



Mid-West  
NMCAP

The logo features the text "Mid-West NMCAP" in white on a black rectangular background. Below the text are three stylized hands of different skin tones (light, medium, and dark) raised in a gesture of support or volunteering. The entire logo is set against a white background with a torn paper effect on its left and bottom edges. A small purple triangle is visible to the left of the logo.

# Volunteer Handbook

## Welcome

Dear Volunteer,

I wish to thank you for volunteering to serve with Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program. Volunteers are a vital part of achieving our goal of strengthening community by promoting effective communication and are involved in every aspect of our agency. I hope that you find the duties of your particular volunteer opportunity to be fulfilling and that your volunteer experience with us is rewarding and positive. The following information package includes details about our organization and the responsibilities of our volunteers. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or the Human Resource Manager, Larry Garcia, at 505-357-1705.

Once again, welcome and thank you!

Sincerely,

Bill Silva, Chief Executive Officer



## **ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

This volunteer handbook provides guidelines that will inform you about matters at MWNMCAAP.

This handbook does NOT constitute either an employment contract or any part of an implied contract with the Agency.

The Agency's Governing Board, at any time, reserves the right to revise or eliminate a policy or practice, in whole or in part, in this handbook as deemed necessary when in the best interest of the Agency's programs.

The guidelines in this handbook are not confidential. They are available to all volunteers. It is the volunteer's responsibility to read and understand the content of this handbook. Any questions that you may have regarding the content should be addressed to the HR Department.

Questions regarding your duties and responsibilities at the Center will be addressed by your assigned supervisor.

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## **1.1      LIST OF ACRONYMS**

CAA	Community Action Agency
CAS	Community Assistance Section
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CSBG	Community Services Block Grant
CYFD	Children Youth and Families Department
DCFO	Deputy Chief Financial Officer
DHS	Department of Human Services
DOL	Department of Labor
DWS	Department of Workforce Solutions
EFSP	Emergency Food and Shelter Program
EHS	Early Head Start Program
FANS	Food and Nutrition Service
FNB	Family and Nutrition Bureau (CYFD)
Grantee Board	The Agency's Governing Board ultimately bearing the legal responsibility of the operation of the Agency and programs it sponsors
Governing Boards	Throughout this manual, the term "Governing Boards" meaning, both the Agency's Grantee Board and Policy Council are in agreement of said policies and practices
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
HR	Human Resources
HS	Head Start Program
HSD	Head Start Director
LIHEAP	Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
MWNMCAP	Mid-West NM Community Action Program
NACAA	National Association of Community Action Agencies
NHSA	National Head Start Association
NMAC	New Mexico Administrative Code
NMACAA	New Mexico Association of Community Action Agencies
NMHSA	New Mexico Head Start Association
PC	The Agency's Head Start Policy Council
SC	Selection Committee
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
TEFAP	Commodities Program

## **1.2 DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS HANDBOOK**

- a. Client: An individual who is provided referral, training, resource development, information and educational services.
- b. Employee: A paid member of staff whether full-time, part-time, or casual.
- c. Volunteer: A person who undertakes a responsibility or expresses a willingness to volunteer their services without paid enumeration.

## **1.3 MWNMCAP MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mid-West NM Community Action Programs mission is to provide quality and comprehensive services in nine component areas:

- 1. Education
- 2. Health
- 3. Nutrition
- 4. Social Service
- 5. Parent Involvement
- 6. Mental Health
- 7. Transition
- 8. Disabilities
- 9. Transportation

Services are provided in accordance with Head Start/Early Head Start, Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) and other federal state and local performance standard for the operation of an Early Childhood Program, through early intervention. There is no service cost to qualified families located in the New Mexico Counties of Cibola, McKinley, Socorro and Valencia.

## **1.4 MWNMCAP CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

We believe that early learning is the root of success and begins at birth. Head Start/Early Head Start provides experience and opportunities to help parents in providing a “good beginning” for their children. We believe that parents are the first and most important teachers for their children.

We emphasize an individual approach in working with the child and the parent(s) based upon individually assessed needs agreed upon by both parents and staff. Our goals are directed towards the enhancement of the family and the involvement of the community in the services that we provide through an integrated approach to delivery of services. We ensure that the learning environment is conducive to the health,

safety, well-being and comfort of children, families and staff by adhering to all applicable rules and standards and by implementing best practices in early childhood development which include: inclusivity, multiculturalism and early childhood development.

## **1.5 THE PRINCIPLES OF VOLUNTEERING**

1. Volunteering benefits the program.
2. Volunteering work is unpaid.
3. Volunteering is always a matter of choice.
4. Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community.
5. Volunteering is a means to address social needs; and,
6. Volunteering is an activity performed in the not for profit sector(s).

## **1.6 VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES AND HOURS**

Volunteer hours can be flexible and are meant to work for you as well MWNMCAP. Please establish a regular schedule with your appropriate supervisor. If you need to change your schedule and/or cannot report as scheduled, please contact your assigned supervisor. Although volunteers are not limited to a certain number of working hours per week, actual volunteer time may vary depending on available work. MWNMCAP will do its best to develop a schedule that will fulfill your needs; however, scheduled volunteer hours are not a guarantee that work will be available. We, in turn, will make every effort to contact you 24 hours in advance if there is no work available.

All volunteers must record working hours daily on a Volunteer Time Sheet immediately upon arrival or departure at their post. Failure to complete a time sheet will result in uncounted community service or volunteer hours. Volunteer Time Sheets for each current month when filled out will be reviewed and signed by the supervisor and forwarded to the respective accounting department.

## **1.7 HOLIDAYS**

MWNMCAP observes the following holidays; volunteer hours are not available on these days:

**January** - New Year's Day & Martin Luther King Birthday

**February** - Presidents Day

**May** - Memorial Day

**July** - Independence Day

**September** - Labor Day

**November** - Thanksgiving Day & Friday after Thanksgiving

**December** - Christmas Day

## **1.8 VOLUNTEER CONDUCT**

As a volunteer, you are expected to represent the agency with the same level of competency and responsibility as any paid employee. Therefore, you are expected to comply with all Agency rules and regulations.

## **1.9 MAINTAINING A PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

The following is a list of tips we should all follow:

Do not loiter in halls or offices.

Do not run in the building.

When an office door is shut, do not disturb, unless it is an emergency.

If someone is on the phone, wait outside of the office or return when that person is off the phone.

Only handle tasks that have been assigned to you to avoid overstepping the assignment of others.

If you have needs and concerns address them with your assigned supervisor or with the HR Department.

## **1.10 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

All MWNMCAP volunteers are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the best interests of the Agency. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to efficient and competent completion of duties and assigned tasks; reasonable and non-negligent duty performance; following directives from supervisors, management, or management's designees; becoming familiar with and following agency policies and procedures; honesty, truthfulness and integrity in all work-related matters; taking care of agency property and resources; reporting incidents of discrimination, including suspected sexual harassment, and any incidents, actions or inactions by any officer, employee, agent, contractor or volunteer which reasonably appears to violate the agency's policies and procedures or which reasonably appear averse to the agency's best interest; refrain from using profane, derogatory or offensive language; follow Federal, State and Local laws; refrain from physical or verbal violence.

All MWNMCAP volunteers will respect and promote the unique identity of each program client, child and family and refrain from stereotyping based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, country of origin, religion, or medical condition disability.



All MWNMCAP volunteers will exercise utmost discretion when following program confidentiality policies concerning information about clients, children, families, and staff members.

All MWNMCAP volunteers will be responsible to see to it that no child will be left alone or unsupervised while under the care of the Agency.

All MWNMCAP volunteers when in children's presence and/or providing child care must use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation. In addition, volunteers will not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

All MWNMCAP volunteers are expected to respect, conserve and protect the property and resources entrusted to their care.

#### **1.11 CODE OF CONDUCT**

Behave honestly,

Act with due care and diligence,

Treat everyone with respect,

Comply with all applicable Federal and State laws,

Comply with any lawful or reasonable direction given by a staff member with the authority to give that direction,

Maintain appropriate confidentiality in relations to staff and client information,

Avoid, any conflicts of interest,

Behave in a way that upholds the values, integrity and reputation of the Agency,

#### **1.12 CELL PHONE USE**

Excessive personal calls during the workday can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. Volunteers are encouraged to make personal calls during nonworking time when possible.

MWNMCAP will not be liable for the loss of personal cellphones brought into the workplace.

1.13

**PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND  
CREATING AN INTIMIDATING, HOSTILE, OR OFFENSIVE WORKING  
ENVIRONMENT**

MWNMCAP promotes a work environment that, within reason, protects everyone from harassment from other employees, clients, volunteers or agents. The Agency prohibits any form of harassment, including, race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, spousal affiliation, age, national origin, disability, serious medical condition, genetic information, or status as a Vietnam Era Veteran.

Sexual harassment is one type of protected class harassment. It includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and all other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise offensive nature; especially where:

- a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicit or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment; or
- c. Any such conduct that has the purpose of affecting or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance.
- d. Such conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment or
- e. Offensive comments, jokes, innuendoes, and other sexually-oriented statements such as, but are not limited to the following:
  1. Sexually-suggestive touching, grabbing, groping, kissing, fondling.
  2. Whistling, lewd, off-color, sexually-oriented comments or jokes.
  3. Foul or obscene language.
  4. Suggestive or sexually-explicit posters, calendars, photographs, graffiti, cartoons.
  5. Unwanted or offensive letters or poems.
  6. Sitting or gesturing sexually.
  7. Offensive email or voicemail messages.
  8. Questions about one's sex life or experiences.
  9. Repeated requests for dates.

10. Sexual favors in return for employment rewards, or threats if sexual favors are not provided.
11. Sexual assault or rape.
12. Sexually suggestive videos, internet or electronically-stored images or statements.

MWNMCAP is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and to promoting the health and well-being of our staff and customers. In keeping with this philosophy, we maintain a drug, alcohol, tobacco, and vape free work and living environment. As such, the following policy applies to all employees of MWNMCAP. It is the policy of MWNMCAP to prohibit smoking and vaping on all company premises to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. Smoking is defined as the “act of lighting, or smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette or pipe of any kind.” Vaping refers to the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems or electronic smoking devices such as: e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-hookahs, and e- cigars.

#### **1.14 DRESS AND APPEARANCE**

- a. Because the public gains many of its impressions of an organization from its contact with its employees, it is always most important that all MWNMCAP employees not only be courteous and efficient but also contribute to the Agency’s public image through proper dress and good personal hygiene. It is one of the Agency’s policies to provide and maintain safe and healthful working conditions and to provide a safe work place for its employees.
- b. The staff will dress in such a way as to reflect their professionalism. Working with young children and being involved in age-appropriate activities can be messy work. Therefore, the guidelines are as follows:
  1. Pants: Hemmed Jeans in good taste are allowed, sweats are not permitted. Capri’s/shorts are acceptable if mid-thigh to knee length. Exercise spandex wear is not permitted. Leggings can be worn under skirts, dresses or long shirts.
  2. Skirts/dresses: Mid-thigh or longer.
  3. Shoes: are to be worn at all times. No flip-flops or other backless shoes. All classroom volunteers shall wear closed toe shoes with a heel strap. Staff may wear no more than a two-inch heel, sandals must have heel strap and worn only when children are not present.
  4. Nails: All personnel working at Head Start Program Centers, long fingernails are not appropriate. Fingernails must be no longer than sports length. (sports length is defined by 1/8 inch past his/her fingertips).
  5. Piercings and Tattoos: Pierced ears are allowed however; use discretion for earrings

(hoops and dangling earrings are not allowed). Other visible body piercing shall be removed during working hours. Tattoos must be appropriate for viewing by young children, or otherwise obscured during working hours.

6. Inappropriate Body Markings (aka “hickies”): These markings are not appropriate for working with young children. Markings must be obscured during working hours. If the markings are not covered, the volunteer will be asked to clock out and go home.
7. Shirts or blouses: must have sleeves that are no less than 2.5 inches and full coverage of undergarments must cover the entire stomach and back, must not be excessively tight, and necklines must not expose undergarments.
8. Clothing promoting drugs, sexual activities, violence, gang affiliation, or disrespect toward any group is prohibited.

#### **1.15 NM STATE REGULATIONS GOVERNING CRIMINAL, RECORD CHECK/ELECTRONIC BACKGROUND CHECKS**

New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) 8.8.3. “Children, Youth and Families General Provisions Governing Background Checks, the purpose of these regulations is to set out general provisions regarding background checks and volunteers history verification required by the Children, Youth and Families Department. Background checks are conducted to identify information in applicants’ backgrounds bearing on whether they are eligible to provide services to children. (NMAC 8.8.3.6). b. Prior to the volunteering of an individual, and in accordance with the Head Start Act of 2007, all Head Start volunteers will receive a comprehensive electronic background check. All volunteers must be cleared or otherwise approved through this process prior to beginning their assignment. This electronic background check is required by the State of New Mexico (CYFD). MWNMCAP will bear the cost of the required CYFD/FBI background check.

#### **1.16 DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING**

MWNMCAP is committed to the goal of a drug-free work place in compliance with the Drug-Free Work Place Act of 1988. Unlawful manufacturing, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited.

***THANK YOU!***

*We would like to say thank you once again. We appreciate your assistance and understand that your time is valuable. We hope that you will enjoy your volunteer experience here at MWNMCAP. If you have suggestions about our volunteer program, feel free to discuss them with your supervisor who will pass them on to the appropriate Program Manager.*

*As a volunteer, you are expected to have read and understand the contents of this handbook.*

*NAME OF VOLUNTEER:* \_\_\_\_\_ *(PRINTED)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *(SIGNATURE)*

*TODAYS DATE:* \_\_\_\_\_