WORLD OF WONDER

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Volunteer Handbook

Welcome!

Welcome to volunteering at WOW! Children's Museum! WOW! is a community-supported 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Our mission is to inspire every child's learning through play. Our vision is to provide exceptional play-based learning for the diverse families of our communities; inspiring all families to nurture their children's curiosity and spark a lifelong love of learning. By volunteering at WOW! you are helping to make a difference in the lives of children, families, and our community. Our volunteers are a vital resource for our organization and help us to fulfill our mission. Whether you volunteer behind the scenes or on the Museum floor with our guests, your time is very valuable and deeply appreciated.

We feel confident that volunteering at WOW! will be a fun and rewarding experience. We have created this handbook to help you know more about WOW! and understand our policies and procedures. We appreciate you joining our team!

WOW! Children's Museum Staff

About the Museum

Mission

To inspire every child’s learning through play.

Vision

To provide exceptional play-based learning for the diverse families of our communities; inspiring all families to nurture their children’s curiosity and spark a lifelong love of learning.

Our Values

We believe in the potential of all children. We champion learning through play. We are dedicated to excellence and play-based learning. We value creative collaboration. We celebrate diversity. We welcome all to play and learn with us.

Museum Hours

Tuesday-Saturday: 9:00 am to 5:00pm

Sunday: Private parties only

Monday: Closed to the public, open for field trips

Holidays

WOW! Children's Museum follows the Boulder Valley School District calendar. WOW! is open on Mondays for Boulder Valley School Holidays (MLK Jr. Day, President's Day, Spring Break, Thanksgiving week, and Winter Break). WOW! is closed for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

Museum Admission

Members Play for Free! Children Ages 1-11: $15 per child

Adults: $9

Under age 1: free

Museum admission is valid all day!

Museum Guidelines

- Adult supervision is required at all times.
- Accompanying adults should maintain visual contact with their children during Museum visit.
- Adults are invited and encouraged to participate in Museum activities with the children.
- To provide a fun and safe experience for all, please encourage your children to use WALKING FEET and INSIDE VOICES.
- The Museum has a snack area and outdoor picnic tables for your use. Please keep all food and drinks within these areas.
- The Museum is a smoke-free and gum-free environment.
- For the safety and well-being of all Museum patrons and staff, please do not visit if you or anyone in your party doesn't feel well or has a fever.

About Volunteering

How do I become a WOW! Volunteer?

- Fill out a volunteer interest form on our website.
- Undergo a background check (if over 18).
- Complete the volunteer agreement.
- Review and acknowledge receipt of the handbook.
- Attend training.
- Create a volunteer schedule.

What is expected of me as a volunteer?

- Commit to volunteering at least 25 hours, or 6 months of volunteer service.
- Be dependable, prompt, and reliable.
- Be aware that as a volunteer you are a representative of the Museum.
- Whenever you are unable to volunteer for a scheduled shift, please email or call the front desk at 303-604-2424 to inform them that you will be unable to make it in.
- Please keep all Museum visitor information confidential.
- Adhere to all volunteer policies and procedures.
- Let us know if you have any concerns about your volunteer experience.

What are the benefits of volunteering?

- Help support children's education!
- Access to fun activities and exhibits.
- On-the-job or special training related to your volunteer position.
- Support and feedback from a professional staff member.

Policies and Procedures

Customer Service

Everything that we do at WOW! is intended to meet one goal: to provide a safe environment where all our guests can have a fun, unique learning experience. We want to ignite their interest in a wide range of topics, and for parents to be engaged with their children while they are here. Providing excellent customer service is one way that we can encourage our visitors to have fun and come back to visit again and again. The following guidelines should help you provide that level of excellent customer service.

Policy:

- Smile! When guests approach you, greet them with a smile. This indicates that we are happy to see them and helps adults and children feel welcome.
- Greet both adults and children; this puts everyone at ease and helps them feel comfortable here.
- Interact and play with children. Talk to the children and ask them open-ended questions. Show them interesting parts of wherever you are volunteering. Let them show you what they find interesting.
- Be available. Please pay close attention to our guests. **Cell phone use, including texting, reading, or doing homework is not acceptable while you are volunteering.**
- Tidy the museum. If it is slow, please tidy the museum space in which you are volunteering. In the art room, this can mean restocking, cleaning up, and organizing. Elsewhere it can mean putting back exhibit components that may have been left lying around. We care about the cleanliness of the museum. If you find a mess that you cannot clean up, please let the front desk staff know.
- Answer guest questions to the best of your ability. Smile and listen carefully to the request or question. Prioritize safety issues, as safety is our first priority. If you are unable to answer a question it is always ok to say, "I'm not sure, let me get back to you." After that, ask front desk staff and make sure that you get back to the guest with an answer.

Safety

The safety of our guests is a top priority in the museum. Exhibits, layout, policy, programs, and classes are all designed with this in mind. While you are in the Museum, please walk around to see what is going on; intervene when you see any risky behavior. You don't have to wait for a parent to notice and stop it. Address safety issues immediately and to the best of your ability. If there is a serious risk and you don't know what to do, report it to a floor staff member immediately.

Policy:

- **Adult Supervision:** Children are not permitted in the Museum without adults for safety reasons.
- **Museum Rules:** As children come in, we explain the rules of the museum. This is for their safety and the safety of others. We encourage children to use their walking feet and inside voices while in the museum. We also ask that children keep their hands to themselves, do not engage in fighting play, and do not chew gum.
- **Clear Pathway:** -We pick up through the Museum many times a day because safety is our top priority. Clear pathways are also a requirement for ADA (American Disabilities Act) accessibility. Maintaining clear pathways assists our guests in wheelchairs or with limited mobility, as well as guests with strollers.
- **Open Doors Slowly:** Children may be standing behind doors.
- **Choking Hazards:** Please regularly check the area in which you are volunteering for small parts that may have broken off and could be a choking hazard. Items under 1.75" are considered a choking hazard. Any easy guideline to remember is that if an item will fit inside of a paper towel tube, it is a choking hazard.

Injury: Be calm if an accident happens. If possible, find the adult who came with the child so he or she knows the child is hurt. Help the child and parent or caregiver to the front desk, where front desk staff can assist them with the injury. If you have any helpful information, such as how the injury happened, please share this with the front desk staff.

Handling Inappropriate Behavior

First and foremost, please alert a staff member to the problem immediately.

Conflict Between Children:

- It is easier to try to prevent problems between children than it is to stop them.
- Encourage sharing and inclusive play.
- Discourage play fighting.
- Feel free to say, "Keep your hands to yourself, please."
- Help children to change the game or come up with creative solutions to the problem.
- If an altercation is taking place and the above has not worked, involve the parents or front desk staff in the solution.

Conflict Between Adults, or You and a Guest:

- Listen and try to understand the problem. Indicate that you are listening by saying, "I hear what you are saying."
- If you cannot handle the situation, or feel uncomfortable, please get a member of the floor staff or manager to help you.
- If you feel threatened and the floor staff is unable to help, you are welcome to call the police at the non-emergency number, (303) 441-4444 or dial 911 if you feel that the threat is immediate.

Background Checks

Because volunteers will be working directly with children, all adult volunteers must undergo a criminal background check prior to volunteering. Volunteers who may not be in contact with children, such as volunteers providing marketing, IT, or fundraising expertise, may be exempt from this requirement. Volunteers must purchase this background check themselves. WOW! uses Verified Volunteers for background checks, and the current cost for a background check is $12. Previously submitted background checks from other sources may be submitted and used at the discretion of the Museum. Youth volunteers do not need to undergo a background check but may be required to provide references.

Youth Volunteers

Youth 15 years or older may volunteer unaccompanied by an adult. All youth under 18 years old must have a liability release signed by a parent or guardian before volunteering.

Attendance and Absenteeism

We depend on you to complete your scheduled shifts. We understand that occasional situations may prevent you from being able to do so. If you know that you will not be able to make a shift more than 24 hours before the shift, please contact your direct supervisor to change your schedule. If you find that you are unable to attend on the day of your shift, please call the front desk at (303) 604-2424 and let them know that you are unable to come in. If absenteeism becomes excessive, your volunteer relationship with the Museum will be reevaluated.

Weather Closures

WOW! Children's Museum follows Boulder Valley School District's guidelines for inclement weather closures. If BVSD has closed due to snow, the Museum will be closed as well. When in doubt about possible closure, please contact your supervisor or call the front desk.

Volunteer Hours

It is very important to sign in and out each time you volunteer so that your hours are recorded. We track volunteer hours for our annual report, grant writing, and volunteer appreciation. We have a sign-in sheet for Museum volunteers. Offsite volunteers should email the dates, hours, and area of service to the Museum at the completion of their project, or monthly, if working on an ongoing project.

Community Service

Volunteers who are required to perform court-ordered community service must notify the Museum staff prior to volunteering. While it is not necessary to discuss specifics of the nature of the events that lead to community service hours, if the offense involved violence or children, we will be not be able to accommodate those volunteers. All volunteer positions may not be available to those completing community service hours. Current volunteers requiring community service must communicate this before performing hours to meet their community service requirement. Volunteers requiring community service for schools, workfare, or other programs are responsible for maintaining their own volunteer records. Written confirmation of hours can be provided with 48 hours' notice, and hours logs can be signed by front desk staff or direct supervisor as needed.

Dress Code

Please follow the three Cs when dressing to volunteer at WOW!: Clean, Casual, and Conservative. Please refrain from wearing shirts with profanity on them. Tattoos do not need to be covered unless they contain profanity or an inappropriate subject matter. Volunteers who wear inappropriate clothing will be sent home to change. Please wear a volunteer apron and volunteer badge while volunteering.

Representing the Organization

Volunteers are only authorized to act as a representative of the Museum if specifically tasked with this responsibility in their volunteer job description. Please consult with and receive permission from your direct supervisor **before** engaging in any actions which may affect or hold the organization liable. These include, but are not limited to, social media posts (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.), public statements to the press, signing contracts or entering into financial agreements, or lobbying or forming partnerships with other organizations. All public relations questions should be directed to the Marketing and Communications Manager.

Rest Breaks

Volunteers are encouraged to take rest breaks as needed during a shift. Please make sure that you do not leave out choking hazards while you are on your break. There are snacks and water bottles provided in the Volunteer Recognition drawer, as well as a vending machine in the snack area. Please consume all snacks in the back office and keep any water bottles out of reach of children while on the Museum floor. You are also welcome to explore exhibits before or after your shift, being mindful of providing appropriate customer service as needed.

Parking

Off-street parking behind the museum and on-street parking is available for staff and volunteers.

Smoking

In response to state and local laws and building codes, smoking is not permitted in or around our building. This includes private offices and other common areas.

Drugs/Alcohol

The possession, use, or sale of drugs and/or alcohol is never acceptable in the museum.

Weapons

The WOW! Children's Museum building is the property of the City of Lafayette. City policy states that no weapons are allowed in city buildings. Weapons are defined as guns, knives (larger than pocketknives), and other objects, blunt or sharp, that could do bodily harm. There is a "No Weapons" sticker on the front door of the Museum. If you notice a guest in violation of this rule, please inform a museum staff member.

Illness Procedures

Policy

WOW!'s staff and volunteers are required to adhere to WOW! Policies on any COVID or other public health matters. WOW! Stays current on all local, state, and federal COVID-19 procedures including mask wearing, social distancing, and other best practices, and implements staff and volunteer requirements as recommended by state or local ordinances and/or WOW! company policy.

Procedure when COVID positive

If you test positive, you cannot work or serve a volunteer shift at WOW!. **You can return for a shift when: You have had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines, AND your symptoms are improving, AND it has been at least 5 days since your illness began.**

If you don't have symptoms, you may return to WOW! five days after you received a positive test unless you develop symptoms. If symptoms develop during your isolation or quarantine period, you must extend the period through the first five days of having symptoms.

If you are returning to WOW! within the first 10 days after testing positive, you must wear a mask at WOW! until you reach the 10-day mark.

Policy when feeling sick

Employees and volunteers should stay home if they have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, or signs of a fever or flu, including vomiting and diarrhea. Please communicate this to your direct supervisor.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of fire or other emergency, volunteers will be directed by staff members. Evacuation will be determined by the type of emergency. In case of fire, staff members will locate and direct all guests and volunteers to the nearest fire exit. In case of a tornado or severe weather emergency, staff members will locate and direct all guests and volunteers to designated shelter areas.

In the event of a potentially dangerous situation happening in the vicinity of the Museum (i.e., bank robbery, hostage situation, escaped fugitive), the Museum will likely receive a Reverse 911 phone call. In this situation, Museum staff will make sure that all visitors and volunteers are inside the building, doors are locked and pulled firmly closed. The Museum staff will notify guests and volunteers, either personally or through the PA system, that we are on a lockdown due to a disturbance in the neighborhood. All guests and volunteers must remain in the building for the duration of the lockdown. When Museum staff receives an "all clear" from the City of Lafayette or Lafayette Police Department, the lockdown will be lifted. In the unlikely

event of an active shooter, law enforcement recommends memorizing the following: "Run, Hide, Fight."

- **Run:** Direct visitors to the nearest emergency exit. Run as far away as possible. Emergency exits include front doors, side door near ball room, snack area and activity room door (fence will have to be jumped), kitchen/trash room door, and back-office door.
- **Hide:** Direct visitors into rooms without windows that can be locked. Those areas include Kitchen/Trash room, Back Office rooms. Avoid the bathrooms unless those doors can be barricaded. Avoid the Activity Rooms.
- **Fight:** Rushing at the shooter is considered an absolute last resort.

Theft

WOW! is not responsible for lost or stolen items at the Museum. This is stated at the front door. If a guest thinks that someone has stolen something from them at the Museum, please escort them to the front desk where a staff member can assist them in contacting the police.

Abandoned Property

Personal property left for more than 30 days will be considered a donation and given to a local charity.

Confidentiality

Our clients, donors, and other parties with whom we do business entrust the organization with important information relating to their businesses. It is our policy that all information considered confidential will not be disclosed to external parties or other volunteers without a "need to know." If you question whether certain information is considered confidential, check with your immediate supervisor.

Liability

Volunteers are covered under our organization's insurance. If you are injured during the course of your volunteer work for WOW!, please notify your direct supervisor or Executive Director right away. A claim will be filed with our insurance company, and medical payments will be paid for volunteers injured both on the premises or off the premises if you were volunteering as assigned within the scope of our business operations. All volunteers are covered by the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 when acting without negligence and within the scope of their responsibilities. Refer to the law for full legal information of protection.

Policy Against Harassment

WOW! Children's Museum is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Everyone has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, WOW! expects that all relationships among persons in the office will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice, and harassment. It is the policy of WOW! to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, status as a covered veteran, or any other protected classification. WOW! prohibits any such discrimination or harassment. WOW! encourages all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment be reported to the Executive Director. It is the policy of WOW! to investigate such reports promptly and thoroughly. WOW! prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or who participates in an investigation of such reports. Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, unwelcome touching.
- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, or slurs.
- Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
- Threats or demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of employment, or to avoid some other loss, and offers of benefits in return for sexual favors.
- Inappropriate conduct or comments consistently targeted at only one gender, even if the content is not sexual.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report sexual harassment.

This behavior is unacceptable in the workplace itself and in other volunteer and work-related settings such as off-site activities and Museum-related social events.

Resigning from Your Volunteer Service

We value our volunteers' time and understand that our volunteers have many obligations and that a change in those obligations may mean that you can no longer volunteer with us. You may resign from your volunteer service with us at any time. If you need to resign, we request that you notify your direct supervisor, ideally two weeks prior to your departure. We will offer an exit interview if you would like to provide feedback or information that you feel is important for us to have.

On rare occasions, volunteers may not be performing their duties appropriately. In this case, a Museum employee will meet with the volunteer to determine what actions need to be taken to improve the volunteer's performance. It is possible that after several attempts to correct conflicts, a volunteer may be asked to leave.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook

I acknowledge that I have been given a copy, or access to a copy, of WOW! Children's Museum's Volunteer Handbook. I understand that this Handbook summarizes the Museum's volunteer guidelines, and that it is furnished to me solely for my information. I understand that volunteering with the Organization is not for a specified term and is at the mutual consent of me and the Organization. Accordingly, the Organization or I can terminate the volunteer relationship at will, with or without any cause, at any time. I understand that the statements contained in the Handbook are not intended to create any contractual or other legal obligations. I also understand that the Museum may modify or rescind any of its policies, or practices described in the Handbook at any time, except for those policies required by law. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to read and become familiar with the contents of the Handbook.

Volunteer Name (printed)_____

Volunteer Signature_____

Date _____