

## Department of Kansas - VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program

**Becoming a hospital volunteer** is a rewarding way to spend your time. People who donate their time, skills and energy to hospital communities play a crucial role in the healthcare and emotional well-being of patients receiving care. By spending time with patients, delivering gifts or speaking with family members, volunteers lift people's spirits.

When volunteers complete tasks and other duties, nurses, patient advocates, doctors and technicians are able to focus their time and energy on providing sick or injured people with the medical services they need.

If you have a special skill, or you really enjoy helping people in need, you should consider volunteering time at a hospital or other medical care facility. Volunteers can typically make their own schedules, and the most positions offer a lot of flexibility. As volunteers work to provide support for sick or injured patients, it's important that they have a cheerful demeanor and kind disposition. Expectations are high for volunteers, and the position sometimes can be very emotional. However, the sense of reward volunteers often feel contribute to an overall positive environment.

### **Five Steps on How To VOLUNTEER AT A HOSPITAL**

#### **1. Contact your local hospital, nursing home, medical facility or volunteer center.**

Visit your local hospital and search for the volunteer services department. Contact volunteer services by phone or email and ask what opportunities are available.. Review the positions available and consider what way you would most like to help.

#### **2. Complete a volunteer application**

You may be able to find this application online, or you may need to request it from someone working in your local hospital volunteer services department. Your application is likely to ask for your full legal name, any previous names you've had and a consent for a background check; Background checks are essential for ensuring the safety and well-being of patients, doctors, volunteers and other personnel; and may also include a skills section, and space for your basic history.

#### **3. Take a physical exam and/or required vaccinations (varies by facility)**

Most hospitals ask that their volunteers complete a physical exam to determine their wellness and ability to complete certain types of tasks. Getting a physical exam / vaccinations benefits volunteers and it helps maintain a safe and healthy environment for doctors, patients, volunteers and other hospital personnel.

#### **4. Interview with a volunteer coordinator.**

After submitting an application and completing a background check and physical examination, the next step to becoming a hospital volunteer is to have an interview with the volunteer coordinator. Most likely, the volunteer coordinator will contact you via email or phone call. Your volunteer interview will be like that of an interview for a paid position. The coordinator may ask questions about your work history and volunteer history, and they're likely to want to hear about times in which you have volunteered in the past.

#### **5. Complete your orientation session**

After being screened and interviewed, the final step to becoming a hospital volunteer is to complete your orientation session. Every hospital will have its own unique orientation process, which is likely to include safety procedures and other important information. This is where you will meet other volunteers and receive training on how to interact with patients. Your training session or sessions may be done in person or online, and they may take place over the course of a day, weekend or week. These sessions will explain the expectations for volunteers. This final step is crucial to the volunteer process, as this is where you are likely to learn the specifications of your assignments.

Volunteering is a profound way to give back and make a positive difference in the lives of our veterans and others. Hospitals and care centers are constantly in need of volunteers who can provide assistance and compassion to patients, residents, and healthcare professionals. Whether you're interested in healthcare, seeking personal growth or simply want to help, volunteering at these facilities can be an enriching experience.

### **National Nonprofit Day** (August 17th) and **Giving Tuesday** (the Tuesday after

Thanksgiving) are two "holidays" which can be utilized to encourage members and non-members to not just to give financially, but challenge people to give their time.