

Volunteer Handbook

Mercy Hospital



Mercy Hospital Downtown

2215 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93301



Mercy Hospital Southwest

400 Old River Road, Bakersfield, CA 93311

Table of Contents

Welcome	2
A Word from Friends of Mercy Foundation	2
Mercy Hospital	3
Our Mission and Values.....	3
Who Are the Volunteers?	3
Attire/Uniform	3
HELLO	4
Confidentiality	4
Services Available	4
Ethics.....	5
Attendance	5
Probation	5
Occurrences	5
Hours.....	6
Cafeteria.....	6
Telephone Calls.....	6
Parking	6
Loss of Property	6
Helpful Hints to Accomplish Great Service	7
Answering the Telephone.....	7
Difficult Situations	7
Diversity	7
Fire and Disaster Information	7
Codes	7
Personal Injury.....	7
Infection Control.....	8
Isolation Rooms	8
Drug Free Environment	8
Harassment	8
Sexual Harassment.....	8
Corrective Action	9
Open Door Policy	9

Welcome

A Word from Friends of Mercy Foundation Team

The Sisters of Mercy, Administration, and staff of Mercy Hospitals, Downtown and Southwest welcome you as you begin your service as a Volunteer.

On February 19, 1910, four courageous young women Sisters of the Mercy from Los Angeles arrived in Bakersfield to establish what is now Mercy Hospital. The Sisters were graciously welcomed by the pastor of St. Francis Church and a number of parishioners. Although the four Sisters had been both hesitant and uncertain about their new assignment, those thoughts were quickly dispelled and they immediately formed a strong bond with the families who opened their arms to them.

The Sisters determined that the 25-bed hospital was inadequate for the needs of a growing community. A larger and more modern hospital was desperately needed and it wasn't long before a wealthy and generous man, William de Gana, a parishioner at St. Francis Church, came forward with a gift that would enable the Sisters to build an "up to date hospital worthy of the best interest of Bakersfield." The gift was used to secure property on Truxtun Avenue. The original hospital was then moved to the Truxtun site and the new hospital was constructed for \$41,000.

Soon, the three-story concrete structure with accommodations for 50 patients was ready. Mercy Hospital continued to expand with the growing community and developed into the 194-bed facility that it is today. In an effort to meet the community's increasing needs in southwest Bakersfield, Mercy Southwest Hospital opened in 1992 and quickly established a reputation for superior health care.

The "Spirit of Mercy" that the Sisters introduced 110 years ago lives on in the hearts of Mercy employees as well as donors and community

members with a special connection to Mercy Hospitals of Bakersfield. In joining us, you honor the legacy of the Sisters of Mercy by providing compassionate, state of the art care, for every member in our community, especially those who are most vulnerable and underrepresented.

All hospital work is important. That is why volunteers are vital members of our team, caring for patients, their families and each other. We hope your time at Mercy is a rewarding and positive experience.

This booklet was prepared to give you basic information about Mercy Hospital, the Volunteer Program, and what is expected from you as a member of this team. It tells about the responsibilities, duties, and privileges our volunteers share. This booklet is a reference guide, containing hospital and department policies, as well as important safety and emergency information.

Most importantly, know that you and your commitment to us is valued. Open communication is key to the success of the Volunteer program. The Friends of Mercy Foundation staff is here to support and guide you on this formative journey you are embarking on. Never hesitate to reach out to us with suggestions and feedback on your experience and this program.

In Gratitude,

The Friends of Mercy Foundation Team
Toni, Misty, and Jessica

Mission, Vision, Values

Dignity Health is committed to furthering the healing ministry of Jesus, and to providing high-quality, affordable health care to the communities we serve.

Our Mission

Dignity Health and Mercy Hospitals are committed to furthering the healing ministry of Jesus. We dedicate our resources to:

- Delivering compassionate, high-quality, affordable health services
- Serving and advocating for our sisters and brothers who are poor and disenfranchised; and
- Partnering with others in the community to improve the quality of life.

Our Vision

A vibrant, national health care system known for service, chosen for clinical excellence, standing in partnership with patients, employees, and physicians to improve the health of all communities served.

Our Values

Dignity Health and Mercy Hospitals are committed to providing high-quality, affordable health care to the communities we serve. Above all else, we value:

Dignity - Respecting the inherent value and worth of each person.

Collaboration - Working together with people who support common values and vision to achieve shared goals.

Justice - Advocating for social change and acting in ways that promote respect for all persons and demonstrate compassion for our sisters and brothers who are powerless.

Stewardship - Cultivating the resources entrusted to us to promote healing and wholeness.

Excellence - Exceeding expectations through teamwork and innovation

Who can be a volunteer?

- Be willing to take a tuberculin skin test before being permitted to volunteer. This is part of the established health standard of Mercy Hospital and Joint Commission requirements. All volunteers must have a yearly screening for infectious TB by TB skin test or chest x-ray.
- Be willing to take medical and drug screenings.
- Be an individual who cares about others and has enthusiasm, vitality, and an eagerness to contribute to the welfare of our patients while providing noncertified assistance to the hospital staff.
- Pay a membership fee of \$12 annually, pro-rated based on your start date.
- Rewards of being a volunteer include priceless experiences in personal development, healthcare knowledge, and knowing that you are making a contribution to the community of Kern County.
- Attend an orientation session, volunteers prior to starting actual duty. This informative session is arranged so that every participant becomes a trained volunteer who is knowledgeable and confident in department functions and hospital policies.
- You will learn about the operation of this hospital, the role of the volunteers, possible areas of interest for services, and other useful information.

Attire/Uniform

Your uniform serves to identify you as a volunteer. Your badge, which you will wear at all times while you are in the hospital, further identifies you as a volunteer. The volunteer uniform consists of a purple polo shirt to be worn with white long pants and white shoes). During winter months a black sweater or light jacket is permitted. Uniform shirts and name badges are not to be altered in any way. Uniforms and shoes are to be clean and fresh-looking at all times. Volunteers out of uniform will be sent home. **Two (2) violations of the uniform code will lead to dismissal from the program.**

Remember, heavy makeup, perfume, and facial or excessive jewelry are not appropriate in a hospital setting, and tattoos must be covered at all times. If your hair is long, it is to be worn back from the face and fastened securely. This is required for good hygiene and safety. Good grooming and appearance are essential and standard for volunteers.

Sandals, shorts, jeans, stretch pants, sweat pants, sunglasses, hats, caps, or flowers in hair are not permitted. Electronic devices that will distract from duties, including headphones, or cell phones are not permitted while on duty. Volunteers are not allowed to chew gum while volunteering. Absolutely no smoking is permitted anywhere on either hospital campus.
The final touch—your name badge and a smile!

As a volunteer, you will interact with patients and their families. Use the following “HELLO” welcome method as a guide:

HELLO

(H)umankindness

- Introduce yourself by name and role
- Smile. Offer a warm welcome.
- End with a good-bye or thank you
- Speak well of others and the organization
- Help when and where you can

(E)ye Contact

- 10 feet – Acknowledge by smiling, nodding, showing positive body language
- 5 feet – Verbally acknowledge. “Hello, how may I help you?” or “Good Morning”

(L)isten

- Position your body toward the other person
- Listen and watch for non-verbal cues
- Focus your attention

(L)earn

- Being in the hospital can be scary and stressful for patients and families. “Our team will take excellent care of you.”
- Take in the surroundings of an individual

(O)ffer Assistance

- Provide assistance in every possible way. “I am happy to walk you there.”
- Offer a wheelchair if the patient has a cane or seems to be struggling.
- Replace the phrase “I don’t know” with “let me find the answer for you.” Avoid saying no and focus on what you can do for your patient/visitor.

Confidentiality

Information concerning the care of a patient is always confidential in nature and, therefore, any information about his/her condition, care, treatment, personal data or even their presence is absolutely confidential and must not be discussed with anyone other than those directly responsible for his/her care and treatment.

Release or discussion of any confidential information is a violation of hospital ethics, and the law, and will result in the immediately dismissal from the program.

Services Available

Every task is important and necessary to the care of our patients and comfort of our visitors.

When you are scheduled to assist in a particular area, the hospital personnel for that area depends on you to be there. By not showing up, you show a lack of responsibility and interest. We count on you to be responsible for upholding your commitment.

YOU CAN SERVE BY:

- Making in-hospital deliveries and running errands for patients and/or staff
- Assisting staff transporting a patient on a gurney, only if staff is present – do not transport a patient or guest in wheelchairs
- Distributing complimentary magazines and books from the Care Cart or Auxiliary office
- Greeting and escorting visitors
- Giving routine information
- Performing clerical tasks

- Delivering flowers, or other items

DO NOT:

- Give patients permission to smoke, eat additional or different food, or drink water without asking the head nurse or nurse in charge;
- Dispense medication/narcotics or deliver specimens to lab;
- Transport patient or guest in a wheelchair unless it is an urgent situation;
- Enter a patient room while treatment is being administered or the door is closed. If the door is closed, knock first and ask for permission to enter the room. Use good judgement when entering a room;
- Assist a patient in or out of bed or a wheelchair, to the bathroom, or otherwise move a patient in any way;
- Enter the newborn nursery for any reason unless assigned to work there;
- Read patient charts;
- Accept or report medical information;
- Handle bedpans;
- Go into any room marked “isolation”;
- Enter medicine rooms;
- Change assignments without informing the Volunteer Services Department;
- Use the hospital’s phones for personal use;
- Enter the Doctors’ lounge;
- Read or photocopy patient medical records or other confidential documents;
- Feed patients;
- Perform chest compressions – even if you may CPR certified, DO NOT perform any form of medical attention;
- Discuss your or your family’s physical or medical conditions/treatments;
- Chew gum while on duty;
- Smoke anywhere on the hospital campus;
- Talk or text on your cell phone or electronic device while volunteering – unless on your provided break/lunch;
- Visit family or friends at Mercy Hospital as patients while on duty;
- Use hospital computers for personal use;
- Handle sealed valuable bags;
- Take vitals;
- Discuss religion, politics, or give any medical advice;
- Act as a witness;
- Accept tips for services;
- Translate for patients – you may provide basic information to visitors in another language they may better understand, e.g.: directions to cafeteria, wait time, etc., but DO NOT translate for patients under any circumstances.

Ethics

As a Volunteer, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Be punctual in arriving and performing duties.
- Maintain a professional attitude.
- Understand that everything seen and heard at the hospital must be held in complete confidence. ALL information acquired about a patient, even their presence, is completely confidential and should not be discussed with anyone.
- Check with the Volunteer Services Department before leaving your assigned area of services to work or help in another area.
- Notify the Volunteer Services Department if you are unable to work because of illness or other reasons.
- Be in complete uniform while on duty.
- Accept supervision, suggestions, or correction.
- If you have any questions, concerns, or problems regarding a person or the hospital, talk to Volunteer Services Department.
- Avoid discussing religion or politics with patients or offering any medical advice.
- Do not accept tips for services.

Attendance

At the beginning of each shift, you will log into Volgistics. You are protected by insurance only while you are working your assigned service in the hospital after you have signed in.

The Mercy Hospital Volunteer sign-in book is kept in the Auxiliary office at the Downtown campus and at the Information Desk at the Southwest campus. This book will only be used if the Volgistics system is not working.

You are required to sign in, as it allows us to keep track of your hours and to know where you are in the hospital in case of an emergency. If your hours are not recorded, you weren't here.

If you find it necessary to leave the hospital grounds while on duty, notify the Volunteer Services and someone else in your area, if available, before leaving.

If you are ill, please do not report for duty. The kindest gesture you can make to our patients is to notify your assigned supervisor AND the Volunteer Services Department of your absence so we can schedule a substitute. If you are absent from three of your scheduled days without notifying the office, you will be replaced.

Mercy Hospital Downtown (661) 632-5000
Mercy Hospital Southwest (661) 663-6000
Friends of Mercy Foundation/Volunteer Services Department (661) 663-6700
Auxiliary Office Number
 Downtown (661) 632-5613
 Southwest (661) 663-6681

Probation

A new member shall be on probation for two months. During which time they shall complete their training. If a probationary member misses two consecutive shifts without calling into Volunteer Services they will be dropped immediately.

Occurrences

An occurrence of absenteeism is defined as one day or consecutive days of unscheduled absence during which time the volunteer has not returned.

- **2 Occurrences** – Verbal discussion and documentation
- **3 Occurrences** – Written statement to volunteer file with one day suspension
- **4 Occurrences** – Termination from program

Hours

You are required to work a minimum of two shifts per month in order to remain active. We will make every effort to assign volunteers to the areas they request; however, this is not always possible. You will be given credit for all of the hours recorded in Volgistics.

Cafeteria

Volunteers receive a meal in the hospital cafeteria on the day of their assignment only. You must be in uniform and wearing your badge. A 15-minute break and a half-hour lunch break are granted within a four (4) hour shift. Notify your on-site supervisor when taking your break.

Telephone Calls

Do not make phone calls of a personal nature through the hospital telephones.

Parking

Volunteers may park in designated employee parking at each campus. Never park in any areas designated for physicians, staff, clergy, outpatients, and emergency parking.

Hospital Security will issue written warnings to vehicles in violation of the hospitals' parking policies. Repeated violations may result in suspension from the program.

While the hospital tries to provide a degree of security for all vehicles by patrolling the lots, it cannot be responsible for fire, theft, vandalism, or damage to vehicles parked on its property.

Loss of Property

All areas of the hospital may be vulnerable to theft. We recommend that you keep a small change and your keys in your pocket. If you lose anything or suspect something has been stolen,

immediately notify the Security and Volunteer Services Department.

Helpful Hints to Accomplish Great Service

Answering the Telephone

“Mercy Hospital Downtown/Southwest dept./location, name speaking, how may I help you?”

Holding for long periods can be very frustrating for someone who is waiting to get through to a sick friend or relative. Be aware when you have someone on hold, and do your best to keep their holding time to a minimum. If needed, reconnect with caller by saying “our apologies for the wait, we will have an answer for you shortly”.

Difficult Situations

If you encounter a difficult situation or difficult people while volunteering at the hospital, handle these situations as professionally as possible.

If you ever feel like you cannot perform your volunteer assignment while at the hospital, regardless of reason, please contact the Volunteer Services department immediately.

Diversity

Mercy Hospitals’ staff, physicians, and volunteers are here to care for all individuals regardless of age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability to pay. Respect people’s differences with compassion and understanding.

Fire and Disaster

A fire located in the hospital is announced by the switchboard operator over the public address system and is referred to as a “Code Red.”

“Code Red (location)” indicates that there is an actual fire at the location announced.

“Code Red, all clear” indicates that the fire is out and it is safe to return to normal activities.

When “Code Red” is announced, you should report to the department supervisor you are

assigned. If you are caught between stations, report to the nearest station supervisor.

DO NOT use the elevators.

DO NOT alarm patients.

CLOSE any open doors near you.

If you see a fire, calmly tell the first available nurse or supervisor, or dial 7777 and calmly inform the operator of the fire’s location.

Fire drills are held regularly and all volunteers are to respond as promptly for the drill as for an actual fire.

When the alarm is activated, the chimes ring, followed by an announcement of the code and exact location.

Following is a list of the hospital’s emergency codes. All volunteers will receive an orientation to hospital emergency codes during initial orientation. You may also find a guide of all codes and their meanings on your identification badge.

CODES

See identification badge.

To report all codes, dial 7777.

On occasion, you will hear certain alerts called overhead including “ABC Alert”, “Stroke Alert”, and “Sepsis Alert”. These alerts are meant to inform hospital personnel of a patient showing significant change in their condition (ABC Alert); are experiencing a stroke (Stroke Alert); or are suspected to be suffering from Sepsis (Sepsis Alert). No action is to be taken on your part.

Personal Injury

If you are injured while on duty at Mercy Hospital:

- Immediately report the injury to the supervisor in your assigned area, who will complete an incident report and advise you

whether to report to the Employee Health Department or Emergency Department.

- Notify the Volunteer Services Department of the injury as soon as possible.

Infection Control

Hand washing is the single most important and most effective way of preventing the spread of infection. Following are times when you should wash your hands:

- Upon arrival to work
- Following delivery to a patient room
- After using the bathroom
- Before leaving your work area to go home
- After removing personal protective equipment, e.g., gloves, gown, etc.
- Use warm water, soap, and friction for 30 seconds
- Follow handwashing with alcohol-based hand sanitizer provided throughout the hospital

ISOLATION ROOMS

Do not enter any patient room/area that is marked as an isolation room. If you are unsure if a room's status, verify with a staff member prior to entering.

DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT

Mercy Hospitals provides a healthful environment therefore, smoking, illegal or intoxicating drug use and alcoholic beverage use is prohibited.

Smoking and the use of tobacco in any form are prohibited on all Mercy Hospital campuses, including private vehicles and/or Hospital vehicles.

The manufacture, transport, distribution, dispensing, possession, sale or use of any alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on Mercy Hospitals' property, while on duty, or while operating a vehicle owned, leased or used by Mercy Hospitals, is prohibited. Any of these actions may result in corrective action up to and including termination.

Because drug and alcoholic beverage use has a negative effect on the workplace and the patient care environment, Mercy Hospitals will enforce a policy of testing for reasonable suspicion.

Harassment

Sexual or racial harassment, in all forms, are not tolerated. If you ever feel mistreated, or harassed, contact the Volunteer Services Department immediately by calling (661) 63-6700 or visit the Friends of Mercy Foundation located in the Operations building at Mercy Southwest.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances; or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior which may include but are not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Offering benefits in exchange for sexual favors, making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
- **Visual conduct:** leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters

- **Verbal conduct:** making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, and jokes
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations
- **Physical conduct:** touching, assault, impeding, or blocking movement
- Any volunteer who feels mistreated in this manner is urged to contact the Volunteer Services Department immediately for assistance.

Corrective Action

The Volunteer Services department will communicate with volunteers experiencing work performance issues, inappropriate placement, unsatisfactory behavior, or violation of hospital or departmental policies and procedures.

Disregard of hospital policies by a volunteer such as theft, drinking alcohol while on duty, using or being under the influence of controlled substances, inappropriate behavior, violation of patient confidentiality, etc., will result in dismissal by Volunteer Services.

Open Door Policy

The Volunteer Services department maintains an open door policy. Should you have any questions or concerns, you may:

- Call our office at (661) 663-6700
- Email the Foundation/Volunteer depts. at MercyVolunteer@DignityHealth.org
- Visit our office at 551 Shanley Court, Bakersfield, CA 93311. We are located south of the Emergency department off Old River.