



Make-A-Wish[®]
Volunteer
Handbook





Welcome to Make-A-Wish® Illinois!

I want to be one of the first to thank you for making the decision to join our organization. You are joining a great team of more than 1,500 volunteers at our chapter who contribute one of your most valuable resources – your time.

Make-A-Wish could not carry out the mission of this organization without our volunteers. As the backbone of our organization, volunteers support our families, grant wishes, ensure we host successful events, and spread the word about our mission. The following handbook will ensure that your volunteer experience is both productive and fulfilling.

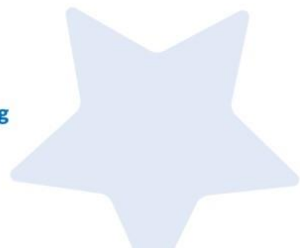
On behalf of the thousands of children and families who will benefit from your gift of time and talent, thank you! We hope Make-A-Wish becomes a vital part of your life.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Springs". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Stephanie Springs,

CEO, Make-A-Wish Illinois



*I wish to go
to Saturn on
a rocket ship*

Zayden, 7
heart condition



Volunteering with Make-A-Wish

As a volunteer, you have the freedom to decide when and how you would like to dedicate your time and talents to meet the needs of our chapter.

There are vast differences among volunteers, staff, wish families, donors and the general public. As a community of diverse individuals, we strive to focus on our common commitment to the organization and its mission. As a Make-A-Wish representative, it is imperative that we all work together to support our mission.

We ask that you always represent Make-A-Wish in a professional and business-like manner. If someone is rude or difficult, please contact chapter staff.

If you have questions regarding a specific practice, policy or procedure, please discuss it with a member of chapter leadership. Volunteers should not depart from the established policies and procedures.

Sometimes things go wrong, accidents happen or mistakes are made. Chapter staff are here to support you in your role. Please reach out if something occurs so we can work with you to find an appropriate resolution.



Transform the life of a child battling a critical illness, while positively impacting the family and community.



Learn specific skills needed to succeed in your role via role-specific trainings.



Utilize skills, talents and interests that may not be used in your day-to-day life.



Share your knowledge, wisdom and experience with other volunteers.



Meet new people, develop new skills and discover new experiences.



Bring joy and hope to those who receive wishes.

Expectations of Volunteers and Staff

Volunteers contribute their skills and talents across a broad range of roles at Make-A-Wish. Staff are committed to providing sound guidance and direction throughout a volunteer's tenure with the organization. To ensure success as a volunteer, all volunteers should:

- ☆ Have a clear understanding of job expectations, including duties, responsibilities, time commitment and support structure.
- ☆ Be given opportunities for leadership and a variety of experiences.
- ☆ Be kept informed about organizational policy, people and programs.
- ☆ Have safe working conditions and have risks explained.
- ☆ Arrive on time for scheduled shifts, trainings and meetings.
- ☆ Remove themselves from any situation that they deem inappropriate or uncomfortable and then report back to their volunteer manager for further instructions.

MUTUAL RESPECT

- ☆ Volunteers are expected to be mission-focused, committed and cooperative.
- ☆ Volunteers are expected to talk positively to the community, at all times, when referring to other volunteers, donors, staff and the work of Make-A-Wish.
- ☆ Staff are expected to be collaborative, professional and appreciative of the best intentions of every volunteer.
- ☆ Staff are expected to adhere to policies and procedures that protect the interest and safety of all individuals involved with Make-A-Wish.





*I wish to take care
of the world*

Amelia, 8
brain tumor

Conflict of Interest and Ethics Assurance

As a volunteer with Make-A-Wish, you have an obligation to comply with the highest standards of ethical conduct. Upon engagement with Make-A-Wish, and every year thereafter, all volunteers must sign an Annual Conflict of Interest and Ethics Assurance Statement. [The Annual Conflict of Interest and Ethics Assurance Statement](#), in its entirety, can be found in the Appendix.

Confidentiality

All information regarding Make-A-Wish, wish children and their families, donors and volunteers that has not been released publicly, is confidential. Volunteers must refrain from using or appearing to use confidential information acquired in the course of their service for unethical or illegal advantage, either personally or through third parties. During their involvement with Make-A-Wish and thereafter, volunteers must maintain the confidentiality of any such information unless legally obligated to do otherwise. No such information shall be released without appropriate authorization.

IN TERMS OF THE MEDIA

It is important to remember that some wishes are not publicity eligible. This means that the family has expressed the desire that there be no publicity associated with their child's wish. If they have checked the "prefer no publicity" box on the Make-A-Wish Liability Release & Authorization Re: Medical Information and Publicity Form, we must respect their desires to the extent we can.

Families who have agreed to publicity may have their experience shared with the media. Please contact chapter staff before reaching out to the media and/or creating any public announcements regarding the wish.

IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY MEDIA

If approached by the media, please contact chapter staff prior to sharing any information. If chapter staff have approved this opportunity, you may only speak to the press about your role as a volunteer. This means that you can only share your story about working with our incredible wish kids and publicly released information regarding our mission. You cannot discuss personal information about the wish child and family or information about Make-A-Wish. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, do NOT respond. Simply refer the media person to the chapter office.

*I wish to meet
a unicorn*

Charlotte, 5
blood disorder



Conflict Resolution

Every reasonable effort should be made to solve problems cooperatively and informally. Our goal is to achieve speedy and effective resolution in a confidential manner.

All involved parties should work together to come to a mutual understanding of the differences. If the conflict remains after several unsuccessful attempts to resolve, chapter staff should be consulted.

Policies, Guidelines and Procedures



NON-DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination based on race, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, age, physical or mental disability, citizenship, genetic information, or veteran status, as well as any other protected class under applicable federal, state or local laws will not be tolerated.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while volunteering poses serious health and safety risks to staff, volunteers and wish families. Make-A-Wish prohibits the following behavior while on Make-A-Wish premises or while performing Make-A-Wish business:

- ☆ Use, abuse or being under the influence of illegal drugs (under state and federal laws), prescription medication obtained illegally, alcohol or other impairing substances.
- ☆ The sale, purchase, transfer, manufacture, transit or possession of any illegal or unauthorized drugs, including prescription medication obtained illegally.
- ☆ The illegal use or abuse of valid prescription medications.

Volunteers are subject to immediate dismissal if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing their volunteer duties.

ILLEGAL OR UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR

The use of the Make-A-Wish name, trademarks, equipment or materials for any illegal, unethical or unauthorized purposes is prohibited.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICS ASSURANCE

All volunteers are bound by the Annual Conflict of Interest and Ethics Assurance Statement contained within the Appendix of this handbook.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Due to the nature of our work, select volunteers who have access to wish children, Make-A-Wish funds or confidential information must successfully complete a criminal background check every three years. Make-A-Wish does not employ or utilize as a volunteer any individual who has been convicted of a crime that victimizes children, involves violence, fraud or significant theft.

THEFT

Theft negatively affects not only our ability to deliver services but also the trust upon which our organization operates. Theft is cause for immediate dismissal and should be reported immediately to the CEO.

CHILD ABUSE, SEXUAL ABUSE, PHYSICAL, MENTAL OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT

As a general rule, volunteers are not mandated reporters in their role with Make-A-Wish. If, as a Make-A-Wish volunteer, you see something that you feel should be reported, please contact chapter staff. However, if a volunteer is a mandatory reporter by profession (i.e., a social worker, pastor, doctor, etc.), he/she is obligated, in that capacity, to report any suspicions in an official manner.

INVOLVING UNAUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS

Individuals (e.g., family members, significant others, friends, etc.) who have not gone through the formal volunteer process (e.g., training, background checks, etc.) and received appropriate chapter approval are not authorized to participate in activities that require authorized Make-A-Wish volunteers. Such instances include, but are not limited to, wish interviews, wish reveals/announcements and wish presentation parties.

PROPERTY

Any material, including photographs and videos, captured as part of your involvement with Make-A-Wish are the property of Make-A-Wish and cannot be used for personal gain.

SMOKE- FREE ENVIRONMENT

In an effort to achieve a safe and healthy environment, smoking is prohibited while serving in an official Make-A-Wish capacity. For purposes of this policy, smoking includes lighting, smoking and/or carrying a lighted cigarette, cigar or pipe, as well as the use of e-cigarettes or any other smoking device.

REIMBURSEMENTS

As a Make-A-Wish volunteer, the chapter will reimburse you for any pre-approved expense that was discussed with chapter staff. The request for reimbursement and documentation supporting the request must be submitted to chapter staff after the expense has occurred or after the conclusion of the wish.

For wish granters, you will be given an amount to spend on each wish child's wish boosts.

AGE LIMITATIONS

The minimum age for most volunteer opportunities is 18 years.



LIMITATIONS ON VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Volunteers may voluntarily leave Make-A-Wish at any time and may be asked to leave the organization at anytime.

TRANSPORTING WISH KIDS/FAMILIES

Volunteers should not transport wish children and/or families in their personal vehicles. If there is a need to transport a wish family from one point to another, a licensed third party driver should be coordinated.

TRANSFERS

When possible, volunteers may choose to pursue a new volunteer opportunity with the chapter. Current volunteers who are interested in a new role with the chapter should notify staff to determine next steps/requirements for that particular role.

ACTIVE/INACTIVE VOLUNTEER STATUS

All volunteers are required to participate in two events, wishes and/or engagement opportunities annually to remain on active status. If these minimum requirements are not fulfilled, the volunteer will be considered inactive.

A volunteer may, at any time, need to “take a break” from their volunteer role with Make-A-Wish due to personal circumstances or other obligations. We ask that you inform us of your need to step away from volunteering and let us know if/when you anticipate returning.

DRESS CODE

Volunteers shall dress professionally and appropriately for the environment in which they are working.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In the event of a medical emergency and/or incident while serving as a Make-A-Wish volunteer, please seek appropriate care and contact chapter staff as soon as you are able.



*I wish to have
a treehouse*

Bowde, 4
cancer



Closing

We are excited you have joined us, and we look forward to a mutually beneficial relationship as we work together to grant wishes to children with critical illnesses. We welcome your ideas, questions and concerns and encourage you to work collaboratively with staff in your role.

When we work together to grant wishes, we do even more than bring joy to children with critical illnesses. We also give them an edge in conquering their illnesses. Researchers studied the effects of granting wishes on children with cancer, and found significant improvements in hope, positive emotions, health-related quality of life and anxiety.*

We hope you find your volunteer work to be impactful and meaningful. It is your commitment, and that of volunteers like you, that allows our chapter to grant the wishes of children within our territory.

*Shoshani, A. Mifano, K. Czamanski-Cohen, J. (2015). The effects of the Make a Wish intervention on psychiatric symptoms and health-related quality of life of children with cancer: a randomized controlled trial. *Quality of Life Research*, 25(5), 1209-1218. doi 10.1007/s11136-015-1148-7