Greater East Ohio Area Chapter Volunteer Essentials

Revised January 25, 2019
Mission and Vision

About Us
The Greater East Ohio Area Alzheimer’s Association serves families in 17 counties in Ohio. The Chapter helps families and caregivers learn about the disease, gain an understanding of the many challenges memory loss presents, and receive emotional support. Families can also find information regarding legal, financial and lifestyle needs, as well as obtain information on care options and gain access to clinical drug trials.

Our Mission
To eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.

Our Vision
A world without Alzheimer’s disease®.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Fundraising/Event – Participate on a planning committee for one of our Signature Events:

- **Walk to End Alzheimer’s®** in September and October (areas including Akron, Medina, Stark, Mahoning Valley, Muskingum, Tuscarawas and Wayne)
- **Paint the Night Purple Benefit Dinner & Auction** in April in Rootstown
- **The Longest Day®** in June (Chapter wide)

Office – Assist with miscellaneous projects in the office (Monday – Friday 9:00am – 4:00pm), including phone calls, data entry, mailings, etc.

Advocacy – Share your story with federal, state, and local policymakers to impact Alzheimer’s policy, legislation, and support national research funding.

Support Group Facilitator – Create a safe, open environment where people share their feelings, thoughts and experiences in a combined effort to better cope with and manage the shared problems of dementia. Training, specific qualifications and background check required.

Community Representatives – Raise awareness of Alzheimer’s Association programs, provide basic disease information, and link consumers to Alzheimer’s Association services. The volunteer will serve as a liaison between the Alzheimer’s Association by attending local events in the community, including health fairs and expos. Training and background check required.

Community Educators – Volunteer as a public speaker who helps the Alzheimer’s Association raise awareness, provide education and expand the reach of educational offerings in the community. These volunteers deliver presentations using prepared training materials on topics related to Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. Training, public speaking experience and background check required.

HelpLine Assistant – Provide support to the Program department in the office with making follow-up phone calls to families seeking support, encouragement, hope and guidance through the challenges of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. The Helpline team also fulfills packets and assists with other miscellaneous projects. Training, specific qualifications and background check required.

Faith Outreach Representative – Serve as a liaison between the Alzheimer’s Association and local faith groups and congregations by sharing information about Alzheimer’s disease, free resources offered through the Alzheimer’s Association, and the many ways to join our cause at local community and education events. Training and background check required.
Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteer Rights

1. The right to information about your volunteer role
   Whether it’s questions about the application process (why do I need to have a background check? when will I find out if I’ve been accepted?) or the volunteer role or project itself (who will I be working with? how will my efforts make a difference?), you have the right to know the who, what, when, why, and how of your volunteer position.

2. The right to feel valued
   Volunteering—whether for two hours or two years—is a significant commitment that you choose to make. In return, you have the right to feel that your time and contribution—however long you’ve volunteered and whatever your task—is valued. Similarly, you have the right to feel that an organization or volunteer effort is using your skills and talents well. Please keep in mind that we may not always have the capacity to take on some or all of your ideas or proposed projects. However any and all volunteer work you do has meaning and makes a difference.

3. The right to negotiate your volunteer role
   You have the right to talk to your volunteer manager to discuss ways you might be able to shift your role or take on another project or position. Our organization desires for you to be involved as much as you would like to be.

4. The right to leave
   You have the right to leave. This isn’t a decision that should be made hastily but, if after talking to and working with your volunteer manager, you still feel unhappy, unappreciated, or unsatisfied with your volunteer experience, you do have the right to resign your volunteer commitment.

Volunteer Responsibilities

1. The responsibility to communicate your needs
   Talk to your volunteer manager if you feel your work isn’t meaningful, if you’re bored, or if you are ready for something new. In order for us to provide the experience you’d hoped, please communicate your needs so that we can improve things. Similarly, don’t hesitate to let us know if you feel you need additional tools, training, or support.

2. The responsibility to follow through on your obligations
   There is a pervasive myth that volunteers are unreliable. Help improve the reputation of volunteers worldwide by doing what you say you’ll do, whether it’s honoring the volunteer role and schedule you’d agreed to, providing ample notice if you’re unable to perform your tasks or responsibilities, saying no or stepping away from volunteering when necessary, or simply serving as a good representative of the organization in the community.

3. The responsibility to honor the organization’s investment in you
   Research your volunteer role(s) first to determine if it’s a good fit for you. Once you’re in the role, first try negotiating your volunteer role if you’re unsatisfied, rather than just suddenly leaving.

4. The responsibility to take care of yourself
   You have the responsibility to make sure that you aren’t overextending yourself, burning out, or causing yourself physical, mental, or emotional harm by taking on roles that aren’t a good fit or that you aren’t prepared for. Limit your volunteer stress by seeking out support (talk to your volunteer coordinator and fellow volunteers), taking a break (either as you’re volunteering or stepping away from volunteering altogether for a while), and having realistic expectations about what can be accomplished and when.
Volunteer Requirements

1. **Commit to two tasks per year**
   As a volunteer for the Alzheimer’s Association Greater East Ohio Area Chapter, you will be required to commit to TWO volunteer tasks per year. You are encouraged to volunteer much more, however, in order to remain as an active volunteer, you must commit to two physical commitments a year.

2. **Keep your contact information up-to-date**
   In an effort to keep our volunteer database up to date and accurate, we ask that you inform us of any contact information changes throughout the year. However, if you forget to do so, your volunteer manager will contact you for your yearly updated information.

3. **Sign a Conflict of Interest and Volunteer Agreement**
   In order to ensure that you, the volunteer, are committed to representing our organization responsibly and respectfully, we ask that all volunteers re-commit yearly in writing form to do so. Don’t worry, your volunteer manager will notify you when it’s time for you to update yours.

4. **Communicate with your Volunteer Manager**
   Just as you, the volunteer, expect timely communication from our organization, we expect the same from you. Whether you are being contacted via email or phone, please remember to respond when contacted by your volunteer coordinator or another staff member. Remember, it’s okay to say NO. If you have been asked to fill a volunteer role, please reply with a simple “yes” or “no.”
   **Not corresponding with your volunteer manager leaves them to wonder if you are still interested in volunteering, and also slows down their process of requesting another volunteer when you do not respond.**

Confidentiality Agreements

Upon accepting a volunteer assignment with the Alzheimer’s Association, you will sign a Confidentiality Agreement, which restricts or prohibits you from disclosing or using confidential information of the Alzheimer’s Association. You are expected to maintain the confidentiality of all the Alzheimer’s Association’s confidential information both during and after your volunteering with the Alzheimer’s Association. Disclosure of confidential information in violation of the Confidentiality agreement will subject you to discipline up to, and including, separation.

Conflict of Interest

Upon accepting a volunteer assignment with the Alzheimer’s Association, you will sign a Conflict of Interest Agreement, which restricts or prohibits you from endorsing the volunteer’s place of employment, personal business, or personal interest.

Background Check Policy

The Alzheimer’s Association will conduct initial background checks on all program volunteers that have direct, unsupervised contact with Association constituents or constituent data. This includes, but is not limited to support group facilitators, community educators, community representatives, faith outreach representatives and data entry volunteers. It is important for the Association to do what we can to protect our vulnerable constituents. In addition to the initial background check, the program volunteer will be required to complete an annual update. The annual update requires the volunteer to affirm that there have been no convictions since the background check was originally completed.
Harassment Policy
The Alzheimer’s Association is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and discrimination. The Association strictly prohibits harassment and discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, genetic predisposition, a physical or mental disability, veteran status, marital status or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. This policy against unlawful harassment and discrimination applies to all persons (employees, volunteers, visitors, guests, vendors, etc.) and is intended to protect people from unlawful harassment and discrimination by anyone in connection with the performance of their job or volunteer role for the Association.

ESCALATION PROCEDURES
What to do if you believe you are being harassed:
  • Tell the person to stop.
  • If the behavior does not stop, report the behavior using the escalation procedures below.
The escalation procedure is designed to accommodate the varied roles of volunteers and to give staff guidance should they encounter a situation where they believe they are being harassed. Staff and volunteers may use several options to report an incident. Volunteers either are assigned to a staff partner or have a primary contact with the organization. Volunteers should report any incident to their primary organizational contact or staff partner. If the volunteer does not feel comfortable with these options, they may call the Compliance Line (800-390-8168).
If the incident is reported through the Compliance Line, the legal and risk management departments will share and address the incident with the appropriate level of management.
Once the incident is assigned to a point of contact, staff partner, staff department head or chapter executive, the following action will be taken by the assigned contacts:
  • Assess the severity of incident
  • Determine who, if anyone, should be consulted regarding the incident
  • Conduct an investigation
  • Draw a conclusion and appropriately address the incident
  • Communicate with the respective parties which may include agreement on subsequent follow up action
  • Document all action taken including the conclusion and resolution with the parties
  • Instruct the parties not to retaliate or discuss the matter with others in order to avoid creating or perpetuating a hostile environment

Photo Release
The Alzheimer’s Association Greater East Ohio Area volunteers may be photographed while on duty. These photos may be used in the Alzheimer’s Association Greater East Ohio Area Chapter newsletters, brochures, displays, advertisements, web site or press releases. The Alzheimer’s Association Greater East Ohio Area Chapter reserves the right to photograph adults over the age of 18 for those purposes. If you do not wish for your photograph to be used to promote the mission of the Alzheimer’s Association Greater East Ohio Area Chapter, please contact your staff supervisor.

Media Policy
To ensure that the Alzheimer’s Association is delivering a consistent message, volunteers are not to respond to inquiries from or offer opinions to the new media. If a member of the media approaches you, simply let them know that you are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Association and put them in touch with a staff member.

Attendance
If you are scheduled to come in for a volunteer shift and are unable to make it please be sure to contact your supervisor before the start of your shift so he/she is aware that you will not be coming.
Volunteer Remediation and Conflict Resolution

Purpose: To establish procedures for corrective action for volunteers that violate the policies of the Alzheimer’s Association outlined in all documents provided upon their completion of the volunteer application and orientation.

Policy: In order to protect and preserve the positive image of the Alzheimer’s Association Greater East Ohio Area Chapter, all volunteers shall adhere to the following policies and guidelines.

Standard of Conduct Guidelines

Volunteers shall refrain from:

- Working under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Theft
- Physical, sexual or verbal harassment
- Divulging of confidential information
- Criminal activity of a violent or sexual nature or fraud
- Contacting the media about a caregiver or person with the disease.
- Speaking negatively about the Alzheimer’s Association
- Acting in any role connected with an outside business or organization while providing volunteer services for the Alzheimer’s Association.
- Any other activity that is a Conflict of Interest or reflects negatively on their position as a representative of the Association.

Volunteers shall:

- Sign a Conflict of Interest form every year
- Maintain confidentiality of PWD’s and families
- Follow the Association guidelines according to the Conflict of Interest, Volunteer Agreements, Support Group Facilitator Agreement, and Community Educator Agreement.

While the above guidelines are the most severe, there are also infractions that would be cause for counseling, mediation or dismissal. These infractions include but are not limited to the following:

- Lack of response to emails or phone calls
- Failure to submit paperwork in a timely fashion
- Performance at consistently unacceptable levels
- Conflict with Alzheimer’s Association staff regarding the performance of duties

Procedures for Volunteer Remediation

Since volunteer success could be compromised by a lack of training, inappropriate placement, unclear expectations or inadequate supervision, every volunteer will be offered training opportunities, a position consistent with the volunteer’s interest, skills and time availability and a copy of the Standards of Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

If a problem occurs, a volunteer will be given a fair chance to improve performance through a supportive and progressive remediation process.
Step one: The Volunteer Manager will counsel, coach and encourage the volunteer as deemed necessary. Action taken will be noted in the Master Volunteer Spreadsheet and documented on a Volunteer Remediation Form. Form will be saved in the volunteer’s file under the Volunteer Remediation folder.

Step two: The volunteer will be given an appropriate amount of time to remedy the infraction.

Step three: After sufficient time, if no improvement is noted, or a repeat of the previous situation occurs, volunteer will be given a written warning. A copy will be placed in the file and a note made on the Volunteer Remediation Form. The volunteer may also be offered another position. It is up to the discretion of management to deem if a volunteer has violated a policy to the point of needing immediate dismissal.

Final Step: If the problem persists, or it has been deemed that the volunteer has violated a policy to the point of needing immediate dismissal, the volunteer will be released. A termination of service letter will be sent to the volunteer.

Conflict Resolution

Mediation
Mediation is a means of facilitating healthy resolution of conflicts. If direct communication fails to resolve an interpersonal conflict between any two volunteers, the conflict may be submitted to the Volunteer Manager. The parties in conflict will meet with the Volunteer Manager. Parties involved in mediation have the right to request another mediator. In such cases management will select another mediator agreeable to both parties.

Grievances
Grounds for grievances may include violation of policies, unfair situations where no policies exist, and unfair or discriminatory policies. The grievance procedure is not the appropriate vehicle for resolving interpersonal conflicts (see mediation).

Every effort should be made to solve problems cooperatively and informally with the parties involved before presenting them in writing as a formal grievance. If the complaint involves another person, whether it is another volunteer or a salaried staff member, the volunteer is encouraged to deal directly with the person(s) involved.

If, after exhausting all other means to address their concerns, a volunteer still wishes to file a grievance, the volunteer should send a written grievance letter to the Volunteer Manager. The Volunteer Manager will respond within 15 days. If the grievance is not resolved, the volunteer has 15 days to submit it in writing to management for a binding decision. Management will respond within 15 days. If the grievance involves the Volunteer Manager, the grievance may be submitted directly to the Executive Director and the Program Director.

All complaints will be treated as confidential.