

**McHenry County Sheriff's Office
Corrections Bureau**

Volunteer Handbook



**McHenry County Sheriff's Office
2200 North Seminary Avenue
Woodstock, IL 60098**

Revised June, 2010

Table of Contents

Introduction	i
Volunteer Policy.....	1
Facility Overview.....	1
Definitions	2
Chain of Command	2
How to Become a Volunteer	3
Application Process / Qualifications.....	3
Reporting Procedures	4
Safety & Security	5
Contraband	5
Emergency Procedures	6
Hostage Situations	7
Conduct with Inmates / Detainees	8
Dress Code	8
Personal Information / Confidentiality.....	8
General Information	9
Do's and Don'ts	10
Volunteer Application	11
Volunteer Notice and Release Form	12

KEITH NYGREN
SHERIFF

ANDREW ZINKE
UNDERSHERIFF



2200 N. SEMINARY AVE.
WOODSTOCK, IL 60098

NON-EMERGENCY
815/338-2144

E-MAIL:
sheriff@co.mchenry.il.us

To: McHenry County Adult Correctional Facility Volunteers
From: Keith Nygren, Sheriff
Subject: Volunteer Handbook

Volunteers and support staff are vital to the operation of the McHenry County Adult Correctional Facility. Constraints on funding and staff resources often make it difficult to provide quality educational, counseling, and rehabilitative programming to our inmate/detainee populations; but through the efforts and support of the community and volunteers, we are able to provide these vital services. The McHenry County Sheriff's Office is committed to working with volunteers to use their talent and resources in order to enhance the Correctional Facility's programs and services.

The McHenry County Sheriff's Office fully recognizes that in order for our institution to be successful, we rely upon the collaborative efforts of trained and competent staff along with volunteers who understand and are committed to work toward the same goals.

Thank you for your interest and willingness to serve our community through volunteerism.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Nygren". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Keith Nygren
Sheriff

Volunteer Policy

It is the policy of the McHenry County Sheriff's Corrections Bureau to utilize volunteers in selected program areas. Volunteers are not considered employees, agents or paid staff members of the Sheriff or the County of McHenry. All volunteers are required to submit to a records check, participate in orientation and/or training, and follow all rules and regulations of the Correctional Facility which pertain to volunteers. Volunteers are recruited from organizations and services throughout the McHenry County area without regard to race, color, religion, age, disability, sex, national origin ancestry, marital status, familial status, military status, and unfavorable discharge from military providing they meet the requirements to perform tasks required of the volunteer job. Persons who have pending criminal cases will not be given security clearance and are not allowed to participate in programming at the Correctional Facility.

Facility Overview

The McHenry County Adult Correctional Facility incarcerates individuals accused of crimes and awaiting trial and those sentenced to serve less than a year in jail. The facility also houses individuals for I.C.E. (Immigration Customs Enforcement), BOP (Bureau of Prisons) and the U.S. Marshalls through contractual agreements.

Inmates/Detainees are housed according to classification and assigned to one of four housing blocks in the jail. Each housing block consists of 4-6 'sections' with capacities from 12 to 64 inmates/detainees.

The current facility was opened to inmates in April 1992 and remodeled in 2005. The jail has a total rated capacity of 651, however for a variety of reasons (e.g., male/female and other classification concerns); the operating capacity is somewhat lower than the total number of beds. The average daily population (ADP) runs between 450-500.

The facility houses inmates awaiting trial in criminal cases, as well as those that have been sentenced to the County facility. An inmate can be held at the facility until they can post bond or are sentenced. After an inmate is sentenced, they can be detained at the County facility for 364 days. Anyone sentenced to more than 364 days would be taken to the Illinois Department of Corrections to serve their sentence.

Definitions

Inmate – Individuals in the custody of the Sheriff who are being held on local or state charges, serving a sentence in the jail or being held on a contract basis for the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), US Marshalls or the Navy.

Detainee – Individuals being held for Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE)

Lay Volunteer – A person who donates their time and effort to enhance the activities and programs of the agency. They are selected on the basis of their skills or personal qualities to provide services in recreation, counseling, education, religious activities, etc.

Professional Volunteer – A person who donates their professional expertise to enhance the activities and programs of the agency. They are licensed or certified in their professional field.

Chain of Command

All volunteers are ultimately responsible to the Chief of Corrections and the on-duty Shift Supervisor (Lieutenants & Sergeants). Any problems or concerns with regard to programming or inmate/detainees may be addressed with them. While inside the facility it is expected that volunteers immediately comply with directives given by on-duty corrections staff.

The Sheriff may reject any volunteer applicants who do not meet the specific qualifications for volunteers listed in this handbook.

The Sheriff may rescind the privilege of being a volunteer to anyone who violates the Rules and Regulations for Volunteers.

The McHenry County Adult Corrections Bureau reserves the right, at all times and without prior notification, to refuse admittance to any volunteer.

How to Become a Volunteer

Application Process / Qualifications

The first step in becoming a volunteer is to complete the [Application for Volunteer Service](#) and sign the [Volunteer Notice and Release](#) form which in part states:

“I have hereby been advised that due to the incarceration of accused or convicted criminals in the McHenry County Correctional Facility, I may encounter risks in the facility that I would not expect to encounter in other facilities, and have considered the risks of being admitted to the jail before signing this Notice.

I have been advised that as a volunteer I am not an employee, agent, or in any way a representative of the County of McHenry or the McHenry County Sheriff’s Office. Therefore, I am aware that there is no County insurance or other financial coverage available to me in the case of injury or harm occurring while performing volunteer services. Further, I agree to hold the County of McHenry, the McHenry County Sheriff, the McHenry County Sheriff’s Office, their employees, agents and representatives harmless for all costs, fees and expenses, ordinary or otherwise, which are the result of any physical injury or other harm I incur, allege to incur, cause or are alleged to cause as a result of my volunteer services in the facility, including, but not limited to any injury or harm I may incur, cause, or are alleged to cause, on these premises while not performing volunteer services. I also agree not to pursue any claim that I may have against the McHenry County Sheriff’s Office, their employees, agents or representatives for the injury or harm to myself or others resulting from any services.”

Completing these forms and authorizations allows security staff to begin a computer based background check. Some of the established criteria for approval include:

- Must be at least 18 years old
- No pending charges or active warrants
- No gang affiliations
- No recent arrests or incarcerations; typically within the past three (3) years.
- Current professional certifications and licenses where applicable
- Sponsorship of a recognized community organization

Once the background check has been completed and approved, your name will be added to the approved roster for volunteers. You cannot enter the facility without your name being on this roster of approved volunteers. Security clearance will expire after one year and must be renewed by submitting a new application. If any information changes throughout the year, volunteers are required to immediately report those changes to the jail. This includes any new criminal charges or active warrants.

Reporting Procedures

Once you have been approved as a program volunteer, the following procedures/guidelines should be followed when reporting to the jail:

- Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the designated start time.
- When signing in at the front desk, you will need a valid form of identification (Driver's License, State ID) which the Officer will hold while you are inside the facility.
- The issued jail ID must be worn at all times while inside the facility.
- Volunteers will be electronically screened prior to being allowed into the main jail area. A hand scanner may be used if the alarm on the walk-through scanner is activated. Pat searches, when necessary, will be conducted by staff of the same sex.
- All program materials must have prior approval from the Chief of Corrections before any item will be allowed into the facility. It is the volunteer's responsibility to obtain this approval.
- Volunteers will be escorted to their designated area by a Correctional Officer. Volunteers are not allowed to roam the facility or leave their designated program area without an escort for any reason.
- Volunteers are responsible for arranging the designated program area and their approved equipment to suit their needs. An assigned Correctional Staff person will assist in order to minimize any security risks.
- Volunteers will be taken to the designated program area prior to detainee/inmates. Detainee/inmates will be escorted by Correctional Officers to the program area after the volunteers are in place.
- Corrections staff will be present whenever detainee/inmates are present.
- At least one Correctional Officer will be present for every 15 detainee/inmates participating in the program.
- Based on the nature of the program, the room being utilized and the number of detainee/inmates present, the number of volunteers allowed to participate may be limited.
- At the end of the designated time, Correctional Officers will escort the inmates back to their housing unit.
- While detainee/inmates are being returned to their housing areas, volunteers will clean the program area and return furniture to its original position.
- After detainee/inmates have been returned to their housing areas, volunteers will be escorted back to the reception desk.
- Volunteers will turn in their ID tag to the officer at the reception desk and sign out in the Visitation Log prior to leaving the facility.

Safety & Security

Safety and security of staff, inmates, detainees and volunteers are the top priorities of the Corrections Bureau. Strict guidelines and procedures have been established to ensure your safety and the security of the facility. Your adherence to these guidelines and procedures is absolutely necessary.

Contraband

It is imperative that volunteers realize the significance of contraband in the facility. Volunteers must refrain from bringing in or taking out contraband, however innocent the item may seem.

Contraband - Contraband is defined as any item(s) not issued by the Correctional Facility, not purchased from the commissary, not issued by health care staff, or not authorized by the Chief of Corrections. It includes any permissible item converted into something other than its original purpose. This also includes unauthorized or excessive amounts of permissible items.

Inmates and Detainees may try to con the volunteer into bringing contraband into the facility for them or taking items out. There are many ordinary items which are used daily by people outside the facility which are considered contraband within the facility. Bringing contraband into a penal institution is a criminal offense (720 ILCS 5/31A-1.1).

Volunteers may not bring **ANYTHING** into the facility or take anything out of the facility without prior authorization from the Chief of Corrections. Some examples of contraband include but are not limited to:

- Cell phones, cameras and any type of recording device
- Chewing gum that can be used to disable locking mechanisms
- Dental floss or guitar strings which can be used as potential strangulation weapon
- Food - can conceal drugs and is against Public Health regulations
- Laminated cards or pictures that can be used to defeat locking mechanism
- Pop cans which can be made into a weapon
- Any type of glass items
- Over the counter medications
 - The Facility Physician prescribes all medication and all dispensing of medication is monitored and recorded.
- Cigarettes are not authorized in the facility and make an excellent hiding place for drugs
- Drugs and paraphernalia
- Pictures, letters, papers - may contain drugs, weapons or compromising information
- Letters taken out may contain threats, escape plans or be in violation of orders of protection

Emergency Procedures

Security is the highest priority at this Correctional Facility. Security procedures are never to be discussed in the presence of, or with detainee/inmates. Knowledge of security procedures could make an escape attempt successful. Volunteers are to be cognizant of Emergency Procedures in order to know what to do in the event of an emergency.

When a volunteer is involved in an incident with an inmate/detainee, or witnesses an incident between inmates/detainees, the volunteer is to:

- Immediately notify a Correctional Officer or other available staff to send help
- Protect themselves by going to a safe area out of the way
- Carefully observe what is going on in order to relate the incident in a written report
- Observe who did what, when, where, how and in what sequence.
- Refrain from trying to intervene and allow the Correctional Officers to handle the situation as they are trained to do.

In the event of an emergency, volunteers are to remain where they are until removed by a Correctional Officer. In some emergency situations, volunteers will be told by the Correctional Staff to remain where they are until the situation has been resolved, (fights, minor fires, etc.).

During an evacuation of the Correctional Facility volunteers will be escorted out of the facility by a Correctional Officer.

- Take nothing with you during evacuation
- Immediately obey all orders of Corrections Staff
- Visitors, volunteers and other non-essential personnel will be assembled at the outside sidewalk visitor's entrance by Ware Road for an accounting after the evacuation
- You will be allowed back into the facility after an all-clear order has been given
- You are required to participate in the final headcount which will be taken upon returning to the facility and before being allowed to go home after an evacuation
- You need to familiarize yourself with evacuation routes posted throughout the facility

Hostage Situations

A hostage situation is any condition where people are held illegally and against their will; denied their right to move, act, speak freely and make decisions on their own; or a condition that endangers life or poses a threat of danger while holding a person or persons in a restricted state against their will.

The longer the hostage lives during the takeover, the better the chances become of living. In the event you become involved in a hostage situation, expect to experience a range of emotions. Emotions will include fear, denial, planning an escape, reflecting on your life, adaptation, and the Stockholm syndrome where you develop a bond with your captors. Hostage situations are not common. The Sheriff's Office has a hostage negotiation team that will respond to hostage situations and will seek to do all they can to keep you safe and get you free.

The following are guidelines to keep in mind:

- Recognize and accept the fact that you have been taken hostage.
- The first 15 to 45 minutes are the most dangerous. The beginning of an incident is the most dangerous for all concerned. The captors are going through highly emotional states during the initial confrontation with authorities.
- Be patient; time increases your odds.
- Be prepared to remain a hostage for an extended period of time.
- Do not increase stress for the hostage taker or other hostages.
- Never try to negotiate when you are a hostage, let the trained negotiators do their job. Even though you may hear things that upset you or make you feel like no one is coming, be aware that negotiators are very well trained and will do everything in their power to promote a safe rescue.
- Pay attention to details. Upon release you may be able to assist authorities with what you observed.

If you believe a rescue attempt is taking place:

- Lay down on the floor and stay down.
- Keep your hands on your head and do not make any fast moves. Rescuers can't tell the hostages from the hostage takers. Sometimes hostage takers will switch clothing with the hostages.
- When staff orders you out, follow directions quickly and be prepared to be frisked and possibly handcuffed until they can sort everything out. It's not personal; they are simply trying to keep you and everyone else safe.

Conduct with Inmates / Detainees

Dress Code

It is important that volunteers dress conservatively and follow dress codes which include:

- No short shorts or mini skirts
- No low cut or see through blouses
- No tank tops or tube tops
- No spandex
- No clothing full of holes
- No excessive or expensive jewelry
- No gang related attire
- Shoes are mandatory
- Avoid dressing in clothing that matches the detainee/inmates orange county issued uniform

Personal Information / Confidentiality

Do not share personal information about other staff members, and be very selective about personal information you share with detainee/inmates. This includes place of residence, spare time, activities, family member activities or where they work, etc. Volunteers must be very careful what they share with detainee/inmates about themselves, as there may be consequences they can not anticipate.

Sound travels through hallways, therefore personal information about detainee/inmates is not to be discussed in the hallways.

Sheriff's Office volunteers are bound by the laws of confidentiality. Confidentiality implies that any information about an inmate will not be divulged outside the facility. If a volunteer becomes aware of information that an inmate/detainee is going to harm themselves or someone else, or is planning an escape, the volunteer **MUST** inform the shift supervisor **IMMEDIATELY**.

While working in the Correctional Facility, volunteers may have access to confidential information about detainee/inmates. What is seen and read is confidential information and may not be discussed indiscriminately.

Volunteers may maintain confidentiality with an inmate if the information does not concern security or program accountability.

General Information

Inmates and Detainees all have the use of telephones during the day and evening hours. Inmates/Detainees are allowed to send out as many letters as they wish or have postage for. Inmates/Detainees who do not have funds are provided with writing materials and postage free of charge. They can receive unlimited amounts of incoming mail. Inmates and Detainees are given access to television and newspapers each day. They have access to the resource/library service on a regularly scheduled basis. Medical services are available to Inmates/Detainees 24/7.

Do's and Don'ts for Volunteers

1. **DON'T take anything in or out of the facility without approval.**
2. **DON'T argue with an Officer's instructions, and NEVER refuse a directive given by a staff member.** If you disagree with the way an Officer handled a situation, bring the matter up with the shift supervisor.
3. **DON'T bring a camera.** Photographs are not allowed within the facility except by written permission from the Chief of Corrections under special circumstances.
4. **DON'T bring a cell phone inside.** Cell phones are not allowed, under any circumstances, within the facility and should be left at home or in your vehicle before entering the facility.
5. **DON'T take anything from an inmate/detainee.** This means anything. Not even a letter, photo, or poem. You might say, "I can't until I check with the chaplain." Sometimes Inmates/Detainees will test you to see if you will break the rules. This may be a way for them to see if you're willing to bend the rules.
6. **DON'T hug inmates/detainees.** Do not give the officers any reason to think you may be doing anything against the rules, like accepting or delivering contraband.
7. **DON'T make promises that you can't keep.** Don't say you'll come back or help a person unless you know for sure that you can and will.
8. **DON'T say you'll do things** for Inmates/Detainees until you know the rules and check with Command Staff.
9. **DON'T give out your address or telephone number.** If asked, you might say, "I'm sorry, but we were told it was against the rules to do that." You might explain kindly that you must obey the rules, as they must. You might say that you don't want to do anything that could prevent programs from helping inmates/detainees.
10. **DON'T enter into any business interactions with inmates/detainees.** For example, an inmate/detainee may ask you to sell his or her artwork on the outside.
11. **DON'T run inside or outside the facility.**
12. **DO be honest about your limited confidentiality.** Don't promise to keep an inmate/detainee's "secret" before you have heard it. You may not be able to keep it. For instance, if you are told something that could endanger a person's life or the institution, it is imperative that you talk to appropriate parties about it.
13. **DO be prepared to handle flirting or romantic advances.** If you handle this issue firmly, but kindly, you will probably prevent a problem. You might simply say, "That's not why I am here," and then change the subject. Suppose a man says to a woman volunteer, "My, you have pretty legs." She might say, "Thank you. They work well. That's the important thing about legs, isn't it? Now would you tell me something about the programs offered to you here?"
14. **DO be patient.** There are a variety of activities taking place on an ongoing basis within the Correctional Facility. There may be times when a program must be cancelled or there is a delay in getting volunteers in. This may be due to staffing issues or some type of emergency within the facility that you may not know about.

McHenry County Sheriff's Corrections Bureau

VOLUNTEER NOTICE AND RELEASE

NOTICE OF RISK

I have hereby been advised that due to the incarceration of accused or convicted criminals in the McHenry County Correctional Facility, I may encounter risks in the facility that I would not expect to encounter in other facilities, and have considered the risks of being admitted to the jail before signing this Notice.

I have been advised that as a volunteer, I am not an employee, agent or in any other way a representative of the County of McHenry or the McHenry County Sheriff's Office. Therefore, I am aware that there is no County insurance or other financial coverage available to me in the case of injury or harm occurring while performing volunteer services. Further, I agree to hold the County of McHenry, the McHenry County Sheriff, the McHenry County Sheriff's Office, their employees, agents and representatives harmless for any costs, fees and expenses, ordinary or otherwise, which are the result of any physical injury or other harm I incur, allege to incur, cause or are alleged to cause as a result of my volunteer services in the facility, including, but not limited to any injury or harm I incur, cause, or are alleged to cause, on those premises while not performing volunteer services. I also agree not to pursue any claim that I may have against the McHenry County Sheriff's Office, their employees, agents, or representatives for the injury or harm to myself or others resulting from any services.

AGREEMENT TO FOLLOW RULES

This is to acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Volunteer Handbook furnished by the McHenry County Sheriff's Corrections Bureau. I understand the contents of the Handbook. I will abide by the Volunteer Rules and Regulations and the Corrections Bureau Policies and Procedures governing volunteers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I hereby acknowledge that I have read the above Volunteer Notice and Release. I hereby agree that while on the premises of the facility, I will obey the rules and regulations of the facility and any oral instructions from the Corrections Bureau Staff. I also understand that by signing and submitting this application, I am authorizing the McHenry County Sheriff's Office to conduct a background check to include a criminal history.

Volunteer Printed Name

Volunteer Signature

Witness

Date