



## **Volunteer Protocol**

This protocol is to help you understand what to expect and how to act, so that you will have a positive experience. Your positive interactions with the students will also boost their confidence and experience at ScenicView Academy. By adhering to the guidelines of this document, you, the students, and the staff will have a smooth and fun experience. Thank you for choosing to spend your time and energy to volunteer with us. We really appreciate it!

Our students may have high-functioning Autism, ADHD, learning disabilities, or other neurodiversities. Due to this, many of our students do not understand social cues. They may do or say things that appear to be inappropriate at times or as younger than their chronological age. However, they are adults and understand when they're treated as children or as a "charity case." The primary service you are offering to our students is the opportunity to learn from individuals their age that have similar life experiences. In order for the students to best learn from their interactions with you, please keep in mind the following:

1. Please provide proof of vaccination prior to your volunteer experience. You may be required to wear a mask and social distance while on ScenicView's campus.
2. It is your responsibility to keep track of your hours and your volunteer paperwork.
3. Do not abuse our students in any way, including physically, verbally, sexually, financially, or mentally.
4. You are required to keep all information of students confidential. Please don't share their names, photographs, or any stories revealing their identities to anyone. We ask that you keep any private information confidential and to report it to a Thrive staff or Mentor if you hear anything that you feel is too personal and should be addressed with the student. As part of confidentiality, we ask that you do not take any photographs or videos of our students unless you have each of them sign a photo/video release and consent form previously approved by Thrive Program Manager.
5. Please be a positive role model. You are demonstrating pro-social behaviors to our students. If you choose to engage in inappropriate social behaviors, then you are signaling that it is okay for them to do the same.
6. Remember that this is for the SVA students – not you. If the students are not being assertive, please don't take over. Instead, help the students take initiative.
7. Please dress comfortably for your volunteer experience. You might be required to move about, depending on the class that you will be volunteering in. Please be aware of the classes you will be involved in and to dress accordingly.

8. Be aware your classroom paperwork for volunteering can only be signed by a Thrive staff or the Thrive Program Manager.
9. Please be consistent. We will expect you to come on the days you say you will come. We will notice when you don't show up. If you cannot volunteer during your scheduled appointments, then please email the Thrive staff at least a day ahead.
10. Please sign in and out at the Front Desk during business hours and at the Mentor Office after business hours.
11. Mealtimes are 12 PM - 1 PM and 6 PM - 6:30 PM. We encourage you to bring a meal with you while you eat and socialize with students.
12. There may be times without programming for you to attend (in between classes or activities). It is your responsibility to find students and socialize with them. We have a Wii and board games available for you to use. Students also enjoy chatting about their special interests.
13. When you are attending a class, please be a mentor to our students. If there are an abundance of volunteers in a given class, you may be a mentor to a specific student. Encourage them to participate in class. Participate in class as you see fit – asking questions, commenting, etc. We ask that you not sit in silence for the duration of the class. You are also welcome to teach a class to gain more experience. Please coordinate teaching a class with the teacher you're volunteering with.
14. As a volunteer, you will be viewed as staff. We ask that you not give out your phone number, email, social media, etc. to any of our students during your time as a volunteer. If a student asks for any of the above while volunteering, you should politely decline. After you are finished with your volunteer work, we recommend you to not give out your personal information, nor ask for our students' information, but it is your choice whether or not you choose to befriend them after your volunteer experience.
15. As a general rule, please don't be sarcastic. Some of our students take things literally and sarcasm can be hurtful. Teasing may also be confusing to many of our students. We ask that you use the student's chosen name and avoid using or giving nicknames.
16. Don't use your baby voice as it is belittling. Our students are adults and should be treated as such. Being overly enthusiastic may also come across as "babying." The best policy is to match the student. If they're more enthusiastic, then be enthusiastic. If they're more laid back, then be more laid back. Please treat our students with respect and dignity.
17. As a general rule, please don't touch the students. Many of our students have sensory sensitivities. Touching may be overwhelming to them. In addition, it may send wrong messages. Once you get to know the students and they are comfortable with

touch, then you can go ahead with appropriate touch like: high-fives, fist bumps, pat on the shoulder, etc.

18. Please let the students know if they are making you feel uncomfortable. We seek to improve their social skills here and you are a big part of that process. Gently correct them when they are socially inappropriate – and do it discreetly.

19. Avoid being alone with a student. Time spent with students in groups or public areas ensure safety for you and for our students.

20. Please keep your devices off and/or out of sight during programming and while spending time with students.

21. Smoking, drinking, and illicit drug use are not allowed on facility grounds. In addition, we ask that you not partake of any of these substances before your volunteer experience.

22. Please gain permission prior to using our equipment and resources. Please treat our campus and ScenicView equipment and resources with care.

23. This document was not created to prevent meaningful friendships and relationships with our students. If you and a student have genuine connection and interest in each other, please visit with the Thrive Program Manager regarding an exception to this agreement.

24. Bottom line – please communicate with the Thrive staff.

As a volunteer at ScenicView Academy, I have read and understand the rules and regulations I am to adhere to at all times. I understand that ScenicView Academy has the right to dismiss any volunteer at their discretion for any reason.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_