

LIFE COMMUNITY SERVICES SOCIETY

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



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Ms Lam Moi Kwai
Chief Executive Officer
Life Community Services Society

Yes, finally a Life Community Volunteer Handbook!

Our society is evolving very fast, and much as we hope that everybody could progress together, there are, unfortunately, some who are left behind. As we deepen our work to reach out to the children and youth from underprivileged backgrounds, we hope to build and strengthen our volunteer community. You will be amazed at how a simple act on your part can make a big difference. Children's destinies are changed, and the world we live in becomes a better place. Your role in befriending and mentoring these young ones is key in this legacy story.

We have put together this handbook so that we can better communicate our policies in on-boarding new volunteers. It also serves as a guide for some frequently asked questions amongst volunteers. We hope you will find the information useful as we endeavour to make your volunteering with us a meaningful and empowering experience.

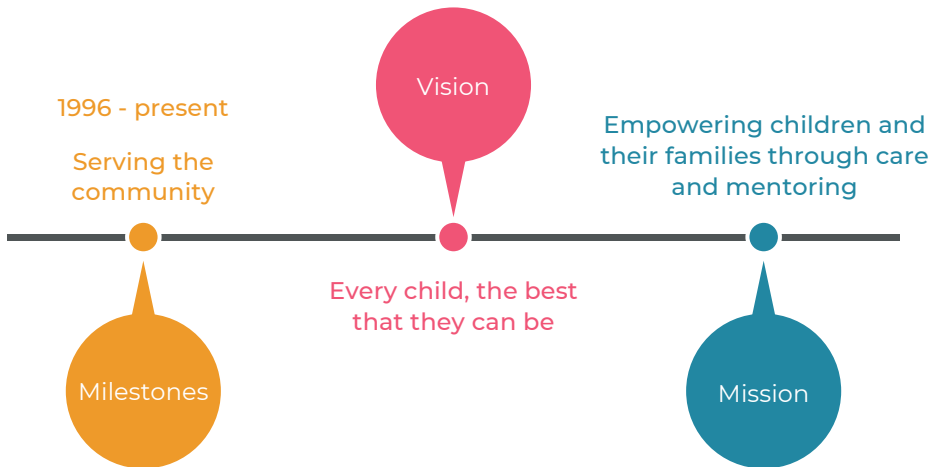
Please feel free to give us any feedback or comments (lcss@life-community.org) to make this resource a valuable one.

It's been a year-long project for us, and we are thankful to firstly NCSS for sponsoring KPMG consultancy to unlock service-based volunteering opportunities. We are also grateful to Costello Medical Singapore for developing this handbook that would have otherwise cost us thousands of dollars to make.

And of course, we thank each of you, our beloved volunteers, for joining us as part of this personal journey to champion the cause of supporting vulnerable and less-privileged children.

Background

Life Community Services Society



4 Core Services



Friends of Children & Youth

Provide care and support to children and youths (ages 6-16) with parent(s) presently or formerly incarcerated, through tailored intervention programmes.



Life Student Care

Provide quality student care services to primary school children by focusing on the total development of the child in a safe and caring environment, through a holistic Social, Physical, Intellectual, Creative, Emotional and Spiritual (moral) (S.P.I.C.E.S) programme.



MightyKids, Families & Community

Serve and mentor community children and youth, affirming and nurturing them within a loving and learning environment. Our focus is on building their Character, Competency and Connection through creative and enriching activities.



EduGrow for Brighter Tomorrows

Strengthen social mobility of children from low-income families by adopting a relational approach, where community mentors are matched to children, supporting their aspirational, character, educational, financial and relational growth. This is a joint project with WeCare@Marine Parade.

Our Vision for Volunteers



Mr Victor Loh, Volunteer Mentor

Being a mentor to my mentee has been as simple as spending time with a friend you care for. This journey has been an experience of personal growth, and in being open-minded and sincere. To me, there are so few programmes that offer such an opportunity: caring for someone else in society who may not otherwise enter my life, humbly offering guidance, and hoping I play a part with little bits of inspiration to support his eventual lifelong ambitions. This fulfilment I have received is one that I hope more individuals in Singapore can come to learn of, and love.



Our volunteers are partners who are passionate and committed to give their time & skills to fulfil the mission of LCSS of empowering children & families through care and mentoring, and together build a caring community.

Code of Conduct



The Code of Conduct has been put in place to ensure a **safe and secure environment** for our children and youths. As a volunteer for LCSS, please uphold our standards of conduct at all times when carrying out your duties and interactions.



As a volunteer and ambassador of LCSS, you are a role model to the children and families we serve. Positive attitude and actions will reflect well on LCSS.

1. Guidance and Expectations for Attitude and Conduct

The following are some guidelines for appropriate behaviour in approaching your duties.

Competence

- Live up to the responsibilities of your role. While volunteering, you should give your all and carry out your duties to the best of your ability.
- Continually upgrade your knowledge and skills by attending relevant training courses organised by LCSS.
- Be willing to learn and take part in all briefings, debriefings, and occasional meetings.
- Offer constructive feedback about LCSS in an appropriate manner.
- Respect the direction and decisions of the staff and management of LCSS. This will help to maximise efficiency and ensure the smooth delivery of our services to our clients.
- Treat your co-workers (paid or unpaid), clients, and members of the public fairly and without discrimination.
- Respect the property of LCSS and our clients.
- Act in and promote the interests of LCSS.

Conflicts of Interest

- In carrying out volunteer work, you should not take advantage of your clients financially, emotionally or in any other way to further your personal interests.
- You should act in a manner that does not create a conflict of interest with LCSS, whether a personal, business or financial interest, at any time.
- Please disclose to LCSS if you have a conflict of interest.

Commitment to LCSS

- Uphold the goodwill of LCSS by adhering to proper ethics and conduct.
- Deal with conflicts or difficulties in a calm and appropriate manner. Should the situation escalate, volunteers should consult the LCSS Staff-In-Charge on the best course of action.
- Respect the mission of LCSS and bear in mind the objectives of the volunteer programme.
- Volunteers are accountable to the LCSS Staff-In-Charge and should check with the Staff-In-Charge if they are unsure or uncomfortable with any tasks assigned.
- Do not contact other organisations or individuals on behalf of LCSS unless permitted to do so.
- Do not use LCSS property, resources, information or funds for any purpose other than authorised use.

Commitment to Clients

- Do regard clients as individuals with their own needs, wants, feelings and emotions.
- Do not stereotype clients or judge them based on their backgrounds and circumstances.
- Do not impose your viewpoints, influence, interest, religion or actions on clients.
- Do not be unduly influenced by your own emotional needs when working with clients.
- Do not share personal problems with clients.
- Do not take clients to your home or to any premises not specified and approved by LCSS.
- Do not engage in any activity that may bring harm (e.g. physical and mental) to another person or property.

2. Procedures for Volunteer Work

Below are some specific procedures you should follow when reporting for volunteer work.

01 Dress Code

You are advised to dress appropriately in a way that is respectful and suitable for your assignment. Avoid wearing skimpy and revealing attire.



02 Punctuality

Be punctual for volunteering duty. If you are running late, inform the relevant parties (i.e. LCSS Staff-In-Charge, caregivers) as soon as possible.

If you find yourself being consistently late, we would advise you to speak with the LCSS Staff-In-Charge.



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Attendance-taking

Where applicable, record your attendance when reporting for duty.



04

Absence from Duty

In the event where you are unable to attend any volunteering activities that you have registered for, do notify the LCSS Staff-In-Charge at least 3 days in advance (unless in unforeseen circumstances, such as sickness or death of a relative).

If a volunteer is absent without any valid reason on 3 or more occasions, their involvement will be reassessed by the LCSS Staff-In-Charge.



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At all times, do not:

- Smoke while on volunteering duty or within the designated venue.
- Report for volunteering work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Make discriminatory or racist statements or behaviours.
- Use vulgarities and inappropriate language.
- Do anything that could be construed as improper or illegal. Action will be taken against volunteers found participating in any unlawful or inappropriate activity.



06

While on duty, do not:

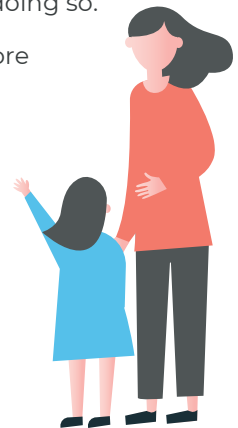
- Use your mobile phone unless for emergencies. Phones should be put on silent mode.
- Give unapproved gifts to clients.
- Leave your valuables unattended at any time.



07

When working with clients:

- Ensure that clients do not damage the property of LCSS and/or its partner/s.
- Ensure that there is supervision of clients at all times.
- Do not borrow from or lend money to clients to avoid any complications.
- Do not maintain any contact with clients outside of volunteering hours, unless otherwise discussed.
- Do not provide your personal contact details (unless stated otherwise) or social media handles to clients. LCSS will not be liable for unforeseen outcomes that may arise due to personal contact details given out to clients.
- Do not use physical discipline on clients. For behavioural issues, seek advice from the LCSS Staff-In-Charge.
- Do not carry and/or touch clients inappropriately (e.g. hugging or kissing) or coax them into doing so.
- The LCSS volunteer agreement provides more details on conduct guidelines.



Confidentiality

Protecting our volunteers

- LCSS values our volunteers' personal data and will provide necessary safeguards to ensure the protection and confidentiality of the data.

Protecting our clients

- On the volunteer application form, you will be asked to acknowledge your commitment to protecting our clients' right to privacy and confidentiality. This includes not sharing client-related issues with anyone other than the LCSS Staff-In-Charge.
- Volunteers are not to use contacts made during volunteering for business or personal gain.



Protecting LCSS

- As a volunteer, you will provide your consent on the Agreement Letter in accordance with the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA). Volunteers will be informed of the purpose for which any personal data is collected, used, and disclosed.
- LCSS is not liable for any unauthorised disclosure of volunteers' contact details.
- LCSS makes an active effort to prevent abuse of any nature. We reserve the rights to conduct background and reference checks on all our volunteers.
- You should not represent yourself as an agent while volunteering at LCSS, or comment to the media, press, legal or government agencies unless explicitly approved in writing by LCSS management.
- You should seek permission from LCSS before administering any research or surveys. Survey forms should be sent to the relevant LCSS Staff-In-Charge for vetting before administration.
- LCSS shall not use or disclose the personal information of volunteers unless the volunteer has provided consent for its collection, use or disclosure.

Volunteer Expenses and Claims



All claimable expenses must be pre-approved by LCSS.

Approved expense claims documentation should be completed with original receipts and submitted to LCSS within 30 days.

Volunteers are generally not entitled to reimbursement (unless otherwise informed).



In the event of an emergency, volunteers and clients should evacuate according to the safety procedures.* Report to the LCSS Staff-In-Charge as soon as it is safe to do so.

*Safety procedures vary for each programme. If unsure, please check with the LCSS Staff-In-Charge.

Grievance Policy



Communication Channels

For any matters pertaining to volunteering, please approach the LCSS Staff-In-Charge.

All complaints (e.g. sexual harassment or misconduct by clients) should be brought to the LCSS Staff-In-Charge.

If differences arise between yourself or other volunteers, staff or clients, you should first attempt to resolve these differences amongst yourselves.

If a third party is needed to resolve differences, you may wish to follow the escalation process as follows:

- Your first line of approach should be the LCSS Staff-In-Charge, Centre Supervisors or Programme Head (If the grievance is with the LCSS Staff-In-Charge/Centre Supervisors/Programme Head, an appeal can be made to the Chief Executive Officer).
- The second line of escalation is the Chief Executive Officer (If the grievance is with the Chief Executive Officer, an appeal can be made to the Board).

Under no circumstances should differences and/or conflicts be made public or involve any stakeholders apart from the above individuals.

Incident Reporting

- The LCSS Staff-in-charge should be immediately notified of all injuries and accidents sustained by clients or volunteers.
- If an incident occurred that caused harm to the client, or if a breach of confidential or personal data took place, the volunteer involved will be asked to complete an incident reporting form within 24 hours.

Withdrawal from the Volunteer Programme



If you had signed up for a specific project or event, no notice of withdrawal is necessary after the project or event has ended.

For service-based volunteer positions, notice of withdrawal should be provided in writing to the LCSS Staff-In-Charge. Please inform us one month in advance if you wish to withdraw, provided you have fulfilled the minimum time commitment specified in your volunteer assignment.

LCSS reserves the right to dismiss volunteers. Reasons for dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to adhere to the Volunteers' Code of Conduct.
- Failure to comply with rules of confidentiality.
- The use of alcohol or other inappropriate substances while volunteering.
- Refusal to attend volunteers' briefing.
- Refusal to give suitable references or disclose past convictions for crimes.
- Any behaviour deemed inappropriate by LCSS.

Some conduct may be tantamount to 'criminal offences'; in this instance, a volunteer may be referred to the authorities. Examples of criminal offences may include, but are not limited to, fraud, embezzlement, acts of terrorism, sexual misconduct and others.

The Journey Ahead



LCSS warmly welcomes you on board, and we wish you a pleasant and fulfilling time while volunteering with us.

Daniel Gan, Volunteer Mentor

Children from underprivileged families are often the most affected; yet, they often do not get the chance to be heard. Volunteering with LCSS allows me to help these children have their say and be heard in society. These children are our future – befriend them, encourage them and give them hope for tomorrow. Let's come together, regardless of race, language or religion, to serve the children, so that we can see their minds renewed, with a more positive mindset and a great sense of hope; their hearts being filled with so much love, joy and peace; and their lives being transformed to the extent that they can begin to touch the lives of other children around them. Let us make Singapore a better place for underprivileged children to live in.





www.life-community.org



This booklet was developed for Life Community Services Society on a pro bono basis by Costello Medical.