



# Volunteer Handbook

202 East Bagley Road  
Berea, Ohio 44017



Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for joining the Berea Children's Home and Family Services family as a volunteer! You are truly a valued part of our organization, and we appreciate everything that you will be doing to help us fulfill our mission of providing hope to children and families.

We are very proud of the work accomplished at Berea Children's Home and Family Services daily. Since 1864, we have firmly believed that all children and families have hopes and dreams that will one day become the reality of their future. Through rain or shine, war or peace, we remain committed to providing services to the most hurting, vulnerable, and indigent children and families throughout Northeast Ohio. Due to the services that you will perform at Berea Children's Home and Family Services, we will have the ability to work to capacity fulfilling our mission.

Our organization will provide you with the very best training and support to make your volunteer experience meaningful for you and to help us support our mission of helping others. I'm delighted that you have the enthusiasm and passion to donate your time and efforts in this endeavor.

This Volunteer Handbook is designed to provide an overview of Berea Children's Home and Family Services, the importance of and standards for our Volunteer Program and our commitment to our volunteers. You will always have at least two (2) points of contact for questions and feedback: your direct supervisor and me. We believe in the Open Door Policy, so please do not hesitate to contact us with questions, comments or suggestions.

Again, thank you for helping improve the lives of our children, whether directly or indirectly, and working to share responsibility in giving them a brighter future. We are confident that you will be a valuable asset to our team, and that your experience is everything that you expect it would be. We wish you the best in all of your endeavors!

Sincerely,

Debbie Mueller, SPHR  
*Assistant Director of Human Resources*  
440.260.8337  
[DMueller@bchfs.org](mailto:DMueller@bchfs.org)

# OVERVIEW: BEREA CHILDREN'S HOME AND FAMILY SERVICES

## OUR MISSION

We equip and empower children and families to reach their potential and become contributing members of a strong community.

## OUR VISION

Strong communities where future generations are educated, self-reliant, and fulfilled.

## OUR VALUES

*Hope* provides the foundation for resiliency to face challenges, the motivation to seek positive change, and the belief in a better life.

*Faith* provides strength to endure difficulties and seize opportunities, and the knowledge that there is more to life than ourselves.

*Community* provides a powerful synergy created from collaboration that results in a healthy, nurturing environment for children, families, and adults.

*Family* provides the foundation for the development of healthy children and should be nurtured and supported in their communities and neighborhoods.

*Personal Responsibility* is accepting that the choices you make shape your future.

*Education* provides the foundation for opportunities, achievement, and success.

*Stewardship* provides the mandate to exercise care and competence in managing our resources as beneficiaries of the public trust and the generosity of individuals and philanthropic organizations.

## ADMINISTRATION

The Berea Children's Home and Family Services' Board of Trustees is the governing body in covenant relationship with the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church. Berea Children's Home and Family Services' President and CEO is responsible for the administration of all aspects of Berea Children's Home and Family Services' operations.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BEREA CHILDREN'S HOME AND FAMILY SERVICES

Founded in 1864 as the German Methodist Orphan Asylum, Berea Children's Home and Family Services was originally dedicated to providing shelter for Civil War orphans and caring for neglected, dependent or abandoned children. In 1960, after a study with the Child Welfare League of America, the agency shifted its focus to serving children and youth needing specialized therapeutic programs.

Today, Berea Children's Home and Family Services has emerged as a diverse organization, highly regarded for the ability to be responsive to the emerging and ever-changing needs of the communities we serve. Through a continuum of services we strive to respond to the individual mental health and developmental needs of the community's most vulnerable children and their families. Our innovative,

comprehensive programming strives to preserve family relationships, help make children and families more self-sufficient and reduce clients' need for future social service or court interventions. We operate under the following four major groups of services: Early Childhood Services, Home and Community Support Services, Out of Home Care Services and Child Care and Education.

We are a private, not-for-profit, charitable organization governed by a board of directors in covenant relationship with the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church. Annually we serve over 10,000 children and families in 22 counties throughout the State of Ohio. Through innovative leadership and superior services, we make the commitment to equip and empower children and families to reach their potential and become contributing members of a strong community.

## FUNDING

90% of our funding comes from fees for services, from sources such as Children and Family Services, Court Systems, Department of Mental Health, Job and Family Services, Medicaid, and private pay. The remaining 10% of our \$31 million budget must come from charitable support from generous individuals, civic groups, foundations, corporations, and churches. Berea Children's Home and Family Services has a multitude of gift opportunities to suit your individual needs. Gift opportunities include annual fund gifts, in-kind contributions, establishing an endowment fund or charitable gift annuity, capital campaigns, planned gifts, legacy gifts and more.

For more information on making a charitable gift to our organization, and to help us equip and empower children, families and communities, contact Laurel Wirtanen-Siloy, *Major Gifts Officer*, at 440.260.8357 or [lwirtanen@bchfs.org](mailto:lwirtanen@bchfs.org). In addition, you can learn about special gift options and make a gift online on our website at [www.bchfs.org](http://www.bchfs.org).

## CREDENTIALS

The recognition of Berea Children's Home and Family Services by a host of national and state service organizations confirms the agency's dedication to providing quality services for children and families.

We are licensed by the State of Ohio Department of Mental Health and the Department of Human Services. The agency is also accredited by:

- The Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children
- The National Academy of Early Childhood Development
- The EAGLE award of the United Methodist Association for Health and Welfare Agencies

## BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Our volunteers are an integral part of the Berea Children's Home and Family Services team. This handbook is provided to help bring clarity regarding the workings of Berea Children's Home and Family Services, the requirements for volunteering, and the process for preparing and serving as a volunteer here. However, this handbook is not a contract or guarantee of continuation as a volunteer with Berea Children's Home and Family Services. Your removal or termination from the volunteer program is in the sole discretion of Berea Children's Home and Family Services.

Please read this guide thoroughly before your first day of volunteer service. Questions should be directed to Debbie Mueller, *Assistant Director of Human Resources*.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO SETTING CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

An interview process precedes any volunteer assignment to ensure that there is a good fit for the organization and for you:

- Review the volunteer job description and volunteer requirements.
- Complete the volunteer application.
- Private and uniform screening process with our Human Resources Department.
- Review for current volunteer position openings along with your personal preference, education, life and employment background.
- Discuss the *due diligence* prerequisites for volunteering (see prerequisites below)
- Once background check and prerequisites are complete, the volunteer handbook and ID badge are provided, and training is scheduled.
- Conversation/interview with the supervisor about the placement to learn what is expected; to learn about the value of volunteers to the organization; and to ensure there is a good fit for you.

When you become a volunteer, we make the following commitments to you:

- Orientation to the Berea Children's Home and Family Services
- Initial training
- On-the-job supervisor/coach/mentor while volunteering
- Communications to keep you informed regarding our organization, events, celebrations
- Recognition as a volunteer while on premise
- An open door policy to welcome and encourage feedback about problems, concerns, and new ideas / opportunities
- A regular review process to evaluate your work, your satisfaction in volunteering, potential growth or other interests within Berea Children's Home

## PREREQUISITES

In addition to the interview process, Berea Children's Home and Family Services requires satisfactory completion of background checks before becoming an employee or a volunteer. This includes:

- Reference checks
- Proof of citizenship
- Physical exam and TB test
- Criminal background check

You will be asked to sign an affidavit form allowing completion of the background checks. The form includes address and social security number. This affidavit form releases all conviction records to Berea Children's Home and Family Services.

Volunteers are selected based on the qualifications for the assignments judged from information provided by the applicant, their references and other appropriate sources. Failure to comply with these and other policies stated in this handbook may result in your removal or termination from the Volunteer Program and is in the sole discretion of Berea Children's Home and Family Services.

## TRAINING

Knowing the mission and organization of Berea Children's Home and Family Services will make you a better volunteer. Your initial training program encompasses:

- Agency orientation
- Client rights
- Customer service skills
- Cultural diversity
- HIPAA training, as required by licensing and accreditation.

All volunteers and employees complete this training as a prerequisite to starting with Berea Children's Home and Family Services. Some volunteer positions require additional training in preventing disease; Nurturing Parent curriculum; and de-escalation skills.

## TRANSITION PERIOD/NEW ASSIGNMENTS

Berea Children's Home and Family Services makes every effort to place volunteers in available positions that will utilize your talents and skills. We encourage and promote an open-door communication policy to welcome and encourage feedback about problems, concerns and new ideas/opportunities.

Your transition period may vary with each placement. This period will be based on the anticipated commitment from you and the necessary length of the placement. This is a time when both the volunteer and Berea Children's Home and Family Services are deciding whether a proper placement has indeed been made. If a determination is made that the match between your skills/desires and the assignment does not meet the expectations of either you or Berea Children's Home and Family Services, a new assignment may be suggested or an alternative solution determined by both parties.

Either party may terminate the volunteer relationship at any time. In the rare instance that you are working with clients, giving a two week notice would be important so that closure with them can occur.

## **VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a Berea Children's Home and Family Services volunteer you impact lives either directly or indirectly and you may be privy to confidential information.

### **REQUIREMENTS OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:**

1. Regard all information acquired through your placement as strictly CONFIDENTIAL. Make no reference inside or outside Berea Children's Home and Family Services to a client's identity, diagnosis or treatment.
2. Keep an accurate record of your volunteer hours and forward this information on to Debbie Mueller, *Assistant Director of Human Resources*. We would like to know how many hours are given so we can:
  - a. Recognize your contributions to Berea Children's Home and Family Services.
  - b. Track the significance the Volunteer Program is to the quality of service Berea Children's Home and Family Services provides.
3. Be on time and regular with attendance. Call your direct supervisor, and Debbie Mueller, *Assistant Director of Human Resources* when you are unable to volunteer.
4. Let your direct supervisor and Debbie Mueller, *Assistant Director of Human Resources* know in advance of scheduled vacations or long-term absences from your volunteer placement.
5. Accept supervision graciously, even when you may not understand the reason for the policy or direction.
6. If invited by a staff member, attend appropriate meetings. Strive to attend any in-service or educational programs that are offered which may enhance your volunteer efforts.
7. In the rare event that you transport clients in your own vehicle or if one is provided by Berea Children's Home and Family Services, you must maintain current automobile insurance. Proof of your coverage and a copy of your current driver's license must be submitted quarterly to Debbie Mueller, *Assistant Director of Human Resources*.
8. Proudly wear your ID when volunteering.
9. Contact your direct supervisor or Debbie Mueller, *Assistant Director of Human Resources* immediately should an accident of any nature occur involving you, a client or another individual.
10. Completion of Agency Orientation, Cultural Diversity, Hepatitis B and Preventing Disease, Client Rights, and PAARR1 Training must be completed before the start of any volunteer position.

## STANDARD OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS

Berea Children's Home and Family Services provides the best possible services for our clients. To carry out this goal efficiently, volunteers are expected to adhere to an exemplary standard of conduct.

### VOLUNTEERS WILL:

- Respect all individuals and be respected
- Perform placements as agreed upon
- Utilize superior communication and customer service skills
- Be sensitive to the situation and ensure confidentiality at all times
- Maintain appropriate personal space with clients; for example, no hugging, holding or sitting a child on one's lap.
- Follow the Individualized Service Plan set up by the staff
- Ask questions when you are unsure about a placement, action, or task

### VOLUNTEERS MAY NOT:

- Discuss your personal problems with a client
- Discuss your religious or political beliefs with a client unless defined by your placement
- Give out your address or telephone number to a client
- Offer therapeutic or medical advice, diagnosis, prognosis, or any other information that might be interpreted as a professional opinion
- Take a client to his/her home or any location not specifically authorized by Berea Children's Home and Family Services
- Carry or discuss firearms or other weapons with clients or bring onto Berea Children's Home and Family Services premises
- Use alcohol or illegal substances *under any circumstances* with a client
- Come to work under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or recently consumed alcohol or other drugs
- Recommend or administer medications
- Participate in any political activities with clients or as a unconfirmed representative of Berea Children's Home and Family Services
- Enter into a private employment agreement with clients
- Engage in any discrimination against a client, a client's family, or agency staff
- Enter staff restricted areas or children's personal areas without permission
- Engage in discrimination by act or word against any race, sex, creed, religion, age, veteran status or disability.

Violation of Berea Children's Home and Family Services standard of conduct for volunteers may result in discipline up to and including termination from the program.

## **BEREA CHILDREN'S HOME AND FAMILY SERVICES POLICIES**

Berea Children's Home and Family Services volunteers function in a support capacity and will never be utilized in lieu of hiring an employee.

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

The Berea Children's Home and Family Services is an equal opportunity volunteer site. It is the policy of the Berea Children's Home and Family Services not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, age, sexual preference, national origin, veteran status or disability.

The President and CEO of Berea Children's Home and Family Services is the agency affirmative action officer and implements and reviews the new and existing policies of the Board of Trustees in regard to volunteers of Berea Children's Home and Family Services to ensure that equal opportunity does, in fact, exist.

### **BAD WEATHER DAYS**

Bad weather days are any days that you feel are so severe that your health may be jeopardized if you try to attend your volunteer placement; extreme temperatures, ice, snow, etc. Your presence is very important to us, so we ask that you call your supervisor when you will be unable to make it to your placement. If the supervisor is unavailable, be sure to leave a message and contact Debbie Mueller, *Assistant Director of Human Resources*.

### **BENEFITS**

**Insurance:** Volunteers accepted by and working at BCHFS are covered along with employees under agency liability insurance. Volunteers are not covered under the agency's group medical insurance plan. If volunteers transport clients in their vehicles, proof of adequate insurance and a valid Ohio driver's license are needed.

**Income Tax Deductions:** The Internal Revenue Service allows for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of charitable volunteer activity. In general, the IRS deductions cover:

- Cost of transportation to/from a volunteer placement.
- Reasonable costs of special uniforms, if required.
- The agency does not reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses. Deductions may be itemized on your annual income tax return form and are done so at your discretion.
- If you do not wish to deduct gas and oil expenses, you may use the standard rate per mile to determine your contribution.

**Coffee and Meals:** When working, volunteers are invited to share a meal and/or coffee with staff or clients, *as appropriate for the setting in which they are working*.

### **CLIENT RIGHTS**

Berea Children's Home and Family Services recognizes that all clients have rights. The personnel and volunteers of Berea Children's Home and Family Services are responsible for assuring that all clients are given the opportunity to fully exercise their rights, without fear of reprisal.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All volunteers at Berea Children's Home and Family Services must respect the privacy of the children and families served. Use any information gained in the helping relationship in a responsible manner. Confidential information includes all facts or conditions pertaining to the child's life and the life of the family which have been communicated to Berea Children's Home and Family Services. It is a right of the client and the duty of all Berea Children's Home and Family Services personnel and volunteers to respect and safeguard this information. Confidential information requires disclosure only for the purpose of helping and can only be disclosed within Berea Children's Home and Family Services when it is required by the health and safety of clients. The guidelines of the Federal Privacy Act of 1974 will be used as goals for Berea Children's Home and Family Services policies regarding confidentiality.

## DRESS CODE

While at Berea Children's Home and Family Services appropriate attire is required. Always wear the Berea Children's Home and Family Services volunteer ID badge. Business casual is appropriate for office environments. When working with children and families, avoid low cut or tight tops, short skirts or shorts. Please avoid extremes in fashion and overly revealing attire. Do not wear clothing that you would be upset about having damaged.

## DRUG/ALCOHOL FREE WORKPLACE

Berea Children's Home and Family Services maintains a workplace that is free from the effects of drug and alcohol abuse. Illegal consumption, sale, distribution, possession, or manufacture of illegal drugs, controlled substances and narcotics is prohibited. Consumption, sale, distribution, possession or manufacture of alcoholic beverages on the agency premises or work sites while on BCHFS business is prohibited.

A volunteer will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including removal or termination for violation of this policy. Notify the Human Resource Department in writing of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation within five (5) calendar days of the conviction. The Human Resource Department will take appropriate disciplinary action as authorized by this policy.

## EMERGENCIES

If a volunteer becomes involved in an accident or becomes ill while on duty, get help immediately. When the proper medical attention has been received and the initial crisis has been taken care of, call Human Resources at 440.260.8330 to report your situation. In the case of an accident at your placement, a Critical Incident Report should be completed as soon as possible. The staff will assist you in filling out this form.

Immediate supervisors should inform volunteers what procedures to follow if an emergency arises. **If you are off campus with a client, always have the name of an emergency contact person with you.** Volunteers should be given written authorization to seek medical care in case of an emergency. If there is a **fire drill** while you are on duty, please follow staff direction, or if alone, proceed to the nearest exit.

## **GIFTS**

Birthday, holidays or going away gifts valued at \$10 or less may be purchased for clients. Gift suggestions may be provided by agency staff. Gifts for clients for any other reason are prohibited. Clients are not permitted to borrow money or property from volunteers.

## **HOLIDAYS**

The Berea Children's Home and Family Services observes the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Good Friday
Independence Day	Thanksgiving Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Memorial Day
Labor Day	Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the preceding Friday or following Monday will be the agency observed holiday. These instances will only occur for three holidays: New Years Day, Independence Day and Christmas Day.

## **PARKING**

Free parking is provided for volunteers in our general parking lots, but *not* in the visitor spaces.

## **REFERRALS**

Referrals for new volunteers are welcomed from existing volunteers, employees, and from the community. A relative of a current employee or volunteer may be considered and assessed for a volunteer position.

Each referral will be guaranteed an interview, following our application process. Actual placement decisions are based on Berea Children's Home and Family Services current needs and the desires/fit of the individual.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the Berea Children's Home and Family Services to maintain a professional business environment and a work-place which is free from illegal harassment and from any intimidation of a verbal or physical nature. Illegal harassment includes sexual harassment and harassment based on race, national origin, color, age, handicap, veteran status, sexual preference, or religion. Behavior of a sexually oriented nature has no place in our working environment. Each individual has the responsibility for maintaining acceptable standards of personal behavior and for ensuring that others have the opportunity to carry out their work assignments in a businesslike atmosphere free from illegal harassment.

The Agency's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy specifically prohibits discrimination on any illegal basis. It states that we will not discriminate in working conditions, physical facilities, or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. Each person in our organization has a right to work in an environment free of intimidation or illegal harassment and in this respect, the complete cooperation and support of all our personnel is essential and expected.

Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or discriminatory nature are considered illegal harassment when:

- Submission to the conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment or continuing employment.
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the person who did the submitting or rejecting.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Harassment based on race, national origin, color, age, handicap, religion, sexual preference or veteran status exists when:

- The conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment;
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance;
- The conduct otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

In the event a situation involving harassment occurs, the affected individual should bring the matter immediately to the attention of the Human Resource Department, the immediate supervisor, or any other appropriate individual. Berea Children's Home and Family Services will promptly investigate the matter and will deal with employees who violate this policy in relation to the seriousness of the offense, up to and including dismissal. No employee, supervisor, manager or other person is authorized to engage in any conduct prohibited under this policy.

All individuals, particularly those at the management level, are expected to be alert to the occurrence of potentially harassing conduct. When potentially harassing conduct occurs, an individual should intervene in a manner appropriate to the circumstances in order to prevent problems of this type. They must report any such conduct of which they have become aware. Again, appropriate discussion with either the immediate supervisor, Vice President or the Human Resource Department is encouraged. The Agency is fully committed to its policy regarding the absence of illegal harassment in the workplace. Appropriate measures will be taken with regard to offending parties. *Please Note:* if the individual has a harassment complaint against their supervisor, the first complaint should be given to the supervisor's supervisor.

## **SENATE BILL 38**

The list of offenses of the Ohio Revised Code for which the Berea Children's Home and Family Services may not retain a volunteer can be found in APPENDIX A of this handbook

You must notify the Assistant Director of Human Resources within twenty-four hours of any charge of any criminal offense that is brought against you regarding the crimes listed in rule 5101:2-5-09. Failure to notify the Agency within twenty-four hours of any charge of any of the crimes listed in rule 5101:2-5-09 shall result in immediate removal from your volunteer position.

If the charges result in a conviction, you must notify Debbie Mueller, Assistant Director of Human Resources, within twenty-four hours of the conviction. Failure to notify the Agency of any conviction of

any criminal offense shall result in immediate removal from your volunteer position. If a conviction of any of the crimes listed in rule 5101:2-5-09 occurs while volunteering for the Agency, the result will be immediate dismissal from your volunteer position.

### **SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT**

A community health agency caring for children and families, Berea Children's Home and Family Services sets high standards for health care for its clients and staff alike. Therefore Berea Children's Home and Family Services and all its facilities except for noted exceptions will be SMOKE FREE.

Berea Children's Home and Family Services recognizes that the decision to smoke or not to smoke is a personal one. Therefore, volunteers wishing to smoke will be allowed to take their breaks in their personal cars.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Personal calls are not encouraged. Turn off or silence your cell phone while volunteering. In case of a personal emergency, please ask your supervisor what phone to use. Any emergency phone calls for you should be directed to your supervisor. If you need to make a personal call, please ask a staff member to direct you to the appropriate phone.

### **TRANSFERS**

You may request a change of placement at any time. All requests are to come through Human Resources, at 440.260.8330. An assessment will be conducted to determine the cause of the request and take appropriate action as needed.

### **VALUABLES**

Berea Children's Home and Family Services is not responsible for your belongings. Volunteers are encouraged to only have on their person those valuables that will be needed for that visit or project. Do not leave purses or other personal belongings unattended.

### **VOLUNTEER RECORDS**

All records will be kept in confidence. Only designated management staff will be granted access to a file. Volunteer records are maintained for all volunteers indicating each assignment, the time worked, and the in-service training attended. Volunteer records can be a valuable reference if volunteers apply for a job.

Volunteering at Berea Children's Home and Family Services is not a prerequisite or avenue to paid employment. Volunteers may apply for positions when openings arise, just as any other member of the public. The Human Resource Department and Department heads are obligated to choose the most qualified candidate for the job and comply with all state and federal laws. Previous volunteer experience is taken into consideration.



## Berea Children's Home & Family Services Volunteer/Agency Statement

**Prerequisite Form:** I received the handbook and have signed the statement at end of the handbook

### Volunteer Handbook Sign-Off Form

Volunteers of the Berea Children's Home and Family Services are subject to the same rules regarding confidentiality as paid employees. Maintaining confidentiality is a prerequisite for volunteering. Clients have a legal right to expect confidentiality with respect to their medical and personal information.

I understand that I will not be paid for my services and that I serve as a volunteer at the discretion of Berea Children's Home and Family Services and can be removed or terminated at any time in the sole discretion of Berea Children's Home and Family Services.

I have read and understand the contents of this handbook and will follow procedures as listed and by the standards set forth.

Volunteer Name *(please print)* \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return the **Volunteer Handbook Sign-Off Form** by mail, fax or email to:

Debbie Mueller,  
*Assistant Director of Human Resources*  
434 Eastland Road  
Berea, Ohio 44017  
440-234-8389 (f) \* [DMueller@bchfs.org](mailto:DMueller@bchfs.org) (e)