

Family Justice Center of Hillsborough County



Volunteer Handbook

Why Volunteer?

Imagine yourself rushing into a strange building, children in tow, you are scared, hurt, and have no place to rest or find safety. Then, instead of walking into a gray, gloomy building, you open the door of the FJC to find a calm, reassuring voice and a safe place to sit and rest. Someone offers you coffee, and a volunteer offers to show your children the playroom. All of a sudden, getting help seems a little less frightening, and there is a glimpse of something you did not believe you would ever find again . . . HOPE.



Domestic Violence is a major issue in our society and there are many people who truly desire to help those affected. But HOW? Many people desire to help but do not know where or how to start.

That is where the FJC comes into the picture. Because FJC offers many services to those affected by domestic violence in one location, there are many ways that community members can become involved. From assisting FJC Staff in the office, to sitting with FJC guests to support them, there are unlimited opportunities for volunteers. Later in this manual, you will find a listing of the types of volunteer activities available.

GOALS

The goals of our volunteer program are to match each volunteer with a fulfilling area of service and to provide volunteers with the training and support they need to assist those affected by domestic violence.

Volunteer Application Process

The Family Justice Center of Hillsborough County is currently welcoming applications for volunteers. Our volunteers are vital to the operation of the Center.

Please begin the process of becoming a volunteer by completing the following steps:

- ❑ **Be at least 15 years of age**
- ❑ **Be aware of the time requirement for the specific volunteer position selected**
- ❑ **Complete a Volunteer Interview**
- ❑ **Complete the FJC background screening**
- ❑ **Complete the required training for the selected volunteer position**
- ❑ **Follow the all policies and procedures of the FJC**

Vision and Mission

The mission of the Family Justice Center of Hillsborough County (FJCHC) is to improve the lives of family violence victims through community collaboration and the provision of comprehensive services in a single location.

FJCHC is a community-wide collaborative between public, private and non-profit organizations to provide comprehensive services to Hillsborough County domestic violence victims and their families in a centralized location, or ‘one-stop-shop.’

Location and Contact Information

The physical address of the Family Justice Center of Hillsborough County is:

9309 N. Florida Ave. Suite 109

Tampa, FL 33612

Main Phone: (813) 935-2015

Fax: (813) 935-2019

E-mail: info@fjchc.org

Website: www.fjchc.org

When giving directions to Guests, the FJC main site can be described as being located on the corner of Busch Ave. and Florida Ave. in the Floriland Office Center, formerly the Floriland Mall. FJC is on the North end of the building, between the Tax Collector and Traffic Court, near the Department of Children and Families.

Hours of Operation

Monday-Thursday 8:00AM- 8:00PM
Friday 8:00AM- 5:00PM

Family Justice Center Holidays

The Family Justice Center is closed for the observance of the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Veteran's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day After Thanksgiving
Independence Day	Christmas Eve
Labor Day	Christmas Day

Organizational Structure and Leadership

The Family Justice Center of Hillsborough County is a Community Collaboration in response to the great need for support for those affected by domestic violence. The FJC is led by the community, as well as its Partner Agencies and Staff.

FJC Board of Directors

The Family Justice Center Board of Directors is made up of individuals from the community of Hillsborough County who have been elected to serve as members of the Board of Directors. Each member is required to submit an application, which is reviewed and voted on by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors is made up of six representatives from the Partner Council, who are elected by the Partner Council to serve on the Board. The Board of Directors also maintains the presence of two domestic violence survivors.

The Board of Directors meets to review and conduct the business of the Family Justice Center and to ensure the direction of the Center maintains its focus on serving those affected by domestic violence.

FJC Staff

The Family Justice Center has a team of full-time, paid staff members who assist in the facilitation of the Community Collaboration, which defines the FJC. The FJC Team is made up of the following positions: Executive Director, Community Outreach Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, IT and Facilities Manager, SAIN Coordinator, a Guest Care Team for initial guest screening, and two Receptionists.

The responsibilities of the FJC Team (collectively and/or individually) include but are not limited to managing the day-to-day operations of the FJC; ensuring guests receive requested information and services; coordinating site visitors; assisting in the

implementation of goals and objectives of FJC grants; coordinating the development of policies and procedures; developing and supervising the volunteer program and training materials; overseeing use of resources and facilities, as well as serving as liaisons to other on and off-site community partners.

Guest Screening

Because of the safety issues victims of domestic violence face, the Family Justice Center has created extensive safety policies and procedures. For the safety of our guests and their families, all FJC staff and partner agency staff complete a background screening prior to employment within the FJC. Each guest receiving services at the FJC will also be screened to ensure their safety and the safety of others in the center.

This screening includes a check of the Clerk's office to determine the presence of any injunctions for protection, the Sheriff's office to determine if there are domestic violence charges (past or present), and the Florida Sexual Predator's website to ensure the person is not registered as a sexual offender. The presence of an injunction, domestic violence charge, or status as a sexual offender does not automatically disqualify a guest for service. However, if there are any concerns from the background screening an advocate will be called to meet with the guest in a private room in the front lobby to review safety concerns. The advocate will determine if it is safe to offer services on-site or if the Guest must be referred to an Off-Site agency. Guests with pending domestic violence cases, injunctions for protection, or warrants will receive appropriate assessment prior to being cleared for services.

Depending on the circumstances, the FJC may decline to provide services but will provide referrals for services at other community agencies.

Guest Care Procedures: Reception

1. Guest enters and gets reception form from Receptionist and gives Receptionist ID.
2. While Guest is completing forms, Receptionist screens through clerk's office, sheriff's office, FJC database, and sexual predator database.
3. If Children are present the Receptionist offers the Children's Room form to complete and explains that the Guest is welcome to leave children during his or her appointment if a volunteer is available. Children ages 10 and up may remain in the kitchen without supervision at the parent's discretion.
4. Once screened and forms completed, the guest enters the Kitchen to wait for their appointment with an advocate.
5. The completed Children's Form is given to the volunteer.
6. Children are greeted and a tag is placed on their back. Parent keeps the tag number for pick-up and a pager which will alert them if the child requires assistance.

Guest Care Procedures: Intake

1. In the Kitchen, the Guest will be greeted by staff and/or volunteers.
2. Guest should be made comfortable, offered coffee, and shown where the Guest restrooms are located.
3. To begin the Intake Process, the Guest is met by a staff member in the Kitchen and escorted to a Living Room for an initial screening interview.
4. The screening form should be fully completed to ensure that the guest has been offered every available service of the FJC. FJC Screening staff will follow the step by step procedures provided to them for completing a guest screening.
5. After initial meeting, the advocate or FJC volunteer will escort the Guest to the next appointment or back to the exit of the building. Guests are never to be left walking through the building alone for safety reasons.

Confidentiality

The confidentiality of our guests is of utmost importance. Each staff member and volunteer who works within the Family Justice Center is required to complete a Confidentiality Form. Each guest who enters the FJC is also required to sign a statement of confidentiality agreeing that everything seen or heard while inside the FJC is confidential information.

Safety and confidentiality are always top priority for any agency, but in dealing with domestic violence safety issues are of even more concern. Victims of domestic violence are in relationships where another person is using whatever methods needed to maintain power and control over them. This means that when a victim of domestic violence is seeking our services, we have to be informed and pro-active in our approach to safety. Abusers are smart, creative, and innovative. They will use any method necessary to control their victim, whether it be stalking, threats, coercion, intimidation, or physical, emotional and sexual violence. For example, an abuser may enter the center claiming to be a victim in order to search for their victim. If we do not put safety first or are not strict on confidentiality rules, then we endanger the lives of those we serve. For more information on our Confidentiality policies, see the Safety and Security portion of this handbook.

Incident Reporting

Should an incident occur within the FJC facility, it is important that a record of the event be kept. Please use the “Incident Reporting Form” an incident report would be used for a medical emergency, making an abuse report, a security breach, or major Guest issue that happens within the center.

The original Incident report form should be given to the FJC Executive Director within 24 hours of the incident. Please follow your agency procedure on incident reporting as well. You may make a copy of the incident report for your agency supervisor if needed. The Incident Report Form is also located on the FJC shared network drive.

Code of Conduct

Identification Cards

All authorized personnel of the FJC must wear an identification tag at all times. There should never be anyone working inside the FJC without a visible identification card. If anyone is seen without a visible identification card, it is the responsibility of those working within the FJC to notify a FJC staff member immediately.

Reliability

As with any position, Guests and other staff are depending on each other to make the center run efficiently. If you are going to be late or absent for any reason, please follow your agencies guidelines about reporting in for work. In addition to following your agencies policy, the FJC requests that you, or someone from your home office, notify the Family Justice Center that you will not be on-site or that you will be late, if you will be arriving more than 5 minutes late. This will assist us in maintaining an accurate scheduling and referral system for Guests.

Client Contact

In order to maintain a safe and professional environment, we ask that all staff and volunteers refrain from accepting or giving money or gifts to FJC guests. It is important that each FJC guest be provided with the same level of care and service. Giving and receiving gifts can place a staff member or volunteer in a compromising situation. It can also threaten the confidentiality of a guest or volunteer. If a guest persists in wishing to express appreciation to the staff member or volunteer, encourage the guest to write a note or card, as we cannot accept gifts.

Should any questions arise about how to handle a client situation, please consult a FJC staff member before proceeding.

Appearance

Appropriate attire is required of all staff and volunteers. FJC requests that all staff and volunteers dress in clothing free from tears. To respect our Guests, FJC staff and volunteers are asked to refrain from wearing revealing or low-cut attire. All skirts must be at or below fingertip length, and no see-through clothing items may be worn without the appropriate covering underneath the garment. Tank tops, midriff tops, tops with spaghetti straps, bike shorts or workout clothing, and sheer clothing are inappropriate attire. FJC staff and volunteers are asked to refrain from wearing shorts or flip-flops. While sandals are permitted, regular beach flip-flops are not.

To respect the self-determination of our Guests, FJC asks that staff and volunteers wear clothing and jewelry free from political and/or religious symbols and statements. Maintaining neutrality in our attire is another way of reducing potential barriers that would keep a Guest from feeling comfortable sharing his or her story. Clothing or other attire that bears a sexually suggesting, obscene, or profane symbol or word is also prohibited.

FJC Volunteer Opportunities

Administrative Volunteers

- Check with Volunteer Coordinator, Office Manager or Receptionist to see if there are Admin tasks to be performed.
- Assist the Receptionist with answering the phone, greeting incoming clients and meeting client needs.
- Provide general office support, such as making Xerox copies, coordinating training folders, and helping to set up prior to trainings.
- Check lobby area for cleanliness, and to ensure there ink pens and clipboards.
- Make sure waiting areas are clear of paperwork or sensitive personal information.
- Check kitchen area for clipboards and return them back to Reception.

Guest Care (Hospitality)

- When guests are present make sure they are comfortable and have their needs met by offering beverages or snacks. Let them know where the restroom is located.
- Check the kitchen, playroom, quiet room, computer room and bathroom to make sure they are clean and free of inappropriate material.
- Kitchen counters should be cleaned often.
- Supervise the TV/DVD.
- Wipe the crib clean with Lysol wipes and check the sheet to make sure they are clean.
- Clean coffee pots in kitchen, staff break room and conference room.
- Feel free to address any other issues with the Volunteer Supervisor

Interview Rooms

- Straighten on a regular basis: (Toy baskets should be full and placed under the in-table in the corner of the room.
- Ensure rooms have for working pens and clipboards placed in the wicker basket on the table.
- Kleenex box should be on the coffee table

Facility Maintenance

- Organize training and group rooms
- Wipe walls or touch up paint
- Wipe door frames for fingerprints
- Clean spots off carpet and furniture
- Vacuum carpet, as needed
- Empty trash and recycle bins, check partner offices
- Check restrooms to ensure they are clean and have adequate supplies, and wipe down counter top.
- Wipe down tables, appliances, and counter top in staff break room

Outreach

- Attend community fairs (monitor resource tables)
- Various opportunities with partner agencies

Clothing Closet

- Guidelines are posted on the back of the door of the Sorting Room and the Clothing Closet.

Children's Room

- Child safety and supervision is the #1 priority. Supervise their activities, read to them, and do arts & crafts.
- Wipe table often.
- Clean toys with Lysol wipes available under the kitchen sink or from Receptionist. Please discard broken toys or toys that could be a potential hazard.
- Arts and crafts materials will need to be checked for leaking tubes of glue, broken crayons, leaking color pens, dried play dough etc.
- Storage room has some new toys that will need to be sorted and brought to the playroom from time to time.
- Volunteers with arts and crafts ideas are encouraged to make a material list or draw patterns and place in a shoe box for other volunteers.
- Toys, games and books will need to be picked up after our younger guests leave.
- Children should not be left alone in the playroom. If a child needs assistance using the restroom, or having a diaper changed, the volunteer is instructed to notify the front desk that the child's parent needs to be paged. The front desk will page the parent, requesting their return to the playroom. If this system does not work, the volunteer should find a staff member or other volunteer who can assist in finding the parents so that no children are left unattended.
- Each child left in the playroom will be given a playroom tag by the front desk staff. Refer to the playroom tag for allergies or special needs of the child. The tag will also tell the volunteer if the child is allowed to have snacks while in the playroom. The volunteer will collect the pager, parent tag, and child tag when the parent picks up the child from the playroom. **THIS IS FOR SAFETY!** We do not want an FJC Guest's safety to be compromised by accidentally going home with a tag from the FJC on themselves or the child. Return the collected tag to the front desk upon the Guest's departure.
- When children leave the playroom, they need to take their belongings with them.
- Every effort should be made to ensure that the playroom is a healthy environment. If the volunteer determines that a child is sick, the volunteer is instructed to contact the Volunteer Supervisor or FJC Community Outreach Coordinator, who will locate the child's parent and request that the parent take the child out of the playroom.

Groups

- Organize fund raisers at your place of employment or within the community
- Decorate interview rooms
- Paint group rooms
- If you specialize in a particular area offer your service free of charge
- Locksmiths: changing locks on homes or vehicles