

Rhyme & Reason Volunteer Policy & Procedures

1. **APPLICATION:** All ministry Volunteer applicants must complete the Volunteer Application, including providing two references and giving voluntary consent to a background check.
2. **REFERENCE CHECK:** All references will be contacted and asked to assess the applicant's suitability and capability for working with R&R participants.
3. **POLICIES & PROCEDURES:** Volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this document and sign the signature page indicating that they read and understood the material and policy requirements.
4. **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK:** Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. uses services of a reputable public data screening firm in order to check the background of all Volunteers for possible criminal history and registered sex offender information. Volunteers will be screened as required by R&R policies.
 - No one will be permitted to work with participants before a Criminal Background Check is completed.
 - If a Volunteer's Criminal Background Check flags obvious areas of concern, the individual will not be permitted to interact with participants without supervision. Supervised volunteering may be permitted at the discretion of Rhyme & Reason leaders.
 - Individuals who have been arrested for, charged with, are on deferred adjudication or regular probation for, or have been convicted of sex-related crimes, abuse, or neglect, either misdemeanor or felony, cannot serve in any area of youth ministry and must not be considered for supervised volunteering.
 - Results of all background checks will be maintained in the Personnel File for five years after the termination of Volunteer's tenure with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc..
5. **INTERVIEW:** All Volunteers must be willing to submit to an interview by Rhyme & Reason leader.

VOLUNTEER CONDUCT GUIDELINES

Safety & Integrity

1. When only one Volunteer is present with a participant or group of participants, the door must remain open with clear sight into the room.
2. Volunteers must remain under the supervision of the Volunteer Coordinator or other appointed R&R leader when they are interacting with participating clients.
3. Volunteers are not permitted to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at any Rhyme & Reason event. All Volunteers must abstain from the use or possession of tobacco, marijuana, illicit drugs, and alcohol while attending a Rhyme & Reason event or during interactions with participants.

Sexual Conduct

1. Volunteers should avoid placing themselves in any questionable positions or circumstances that could be interpreted either by the participant or by someone else as sexual misconduct. NEVER touch a participant in an inappropriate place or in an inappropriate way. Volunteers must be

above reproach in conversations and conduct in all interactions with participants. It is the responsibility of all Volunteers to guard themselves and our organization from even the appearance of sexual misconduct or harassment.

2. No romantic or physical relationship of any kind will be allowed between Volunteers and participating clients. Such action is grounds for immediate dismissal from a position at R&R and may be subject to legal action when appropriate.

These procedures have been established to protect participants, Volunteers, and Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc.

Overnight Policy

Volunteers and Employees are responsible for enforcing the following additional policies during overnight Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. events (i.e. Lock-in, Retreats, Camping, Mission Trips, etc.):

1. In “group” sleeping arrangements, male and female participants must sleep in separate areas. At least two chaperones of the same sex as participants must be present to supervise each group.
2. No visitation between genders is allowed during designated “lights out” time.
3. Participants may be relocated within group sleeping areas at the discretion of Employees and Volunteers (i.e. to prevent disruption, to prevent inappropriate physical contact, or to prevent unwanted physical contact).

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES

Allergies and Medical Conditions

1. Employees and Volunteers should encourage all participants to fill out a Medical Information Form for each new participant. This should include all allergies, dietary restrictions, and medical conditions the participant/guardian is aware of.
2. Rhyme & Reason Employees and Volunteers are not allowed to administer medication unless a current Authorization to Dispense Prescribed Medication Form is on file. This Authorization must include the correct dosage, time, and dispensing instructions. Participants must also provide a way to be contacted by an Employee to answer any dispensing questions. If an Authorization is not on file, only guardians/emancipated participants will be allowed to administer medication. Volunteers are not permitted to dispense medication under any circumstances.

Food & Snacks

Prior to planning snacks or meals for an event, Volunteers are responsible for consulting the Medical Information & Authorization Forms of all participants in attendance for food allergies, sensitivities, or dietary restrictions. Meals and snacks must be planned accordingly. If a Volunteer is responsible for planning or preparing a meal or snack, and an Employee has not verified that there are no allergy concerns, the Volunteer should inquire about food allergies, sensitivities, or dietary restrictions. Volunteers will have access to Medical Information Forms in an emergency and must follow HIPAA regulations and confidentiality of information at all times.

Food Safety

1. **FOOD PREPARATION FOR RETREATS, MEETINGS, & EVENTS:** Food may be prepared in a commercial or non-commercial kitchen for Rhyme & Reason retreats and events as long as the food is provided to participants free-of-charge and is prepared by regular Employees or Volunteers participating in the event.

2. **FOOD PREPARATION FOR FUNDRAISERS:** For the purpose of fundraising, Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. may sell food prepared in a private or non-commercial kitchen up to 15 days per year. It is the responsibility of Employees to ensure planned events do not exceed this 15-day threshold. If the 15-day limit is exceeded, catering arrangements must be made with a commercial kitchen.
3. **FOOD SAFETY:** In order to prevent food-borne illness, the following precautions should be taken by all Employees and Volunteers preparing food:
 - Clean: Wash hands and food preparation surfaces often. Wash fresh fruits and vegetables carefully.
 - Separate: Don't cross-contaminate! When handling raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs, keep these foods and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods.
 - Cook: Cook to the proper temperature.
 - Chill: At room temperature, bacteria in food can double every 20 minutes. The more bacteria there are, the greater the chance individuals could become sick. So, refrigerate foods quickly because cold temperatures keep most harmful bacteria from multiplying.

SAFETY POLICIES

Participation & Attendance

While activities are in progress, participants must be in attendance if they are participating in the event. Volunteers and Employees are expected to enforce this policy and must not allow participants to roam away from the group.

MISSING OR RUNAWAY PARTICIPANT: Time is critical if a participant is missing. The Volunteer should call the police immediately with the following information:

- Name, age, gender
- Complete physical description: Color of hair, eyes, skin, weight, height, build, color of clothes worn when last seen, glasses, braces, etc.

As soon as the police have been notified, Volunteers should call the R&R Volunteer Coordinator who will call the participants' guardian/caregiver and Case Manager to inform them of the situation.

Pick-up & Drop-off Procedures

Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures are extremely important for security, safety, and accountability. Employees and Volunteers are responsible for enforcing and clearly communicating the following Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures

1. **DROP-OFF PROCEDURES:** For participant's safety, it is the responsibility of the guardian/caretaker or designated transporter to ensure their participant arrives safely at all Rhyme & Reason Ministry events, either by escorting them into the programming area and notifying an Employee or Volunteer of their arrival, or by contacting the event coordinator by cell phone.
2. **PICK-UP PROCEDURES:** It is the policy of Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. that a participant will not be released to any individual who is not named on the Authorization for Pick-up & Transport Form. Any changes to authorizations must be made in writing by the emancipated participant or guardian. A photo ID is required at time of pickup. Authorized individuals must sign the participant out with an Employee or Volunteer when removing them from Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. care.
3. **CUSTODY:** Due to the nature of custody laws, Volunteers and Employees must act diligently to ensure only authorized individuals are picking up participants in our care.

4. **IMPAIRED PERSON POLICY:** The safety of the participating person in Rhyme & Reason Ministry, inc. events are of paramount concern to our organization. It is the policy of Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. that a participant will not be released to an individual who appears to be affected by, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol. Both Volunteers and Employees are responsible for enforcing this policy to the best of their abilities. This policy will apply with equal force to all individuals, including a participant's parent, biological parent, or any other authorized adult. If a participant's parent, guardian, caregiver, or other authorized adult is under the influence and insists on taking the participant, the local Police Department must be contacted immediately.

Participant Protection & Abuse

Rhyme & Reason Ministry, inc. is a mandated reporter of suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Employees and Volunteers must report any suspected abuse under Indiana child abuse laws. The toll-free number for the Indiana Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline is 1-800-800-5556. The number for Indiana Adult Protective Services is 1-574- 235-5092. To make the report as complete as possible, Volunteers and Employees should gather all relevant information before a call is made.

Accidents & Incidents

1. Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. must take every precaution to reduce the risk of injury during activities, however, accidents do happen. If a Volunteer witnesses an accident, they should fill out an Accident/Incident Witness Report describing what happened and give the completed Form to an Employee. Employees are responsible for notifying participants' guardians/caregivers of all injuries. If the injury is moderate to serious, a guardian/caregiver must be notified immediately. In the event that a participant's parent/guardian and Emergency Contacts cannot be reached, the BDDS Case Manager should be called. If an injury is serious, call 911 immediately.
2. Employees are responsible for notifying guardians/caregivers of any notable incidents that occur. If a Volunteer witnesses an incident, they should fill out an Accident/Incident Witness Report describing what happened and give the completed Form to an Employee.
3. Volunteers and Employees are expected to exercise careful judgment when considering information that may be helpful for guardians/caregivers or Case Managers, and should err on the side of over-informing rather than under-informing.
4. If Employees and Volunteers believe someone may have ingested poison, action should be taken immediately! The toll-free number for the Poison Control Center Hotline is 1-800-222-1222.

General Rules & Expectations

Employees and Volunteers are responsible for clearly communicating and enforcing the following rules and policies:

1. Participants must ask for permission to leave the area where the group is meeting or an organized activity is being conducted
2. Games that pose a choking risk are NOT allowed under any circumstances (i.e. Chubby Bunny, Hot Dog Eating Contest)
3. Offensive or immodest clothing is not permitted and will be addressed and handled at the discretion of Rhyme & Reason Employees
4. Use of technology and cell phones may be limited or temporarily suspended at the discretion of Rhyme & Reason Employees and Volunteers
5. Appropriate language must be used at all times
6. When someone is speaking, others must listen respectfully

Open Communication & Support

1. Rhyme & Reason Ministry believes it is vital that open communication occurs among Employees, Volunteers, emancipated participants, Case Managers, guardians, and caregivers. It is the responsibility of Employees and Volunteers to treat emancipated participants, Case Managers, guardians, and caregivers with respect and courtesy, give encouragement and support, and show each person that they are our first priority. To this end, emancipated participants, Case Managers, guardians, and caregivers must be admitted to Rhyme & Reason events and given immediate access at any time.
2. Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. strives to provide a safe, secure, Christ-centered environment of support.

Volunteer Agreement: As a Volunteer for Rhyme & Reasons Ministry, Inc. I agree to:

1. Hold absolutely confidential all information that I may obtain, directly or indirectly, concerning participants and their families, Volunteers, or Employees.
2. Comply with and enforce Rhyme & Reason policies and procedures, and uphold their philosophy and standards.
3. Seek clarification from a supervising Employee or Volunteer Coordinator when necessary.
4. Donate my services to Rhyme & Reason without contemplation of compensation.
5. Be punctual and conscientious, and conduct myself with dignity, courtesy, and consideration for others.
6. Communicate any volunteering-related problems, concerns, differences of opinion, conflicts, or suggestions to the Volunteer Coordinator or supervising Employee.
7. Notify the Volunteer Coordinator or supervising Employee if I choose to discontinue my volunteer service.

I understand that the Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. Volunteer Coordinator or designated leadership reserves the right to terminate my Volunteer or Mentor status at their discretion and without notice.

I, _____, have read and understand the policies contained in this document. I also understand and agree with each of the above conditions.

Signature of Volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Name (Print): _____ Phone: _____

Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. Volunteer Release & Waiver of Liability

1. **Waiver and Release:** I, the Undersigned, release and forever discharge Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. and their successors and assigns from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind or nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise from my participation with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. ____
 - a. I understand and acknowledge that this release discharges Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. from any liability or claim that I may have against Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. with respect to bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, damage to personal property, or claims related to my participation with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. ____
 - b. I further agree to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. and its officers, agents, volunteers, and employees from any and all claims resulting from injuries, damages, and losses arising out of, connected with, incidental to, or in any way associated with my participation with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. ____
2. **Covenant Not to Sue:** In consideration for the opportunity to volunteer with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. I do hereby covenant not to sue or otherwise participate in any action against Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. arising out of, connected with, incidental to, or in any way associated with my participation with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. ____
3. **Assumption of Risk:** I recognize and acknowledge that there are certain risks of physical injury in connection with activities involving participants and volunteer work. I hereby expressly assume the risk of injury or harm from my participation with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. and release Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. from all liability for injury, illness, death, or property damage resulting from my participation with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. ____
4. **Indemnification:** I agree to indemnify and hold Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. harmless against any and all liability or loss, and against any and all claims or actions caused by or sustained in connection with my participation with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. Such indemnification extends to, but is not limited to, violations of any state, federal, or local statute, or state or federal regulation. Such indemnification also expressly extends to the defense of any such action or claim, and to any attorney's fees incurred by Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. in defense of such action or claim or in seeking enforcement of this indemnification obligation. ____
5. I expressly agree that this Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Indiana and that this Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Indiana. I agree that in the event that any clause or provision of this Release is deemed invalid, the enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Release shall not be affected. ____
6. I understand that my participation with Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. is strictly on a volunteer basis.

By signing below, I express my understanding and intent to enter into this Release and Waiver of Liability willingly and voluntarily.

X _____
Signature of Volunteer Date

Name of Volunteer (Print) Phone Number

Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. Volunteer Application Form

Please fill out this form and return to Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc. to receive consideration for a volunteer position. You may mail this form to our mailing address, attach it to an email to info@rhymeandreason.net or hand deliver a hard copy to the R&R Volunteer Coordinator.

Rhyme & Reason is a 501(c)(3) organization working in the Northern Indiana area to provide activities and services helping those with emotional social and behavioral challenges make sense of their lives and find their purpose. We invite volunteers over the age of 21 and of any race or creed to engage with our clients at our site, online, and by providing various services.

After we receive your application, we will contact you and arrange for an interview in person or by phone with our Volunteer Coordinator. All information on this form will be kept confidential and will help us find the perfect volunteer project for you. Please be advised that, since we work with a vulnerable population, we require a criminal background check. We will advise how this may be done in the most efficient way.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____ Date of Birth: _____

SS# for Background Checks: _____ Alias: _____

Employer (if applicable) _____

Do you have skills, special interests or experience that you would like us to consider when placing you into an appropriate position?

Here are some of the volunteer positions we offer. Please check the ones you would be most interested in.

- Office help (routine office tasks on a specific day of the week).
- Events (fundraising events, client get-togethers, celebratory events, Social Club activities).
- Fundraising (telephone calls, writing thank you notes, grant writing, silent auction donations).
- Communications (writing for publications, FaceBook, blogs and other social media, fundraising messages, website articles).
- Transportation (Car and proof of insurance required. Taking clients to doctor's appointments, shopping, to a religious service, R&R Social Club Activities, etc.).
- Teaching (nutrition, how to use a computer, how to use social media, how to use Zoom, Facetime, and other communication apps).
- Other: _____

How many hours are you available per week? _____

What days/times are you usually available?

| Day | Morning | Afternoon | Evening |
|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
| Friday | | | |
| Saturday | | | |
| Sunday | | | |

Please describe any physical limitations:

Emergency contact:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Relationship: _____

Please provide the names and contact information of two character references:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Name: | |
| Telephone: | |
| Relationship: | |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Name: | |
| Telephone: | |
| Relationship: | |

Liability Release: *As a volunteer of Rhyme & Reason Ministry, Inc., I agree to abide by all policies and procedures as spelled out in the volunteer handbook. I understand that I volunteer at my own risk and neither the organization nor its employees assume any liability for any accidental injury or health problem arising from volunteer work I perform for the organization. I agree that all work I do is on a volunteer basis and I am not eligible to receive any monetary payment or reward.*

Signature: _____

Date: _____