

Yoakum County Sheriff's Office

Volunteer Handbook



Welcome

Thank you for volunteering with the Yoakum County Sheriff's Office. Your time and dedication support important programs and community outreach efforts. This handbook outlines your role, expectations, and the safeguards in place to protect everyone involved.

1. Volunteer Purpose & Role

You will assist with inmate programs, community outreach, chaplaincy, or administrative tasks. Your role promotes personal development, constructive engagement, and supports individuals in preparation for re-entry into the community.

2. Eligibility & Background Check

Volunteers must be at least 18 years old, possess valid ID, and not be incarcerated or under indictment for a felony. Family or friends of inmates are generally ineligible. A standard criminal history check will be required upon application.

3. Application & Approval

Volunteers must complete:

- The Volunteer Application Form
- A Confidentiality Agreement
- A PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) Acknowledgment

Upon approval, your name will be added to the Approved Volunteer List. If you don't volunteer for three consecutive months, you will be required to reapply.

4. Orientation & Training

All volunteers must attend a 60-minute orientation session that covers: confidentiality, safety and security protocols, professional boundaries, and behavioral guidelines. Afterward, you'll sign an acknowledgment confirming completion.

5. Conduct & Boundaries

Volunteers must:

- Maintain strict confidentiality about facility policies and interactions.
- Always follow supervisor instructions—volunteers support, not manage.
- Avoid contraband or favors—everything shared or given must have staff approval.
- Abide by zero tolerance for sexual misconduct. No physical contact with inmates, except when required for safety or by facility protocol. This includes inappropriate touching, sexual language, or gestures. Violations will be reported to authorities.

6. Security Procedures

Each time you visit, you must sign in, wear your volunteer badge, and return it when leaving. Keep your badge visible while on site.

7. Dress Code

Dress in professional, conservative attire:

- No shorts, see-through clothing, bare midriffs, tank tops, or mini-skirts.
- No athletic wear, hats, flip-flops, or sunglasses (except prescription).
- Carry only approved items; prohibited items typically include cell phones, cameras, recording devices, and wallets or purses unless authorized.

8. Time Commitment & Attendance

We request a minimum of 2 hours per month, though we appreciate flexibility. If you are unable to attend a scheduled time, please notify your liaison promptly. Extended absence (over 3 months) requires reapplication.

9. Communication & Support

You will be assigned a staff liaison for daily coordination and feedback. Periodic check-ins and informal recognition help keep us connected and motivated.

Closing Note

By following these guidelines, volunteers ensure a safe, respectful, and productive environment for themselves, staff, and those we serve.