



Fundraising Guidelines

VOLUNTEER FOR MENTAL HEALTH

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Fundraising Guidelines for Volunteers for Mental Health

1. Introduction

VMH is committed to bridging gaps in mental health care by gathering data and influencing evidence-based policies. Fundraising is a key activity that enables us to support volunteer initiatives, expand our programs, and reach more people in need. This Fundraising Guideline provides volunteers with the framework needed to engage in effective, ethical, and compliant fundraising activities that align with our mission.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to:

- Provide clear instructions on how to conduct fundraising activities.
- Ensure that all fundraising efforts are ethical, compliant, and transparent.
- Safeguard the reputation of VMH while maximizing funding opportunities to support mental health programs.
- Create a cohesive and consistent approach to fundraising among all volunteers.

3. Scope

This guideline applies to all volunteers of VMH involved in any form of fundraising activity, including but not limited to:

- Soliciting donations from individuals, companies, or foundations.
- Organizing events such as charity runs, auctions, or workshops.
- Online fundraising through crowdfunding platforms or social media campaigns.

4. General Principles of Fundraising

- **Integrity and Honesty:** Volunteers must always act with integrity and be truthful about the cause, the organization, and the intended use of funds.
- **Transparency:** Provide accurate information regarding how funds will be used, and be transparent in your communication with donors.
- **Compliance:** Adhere to all applicable laws, regulations, and organizational policies related to fundraising.
- **Respect for Donors:** Respect donors' rights, including their right to privacy and their right to receive information on how their contributions are being utilized.
- **No Pressure:** Donations should be voluntary, with no undue pressure or coercion placed on potential donors.

5. Types of Fundraising Activities

A. Direct Donations

- **Individual Donors:** Volunteers may approach individuals within their personal or professional networks to solicit donations. Always present the mission of VMH clearly, focusing on the impact that donations will have on mental health care.
- **Corporate Donations:** Volunteers may approach companies for monetary or in-kind contributions. When seeking corporate donations, ensure that the values of the company align with those of VMH.

B. Fundraising Events

- **Event Planning:** Volunteers may organize fundraising events such as charity dinners, auctions, sporting activities, or awareness walks. Ensure that all events are planned in line with organizational standards and local regulations.
- **Promotion:** Use flyers, posters, and social media to promote events. Any promotional materials should be approved by VMH to ensure consistency in messaging.

C. Online Fundraising

- **Crowdfunding Campaigns:** Volunteers may set up crowdfunding pages on approved platforms to raise funds for specific initiatives. Make sure that all information provided on the page is accurate, and share stories that illustrate the impact of VMH's work.
- **Social Media:** Social media platforms can be powerful tools for fundraising. Volunteers are encouraged to share content related to campaigns through their own profiles. When using social media, respect individuals' privacy and avoid sharing sensitive information without consent.

D. Grants and Sponsorships

- **Grant Applications:** Volunteers interested in applying for grants must first coordinate with the fundraising team at VMH to avoid duplication and ensure alignment with the organization's priorities.
- **Sponsorships:** When seeking sponsorships from local businesses or organizations, communicate the benefits of partnering with VMH, such as increased visibility and contributing to a meaningful cause.

6. Ethical Fundraising Guidelines

A. Communication with Donors

- **Accuracy:** All information shared with donors, including financial needs and intended outcomes, should be truthful and accurate.
- **Acknowledgment:** Volunteers must acknowledge all donations promptly, expressing gratitude for the support provided.
- **Use of Donations:** Ensure that funds are used strictly for the purpose stated during the fundraising campaign. Any change in the intended use of funds must be communicated to donors, allowing them to make informed decisions.

B. Confidentiality and Privacy

- **Personal Information:** Donors' personal information must be kept confidential and only used for purposes directly related to their donation. Never share donor information without their explicit permission.
- **Data Protection:** Volunteers must comply with all relevant data protection regulations to protect donor data from unauthorized use.

C. Financial Accountability

- **Record Keeping:** Volunteers must maintain accurate records of all funds raised, including cash donations, in-kind contributions, and any expenses incurred during fundraising activities.
- **Receipts and Reporting:** Provide receipts to donors when applicable, and submit detailed financial reports to the organization's finance team.

7. Planning and Conducting Fundraising Events

A. Event Proposal

- **Approval Process:** All fundraising events must be approved by the relevant authority within VMH. Volunteers must submit a proposal that includes the purpose, budget, target audience, location, and timeline.
- **Risk Assessment:** Conduct a risk assessment for the proposed event, considering potential risks to participants, volunteers, and the organization.

B. Promotion and Outreach

- **Materials:** All promotional materials, including flyers, posters, and social media content, must be reviewed and approved by VMH to ensure compliance with branding and messaging guidelines.
- **Publicity:** Volunteers are encouraged to promote events through their networks, but must ensure that no misleading claims or guarantees are made.

C. Budget Management

- **Event Budget:** Prepare a detailed budget for any fundraising event, including costs related to venue, materials, permits, and other logistics.
- **Minimize Costs:** Aim to keep costs low to ensure that the majority of funds raised are directed toward program activities.

8. Legal and Compliance Considerations

- **Permits and Licenses:** Obtain necessary permits or licenses for public fundraising activities or events, such as venue permissions or raffle licenses.
- **Tax Compliance:** Ensure that all donations comply with local tax regulations and that any tax-deductible donation receipts are issued appropriately.
- **Use of Funds:** Ensure compliance with laws that govern the use of donated funds, including adhering to donor restrictions on the purpose for which funds are used.

9. Volunteer Responsibilities

A. Professional Conduct

- Volunteers must always behave professionally, acting in the best interest of VMH.
- Volunteers should dress appropriately during fundraising events and activities, keeping in mind the audience they are interacting with.

B. Reporting and Feedback

- Volunteers must submit reports detailing fundraising activities, amounts raised, and expenses. This ensures accountability and transparency in the use of resources.
- Volunteers are encouraged to share their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improving future fundraising efforts.

10. Support and Resources Provided by VMH

- Training: Volunteers will receive training on effective fundraising techniques, communication with donors, and ethical practices.
- Materials: Volunteers will be provided with promotional materials, such as brochures, presentations, or branded merchandise, to support their efforts.
- Guidance: Volunteers will have access to a fundraising coordinator or mentor to assist with planning and implementing fundraising initiatives.

11. Prohibited Activities

- High-Pressure Tactics: Volunteers must not engage in high-pressure or coercive tactics to solicit donations.
- Misrepresentation: Misleading statements about the organization's work, achievements, or use of funds are strictly prohibited.
- Unauthorized Campaigns: Volunteers must not start any fundraising campaign without approval from VMH. Unauthorized campaigns can lead to reputational damage and legal liabilities.

12. Health and Safety Considerations

- Risk Assessment: Volunteers must conduct a risk assessment before undertaking any fundraising activity to identify potential hazards.
- First Aid and Emergency Procedures: Ensure that appropriate first aid is available at fundraising events and that volunteers are familiar with emergency procedures.
- Public Health Safety: Volunteers must comply with all current public health guidelines.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Performance Review: Fundraising activities will be evaluated based on the amount raised, the effectiveness of communication, volunteer feedback, and the cost-effectiveness of the campaign.
- Regular Feedback: Volunteers are encouraged to provide feedback on the challenges and successes they experienced, which will be used to improve future efforts.

14. Acknowledgment and Agreement

All volunteers engaged in fundraising activities must acknowledge their understanding of this guideline and agree to adhere to the principles, procedures, and ethical standards outlined herein.

Volunteer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

15. Conclusion

The Fundraising Guidelines aim to support volunteers in conducting ethical, compliant, and successful fundraising activities. By adhering to these guidelines, volunteers contribute to building trust with donors, maximizing support for mental health programs, and ensuring that VMH can fulfill its mission to improve mental health care and influence policy through data-driven initiatives.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our shared cause.

VOLUNTEERS FOR MENTAL HEALTH
Informed by Data, Inspired to Care