signature

Date

Volunteer Commitment/Parental Consent Form

Date: _____
 Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Phone: _____

I, _____, agree to
 (volunteer name)
 volunteer at least 50 hours this school year (including summer). My parents/guardians are aware of my commitment to the Louisiana Children’s Museum, and I have made all the necessary transportation arrangements.

VOLUNTEER: Print Name: _____
 Signature: _____
 PARENT: Print Name: _____
 Signature: _____

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE CONTACT:

Name	Relationship	Phone Number(s)
Name	Relationship	Phone Number(s)
Doctor’s Name	Hospital	Phone Number(s)
Allergies/Medical Problems Special Instructions?	Do you carry medications with you? If so, where do you keep it/them?	