

# **RAPPAHANNOCK REGIONAL JAIL**

## **Volunteer Program Handbook**



**1745 Jefferson Davis Highway  
Stafford, Virginia 22554**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Volunteer Program of the Rappahannock Regional Jail (RRJ). This handbook is designed to be your guide during your initial orientation and to serve as your reference manual during your term as a volunteer.

For most of you, this will be your first exposure to professional corrections. If that is the case, we hope we can dispose of some of the myths and properly prepare you for what we hope will be a positive experience.

For those of you who have experience as a volunteer in other correctional facilities, we hope that we can expand your knowledge with relevant and useful training.

All of you will be working in a great variety of positions and providing a wide range of services. If you have a question or feel a need for more information, please do not hesitate to contact the Inmate Services Manager.

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS & PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS**

Volunteers may request a specific assignment. If a volunteer does not have a preference for a specific assignment, the RRJ staff will place the volunteer where he/she is needed and is best qualified.

During the orientation period, RRJ staff will attempt to prepare volunteers for their job assignments. If, during an assignment, the volunteer feels that he/she would be better suited in another position, contact the Inmate Services Manager to arrange for a transfer.

There are volunteer positions available in most areas of the Rappahannock Regional Jail's operations, as well as in the areas of education, religion, and substance abuse counseling.

## **ORIENTATION & TRAINING**

Volunteers must first pass a security and background check before they are eligible for the Volunteer Program.

Before a prospective volunteer can begin working within the jail, he/she is required to participate in the RRJ volunteer orientation and training program. This program is designed to acclimate and explain the jail environment to potential volunteers and ensure that they want to be a part of the RRJ Volunteer Program.

All new volunteers shall attend an orientation and training session prior to beginning their work. All volunteers shall attend regular training refresher classes.

The Inmate Services Manager is responsible for the orientation and training program. It is his/her responsibility to interview and assess each volunteer so that the volunteer can be matched to the appropriate assignment. Once a volunteer is assigned a specific task, he/she will also be assigned a contact person. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to know his/her contact person in the event of inmate confrontations or program cancellations.

## **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

The managing executive of the Rappahannock Regional Jail is the Superintendent. He/she has the final authority in daily operations. The RRJ itself operates under guidelines and policies established by the Rappahannock Regional Jail Authority. There are three divisions responsible for different areas of operation within the jail. They are as follows:

Security and Confinement  
Support Services  
Human Resources and Training  
Programs and Community Corrections

Each division head answers to the Superintendent. During non-duty hours the Watch Commander, usually a Lieutenant is in charge of the facility in the absence of the Superintendent.

It is important that you always follow the instructions of the security staff when you are in the building.

## **RULES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

***The following rules will be observed by all volunteers:***

1. Volunteers should attend programs (or other duties) as scheduled, or give/reasonable notification of any changes to the facility.
2. Admittance on scheduled dates and times is at the discretion of the Watch Commander. Please be patient if asked to wait. Security operations must take precedence. A ten-minute grace period will be given to volunteers conducting programs before the program will be cancelled.

3. All persons and their possessions entering the Rappahannock Regional Jail are subject to search. It is best to leave your belongings in your vehicle, at home, or secured a locker provided in the Public Lobby. Do not bring cash into the facility.
4. This is a tobacco-free facility. Inmates, staff, and visitors may not have chewing tobacco, cigarettes, matches, lighters, or smoking paraphernalia in their possession in the secure area.
5. Nothing is to be taken into the building for an inmate without the prior approval of the Superintendent, Inmate Services Manager, or the Watch Commander.
6. One must have approval from the Inmate Services Manager for all program-related materials he or she wishes to use as part of an assignment.
7. Absolutely nothing is to be taken out of the building for any inmate.
8. While in the building volunteers are responsible at all times for their personal belongings and equipment.
9. All information about jail operations and inmates is confidential and may not be disclosed by volunteers. Inmates are entitled to their privacy.
10. Volunteers must terminate their programs at the scheduled time and leave the building (unless given permission by the Watch Commander to continue).
11. Volunteers must stop their scheduled activities and leave the building immediately if they are directed to do so by the security staff.
12. The Rappahannock Regional Jail reserves the right to cancel scheduled activities at any time, without notice, if required for security or orderly running of the facility.
13. Civilians are required to be attired in clothing that allows for comfort but yet maintains a level of professionalism commensurate with their position and job responsibilities. As a general rule, clothing must not be too tight, tattered, frayed, excessively faded or revealing. The following are specific rules governing the dress code:
  - ◆ No cross dressing
  - ◆ No tight fitted clinging garments are to be worn
  - ◆ Undergarments must be worn.
  - ◆ No low-cut blouses or shirts.

- ◆ No sleeveless blouses or shirts. Skirts must be no higher than three (3) inches above the knee.
  - ◆ No shorts (skorts are allowed if they conform to the general rules discussed above).
  - ◆ Jeans are allowed if they conform to the general rules discussed above.
  - ◆ Clothing with logos or slogans that are racially, ethnically, sexually, or gender offensive is not allowed.
14. Volunteers under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to enter the facility and their volunteer status will be immediately terminated.
  15. Volunteers must maintain a professional working relationship with the inmate population incarcerated in this facility. Volunteers will not release their personal telephone numbers or addresses to the inmates of this facility.
  16. Volunteers must not engage in sending or receiving personal correspondence with inmates incarcerated in this facility.
  17. Volunteers must not engage in receiving personal phone calls from inmates incarcerated in this facility.
  18. Volunteers may be terminated at any time without prior notification for violations of the above-listed rules, or for any other conduct, which poses a serious threat to the security, and orderly operations of the RRJ.
  19. Volunteers having a personal relationship with an inmate must notify the Inmate Services Manager at once. The volunteer may be denied entry during the period of the inmate's incarceration.
  20. If a current volunteer is going to post bond for an inmate, including a family member, he/she is required to notify the Inmate Services Manager immediately.
  21. If there are any problems or questions, contact the Inmate Services Manager as soon as possible

## **SECURITY**

Security is the first and foremost consideration of every action taken or decision made within the facility. The following guidelines must be adhered to at all times:

- Never bring anything into the facility or give anything to an inmate without getting permission first. Some items may seem harmless but they may pose a threat to others. For example, objects such as keys, rat-tail combs, or other sharp items are considered contraband and are strictly prohibited. Refer to the section on Contraband.
- Never carry messages into or out of the facility for inmates. Passed messages may mean something other than their stated intent.
- Follow the instructions of the security staff quickly and promptly. Never argue with or question the orders of the staff.

Volunteers can best work with Security in several ways:

- Always bring a picture I.D. to the facility. No one will be admitted into the secure area without a picture ID
- Be on time. A volunteer will not be allowed to disrupt the jail schedule by coming in early or late, or by ending a program late.
- Do not do any favors for the inmates. Volunteers need to maintain privacy and confidentiality between themselves and the inmates. Doing favors such as giving out one's address or phone number only places the volunteer in a risky position.

### **SEARCH POLICY**

The policy of this institution is that all who are entering agree to be subject to search. This policy pertains to all persons entering the institution, including volunteers.

### **ANYONE CAN AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO A SEARCH AT ANY TIME WHILE IN THE RAPPAHANNOCK REGIONAL JAIL.**

Please cooperate with the security staff in this matter, and do not be offended if you or your possessions are searched periodically, as this is routine procedure.

### **CONTRABAND**

Contraband is defined as any item that can be used to break the rules of this institution or to assist an escape.

Items that are not issued or not authorized by this facility are considered to be contraband. Control of contraband is necessary for several reasons:

- To control the introduction of articles that can be used for trading or gambling.
- To control the collecting and the accumulation of items that makes housekeeping difficult.
- To identify any items that can be used as weapons or to aid an escape.

Volunteers have an obligation to comply with the safety and security policies of the facility. Any items or materials needed for a program or inmate must be pre-approved prior to the date you want to use the items. Seek approval well in advance of the activity.

Consult the Inmate Services Manager. If he/she is unavailable you may contact the Director or Deputy Director of Security and Confinement.

**ANYONE WHO KNOWINGLY BRINGS ILLEGAL CONTRABAND INTO THIS FACILITY WILL BE PROSECUTED TO THE FULLEST EXTENT OF THE LAW.**

## **LIABILITY**

Upon completing the Volunteer Personnel History Form, volunteers must sign a waiver releasing the RRJ and its staff from liability due to any injury received.

It is important to understand the inherent danger associated with working in a corrections environment. Even though inmates are screened and monitored by security staff, the element of risk still exists.

In the event you do not feel safe, contact security personnel and tell the officer that you wish to cancel the program. Do not hesitate to talk with security personnel about any concerns that you may have.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION**

All information concerning the operations of this facility and the inmates within it is considered confidential. All information concerning inmates is governed by the Code of Virginia 2.1-340, Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and 2.1-337, Privacy Protection Act.

Do not release any information concerning this facility or the inmates to anyone without approval from the Inmate Services Manager, or in special cases, without permission from the Superintendent, or his designee.

If an attorney or an outside organization requesting information on the status of an inmate approaches you, refer him or her to the Inmate Services Manager. This policy allows the Rappahannock Regional Jail to assure that the inmate's right to privacy is protected.



## **AVAILABLE COUNSELING SERVICES**

There are many counseling services available for the inmates at the Rappahannock Regional Jail. If you encounter an inmate that is in need of counseling services, inform the Inmate Services Manager. The Inmate Services Manager or designee will investigate the information and make referrals for services as may be deemed necessary.

## **THE NO HOSTAGE POLICY**

This institution observes what is standard in most correctional facilities today; namely, a NO HOSTAGE POLICY. This means exactly what the name implies. This facility will recognize **NO HOSTAGES**. Anyone taken hostage will lose all official status. The Rappahannock Regional Jail staff will NOT negotiate for the release of any hostage, and the staff will use whatever means it deems necessary or appropriate to regain control.

This policy, which seems cruel on the surface, is meant to take away much of the threat of being taken hostage. The rationale is that an inmate will be much less likely to take a hostage if it is known that they will not be able to use the hostage to bargain for their freedom. In the event that you are taken hostage, cooperate with the hostage-taker. Do not attempt to argue with the hostage-taker or attempt to talk the hostage-taker into anything. Try not to reinforce the hostage-taker in his/her thinking.

If the situation is resolved by tactical means, DO EXACTLY WHAT THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM ORDERS. Remember that Emergency Response Team members might not be able to recognize you as a volunteer.

**THE BEST ADVICE TO HEED IF TAKEN HOSTAGE IS TO REMAIN CALM AND, MOST OF ALL, BE PATIENT.**

## **FIRE PROCEDURES**

In the event there is a fire alarm while you are in the facility, you and the inmates with whom you are working will be requested to remain in the room where your program is being conducted. All volunteers should wait quietly while awaiting further instruction. Please keep a list of the inmates who are presently in your group at all times.

If a fire occurs and it presents an immediate life-threatening situation and security personnel are not available, contact the Control Room by either intercom or telephone for instructions.

Remember, regardless of the situation, there is no need to panic. Staff in the Control Room will still be able to observe you and maintain several different means of voice communication with you.

Most areas of the facility have an automatic sprinkler system. In addition, there are fire extinguishers throughout the building and all exits are clearly marked EXIT.

If the fire alarm is sounding, it is likely to be noisy in the hallway. Try to stay close to an intercom or telephone, especially if you are told to await further instructions.

Try to keep your composure and assist the inmates in keeping calm. Please do not spread rumors or attempt to speculate on what is happening with the inmates. The best assistance you can give is to help keep a panic situation from occurring.

## **UNFORESEEN EMERGENCIES**

In the event of any other unforeseen emergency, which happens elsewhere in the building, you should simply continue on with your program if possible. Security personnel will give you further instructions.

In the event that an incident occurs in the area where your program is being conducted and you cannot properly continue your program, you should approach security personnel AFTER it appears that the situation is controlled and request to have your group sent back to their housing units.

If an emergency occurs in your activity, remain calm. Attempt to contact security personnel and follow their instructions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Regional Jail is committed to working with volunteers from all socio-economic areas within the community. A properly supported volunteer work force is important, not only to the inmates, but also to the overall operation of the Rappahannock Regional Jail.

We hope that you will stay with the Rappahannock Regional Jail in your volunteer capacity for a long period, and we hope that the program structure, which we provide, will help make your volunteer service a satisfying and rewarding experience.

## **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

Rappahannock Regional Jail Main Number	<u>540 288-5245</u>
Captain Kevin Hudson Director of Programs and Community Corrections <a href="mailto:khudson@rrj.state.va.us">khudson@rrj.state.va.us</a>	<u>540 288-5231</u>
Ms. Valerie Carter Inmate Services Manager <a href="mailto:vcarter@rrj.state.va.us">vcarter@rrj.state.va.us</a>	<u>540 288-5269</u>
Ms. Loretta Wallace Inmate Services Coordinator <a href="mailto:llwallace@rrj.state.va.us">llwallace@rrj.state.va.us</a>	<u>540 288-5264</u>
Mr. Jim Firth Cluster D & FHP Case Manager <a href="mailto:jfirth@rrj.state.va.us">jfirth@rrj.state.va.us</a>	<u>540 288-5245, Ext. 478</u>
Ms. Darlene Gallahan Cluster B Case Manager <a href="mailto:dgallahan@rrj.state.va.us">dgallahan@rrj.state.va.us</a>	<u>540 288-5236</u>
Ms. Carolyn Wilson C Cluster/ Segregation / Community Corrections Case Manager <a href="mailto:cwilson@rrj.state.va.us">cwilson@rrj.state.va.us</a>	<u>540 288-5235</u>