

ACPS 2024-25 Volunteer Handbook



Overview

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) deeply values the dedication and contributions of all our volunteers! Everyone interested in volunteering in ACPS schools and facilities must first obtain approval by submitting the online ACPS volunteer application and signing the ACPS Code of Conduct and Expectations. Our division uses the Raptor Volunteer Management system to conduct a criminal and sex offender background check on every application. Although a Social Security number is not required to serve as a volunteer, the application requests this to prevent processing delays and so we have accurate and complete information that can help ensure the safety of our students, staff and community. Approved volunteer status is valid for two years. After that time, please complete the online volunteer application to renew your status and continue supporting our schools.

Visit www.acps.k12.va.us/volunteer to learn more and find:

- School Board policies important to ACPS volunteers
- The ACPS Code of Conduct and Expectations
- The application form and Frequently Asked Questions
- Information about current volunteer opportunities

Questions?

- Write to Volunteer@acps.k12.va.us
- Call 571-547-1697

Overview.....	2
Becoming a Volunteer.....	4
Who is a Volunteer.....	4
How to Become an ACPS Volunteer.....	4
How to Learn About ACPS Volunteer Opportunities.....	5
Expectations for ACPS Volunteers.....	6
ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations.....	7
ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations.....	8
ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations.....	9
Checking In/Out at Schools.....	9
Reporting Concerns.....	9
Policies and Procedures for ACPS Volunteers	10
School Visitors And Volunteers (Policy KK).....	10
Sexual Harassment (Policy GBAA/JFHA).....	10
Weapons In School (Policy JFCD).....	10
Responsible Computer Use (Policy IIBEA/GAB).....	10
Use of Social Media.....	11
Volunteer Relations with Students & Families.....	11
Dress Code.....	11
Siblings.....	11
Office Machines.....	11
School Parking Lot.....	12
Theft.....	12
Resignation/Dismissal.....	12
Guidelines for School Volunteers.....	12
General Tips.....	12
General Tips.....	13
Volunteer Information/Procedure Checklist.....	13
Interacting with Students from Varied Backgrounds.....	13
ACPS Staff Contacts for Volunteers.....	14

Becoming a Volunteer

Who is a Volunteer

A volunteer is any individual who is not employed by the school division but has been formally approved by ACPS to provide volunteer services. A volunteer includes anyone providing services to or interacting with ACPS students on an ongoing basis, potentially without direct supervision by school staff. All volunteers must apply and be approved before their first volunteer activity at a school and must abide by [ACPS School Board Policies](#) and the [ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations](#).

Volunteering takes place in ACPS schools and facilities, as well as field trips, events and activities at other sites designated by ACPS staff. Some examples of volunteer activities include:

- **Field Trip Chaperones:** Assist in planning logistics, supervising students and attending one-day trips such as band events.
- **Academic or Mentoring Support:** Engage with students by reading to them, tutoring in subjects such as reading, math and science, and offering mentorship or career guidance.
- **Event Assistance:** Provide support for Science Fairs through project supervision, judging and event organization.
- **Athletic Support:** Help with concessions, booster club activities or game announcing at sporting events.
- **Gardening Projects:** Participate in school gardening activities, including planting, weeding, and special projects.
- **Administrative Assistance:** Help teachers by preparing classroom materials and offering general administrative support.

How to Become an ACPS Volunteer

To serve as a volunteer within ACPS, follow these steps:

1. Online Application: Start by completing and submitting [the online ACPS volunteer application](#) through the Raptor Technologies secure platform (www.acps.k12.va.us/volunteer). This includes agreeing to the ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations.

2. Background Check: A criminal and sex offender background check will be conducted. Applicants who are registered sex offenders should review the ACPS Sex Offender Registry Notification Policy (File: KN) and the ACPS Registered Sex Offenders on School Property Policy (File: KNA). Applications will be denied if the applicant has been [convicted of a barrier crime](#), as outlined in ACPS policies

(www.acps.k12.va.us/barrier-crimes).

3. Photo Identification: Upload a photo ID as part of your application. A [list of accepted official documents](#) is available on the ACPS volunteer webpage (www.acps.k12.va.us/volunteer).

4. ID Verification: Within a week, most applicants will receive an email message, typically from the ACPS Raptor Volunteer Management system, to schedule a five-minute virtual appointment for ID verification. You'll need your photo ID and a device with a camera and microphone, such as a mobile phone, tablet or computer. In-person ID verification can be arranged by contacting the Volunteer Office (details on page 2).

5. Approval Timeline: This process typically takes 7-10 business days after submitting the application. Approval time may vary due to ACPS holidays, closures or a high volume of applications.

How to Learn About ACPS Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways that volunteers can serve in our schools and support our students! Each school has varied opportunities for volunteers interested in a particular school or the ACPS volunteer team can assist with identifying a school.

After a volunteer is approved, they are encouraged to reach out to their selected school to learn about specific volunteer needs and get details about scheduling, time commitment and more. Information about volunteer needs may be included in a school newsletter or email messages to families, or may be shared through the school's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) or the Alexandria City Council of PTAs (PTAC). Teachers may reach out to families via email or alerts about classroom activities such as reading to students or chaperoning field trips. Some volunteer opportunities may be shared via email to the division's volunteer database or posted at www.acps.k12.va.us/volunteer, and via Volunteer Alexandria (www.volunteeralexandria.org).

Some ACPS community partners manage established programs within our schools. Volunteers interested in participating with these programs should contact that organization directly. For example, the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium's Book Buddies program in all ACPS elementary schools and the Alexandria Mentoring Partnership offers various youth mentoring opportunities. Please note that volunteers working with our

community partners are still required to complete the ACPS volunteer application and approval process.

Expectations for ACPS Volunteers

ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations

ACPS volunteers are required to read and sign the ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct & Expectations in the application process. Volunteers are expected to be familiar with, and abide by, all ACPS Board policies and requirements included in this code of conduct. It is copied in its entirety in this handbook and is [available online in multiple languages \(www.acps.k12.va.us/volunteer\)](#). All ACPS School Board policies are available at [www.acps.k12.va.us/school-board/school-board-policies](#).

The ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for volunteer behavior while volunteering, student privacy, the need to speak to authorities in the case of any concerns involving abuse of a student, and more. If a volunteer has any questions about this code of conduct or what constitutes appropriate behavior, they should contact a school administrator or the ACPS volunteer specialist.

Violations of the ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations are first addressed by school leadership. In the event of a single violation or a pattern of violations,, there is a tiered division-wide review process to determine if a temporary suspension or termination of volunteer privileges is warranted.



ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations

This document, in alignment with ACPS Board Policy “[KK-School Visitors & Volunteers](#),” explains what is expected of Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) volunteers to help ensure the safety of the students and staff in our schools. Additionally, ACPS requires volunteers to review and comply with [the ACPS Volunteer Handbook](#).

As an ACPS volunteer, I agree to abide by the following Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations:

1. As a volunteer, whether in-person or virtually, I must coordinate and get direction through designated school staff and/or ACPS partners approved by the ACPS Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement.
2. Immediately upon arrival to volunteer at an ACPS facility, I must sign in at the main office or the designated sign-in station and scan my photo ID. I will wear my volunteer identification sticker at all times when volunteering with ACPS. I will sign out when I have completed my volunteer assignment.
3. I will be prompt and consistent in my attendance. If I will be late or absent, I must notify the school’s volunteer coordinator or designated partner point of contact as soon as possible.
4. I will promptly respond to communications from the school’s volunteer coordinator, the supervising teacher or staff member, and/or partner organization contact, as requested.
5. I will maintain a positive attitude and will promptly and respectfully direct any concerns or complaints to the appropriate staff or administration.
6. I will maintain student privacy and confidentiality, unless otherwise prompted by ACPS officials or law enforcement, at all times.
7. I will share with ACPS teachers and/or school administrators any concerns I have related to student welfare and/or safety regarding the volunteer activity that I am participating in.

8. I will inform a school administrator if a child confides in me about an abusive situation or if I see signs or indications of abuse in a child. I will make myself available to share the information to appropriate authorities if needed, which may require me to join ACPS staff in contacting the authorities. I understand that [the Commonwealth of Virginia considers athletic volunteers to be mandated reporters](#).
9. I will adhere to all ACPS regulations and procedures in the assigned school or department.
10. I will only use adult bathroom facilities while volunteering in schools.
11. I will avoid being alone with any individual student.
12. I will not discipline any student while I volunteer with ACPS. For assistance with problematic student behavior, I will seek help right away from the teacher or school staff.
13. I will not contact students outside of school hours without permission from the students' parents or guardians.
14. I will not provide students with monetary rewards or gifts. As some students may have food allergies or dietary restrictions, I will also not provide/share food with students.
15. I will not disclose, use or disseminate student photographs or personal information about students or others, including posting on social media any images of the students I engage with as a volunteer, given that ACPS abides by every family's decision about placing their student on an opt-out list. Partner organization staff must obtain prior approval for photos/videos that include ACPS students.
16. I will not record any virtual sessions. Doing so will result in immediate termination of volunteer status.
17. I will not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when I volunteer, nor will I engage in drug or alcohol usage when I am volunteering.
18. I will promptly notify the school principal or appropriate department head if I am convicted of [any offense that constitutes a barrier crime under the Code of Virginia](#).
19. I will respect all students, in alignment with ACPS's commitment to equity and diversity and [the ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan](#).
20. I will comply with the instructions and guidance of ACPS staff.
21. I will read and abide by [the ACPS Sexual Harassment policy \(GBAA/JFHA\)](#).

22. I will read and abide by [the ACPS Weapons in School policy \(JFCD\)](#).

23. If I am going to use ACPS computers or software during my volunteer experience, I will read and abide by [the ACPS Responsible Computer System Use policy \(IIBEA/GAB\)](#).

I acknowledge that I freely give my time, effort and services as a volunteer to assist ACPS and understand that I will receive no compensation in return. I recognize that as a volunteer, I am not covered by any workers compensation or similar insurance that would pay my medical bills incurred due to any injury, accident or other unforeseen circumstances I may experience while performing services as a volunteer.

Despite a risk of injury and lack of workers compensation or other medical insurance coverage from ACPS, I knowingly and voluntarily waive any and all claims, actions, or causes of action against ACPS and agree to hold ACPS, its trustees, agents, affiliates, and employees harmless for any injury or damage that I may suffer as a result of my activities as a volunteer for ACPS.

I agree to follow the ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations at all times. I understand that failure to follow the ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations could result in a restriction of my volunteer time or termination of my volunteer status.

- Name *
- Email *

Checking In/Out at Schools

Each time a volunteer reports to a school to provide volunteer services, they must check in at the school's front office, enter their name and scan their photo ID using the designated kiosk for visitors and volunteers. Upon check-in, the system will print a volunteer sticker badge which must be visible for the duration of the time at the school. For safety and security purposes, we ask volunteers to please check out at this kiosk when their volunteer services are complete for the day.

Reporting Concerns

If a volunteer has concerns about a student, a staff member or an activity, the volunteer is asked to please address these concerns immediately with the school's volunteer contact, the principal or another member of school leadership. As stated in the ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations, volunteers are expected to inform a school administrator if a child confides about an abusive situation or if the volunteer sees signs or indications of abuse in a child. All volunteers are expected to make themselves available to share the information to appropriate authorities, if needed. In [the Commonwealth of Virginia, athletic volunteers are considered to be mandated](#)

[reporters.](#)

Policies and Procedures for ACPS Volunteers

The following policies are summarized here; all are available in full on the [ACPS School Board policy webpage](http://www.acps.k12.va.us/school-board/school-board-policies) (www.acps.k12.va.us/school-board/school-board-policies).

School Visitors And Volunteers (Policy KK)

Volunteers, whether in-person or virtual, will be coordinated and directed through ACPS and must be approved by the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement. Protocols and procedures related to volunteering, including required background checks and screenings, will be governed by the ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations, including adherence to confidentiality provisions.

Sexual Harassment (Policy GBAA/JFHA)

ACPS is committed to maintaining a learning/working environment free from sexual harassment and harassment based on race, national origin, disability, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. Therefore, the Alexandria City School Board prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based on race, national origin, disability, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation of any student or school personnel at school or any school sponsored activity.

Weapons In School (Policy JFCD)

No one, including students or employees, may bring, use, or possess any weapon, as defined in this policy, on school property, other than in certain of the limited circumstances specifically authorized by law, which are detailed in the full policy as posted on the ACPS website.

Responsible Computer Use (Policy IIBEA/GAB)

ACPS and its employees are committed to using technology consistently, responsibly and effectively for teaching and learning, communications and productivity. Access to the computer system should not be abused in the amount of time used, type of use or content. Any individual who uses the ACPS computer system has no expectation of

privacy regarding that use.

Use of Social Media

ACPS policy addresses responsible and safe use of social media and related technologies by students, staff and volunteers. Since volunteers are required to respect confidentiality, student privacy and family permissions as stated in media opt-outs, ACPS does not permit volunteers to post photos of students on social media. Community partners should work with the Office of Communications for any photo, video and social media needs they have. For more information, please see www.acps.k12.va.us/policies-GAC.

Volunteer Relations with Students & Families

Volunteers must abide by the ACPS Volunteer Code of Conduct and Expectations as it addresses issues that are key to building a positive relationship between volunteers, staff, students and families in ACPS. Among other issues, this includes volunteers respecting student privacy and confidentiality, avoiding being alone with a student or taking any disciplinary action, maintaining a positive attitude, speaking to school staff about any concerns or problems, and not contacting students outside of school hours without family permission.

Dress Code

Volunteers are expected to dress in accordance with accepted social and business standards. If you are unsure about particular attire, please contact the ACPS volunteer specialist or the school's volunteer coordinator.

Siblings

Young children should not accompany family volunteers when they are volunteering. Preschool students/younger siblings can be a distraction to students, staff and family volunteers. They need to be supervised closely for their own safety, and it is hard for family members to do this while serving as ACPS volunteers.

Office Machines

Staff appreciate volunteers helping teachers with the preparation of classroom materials. Volunteers should be trained on the correct use of all office equipment. It is also very helpful if volunteers are willing to step aside, allowing teachers or office

staff to use machines during recess or times when immediate access is needed. Please remember that ACPS equipment is to be used only for educational/school purposes and is not to be used for personal use.

School Parking Lot

When driving near schools or in school parking lots, great care must be taken. We ask that drivers watch closely for students and others at all times. Please check with the school office on where you should park when you arrive at a school to volunteer.

Theft

No item purchased or supplied by ACPS should ever be removed from school sites without the express authorization of the school's volunteer lead or administrator. Volunteers should not bring excessive amounts of money or valuable items on site when providing volunteer services.

Resignation/Dismissal

If you decide not to continue volunteering with ACPS, please inform the contact you have been working with at the school and any other staff who you work with directly. Please note that ACPS reserves the right to discontinue the volunteer relationship with any individual. A suspension of volunteer services will be provided in writing.

Guidelines for School Volunteers

General Tips

- 1. Be Patient:** Take the time to find your best approach when working with students. Patience is key to building effective relationships.
- 2. Names Matter:** Learn to pronounce and spell students' names correctly, as they prefer. Make sure that they also know and can pronounce your name.
- 3. Respect and Courtesy:** Treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and expect the same in return.
- 4. Show Interest:** Demonstrate interest in students by listening attentively and showing you care through your words and actions.

5. Encourage Success: Support and celebrate student successes. Build their self-confidence with sincere and regular praise. Remember that effort and attentiveness can be as important as performance. Focus on the positive while minimizing the negative.

6. Avoid Comparisons: Refrain from making comparisons between students, teachers or schools.

7. Be Fair and Consistent: Consistency and fairness are essential in creating a supportive environment.

8. Embrace Mistakes: Acknowledge that mistakes are a natural part of learning. Encourage students to see mistakes as opportunities, and don't be afraid to make them yourself.

9. Build Trust: Be trustworthy and honest in your approach and attitude. Students will trust and respect you if you are genuine.

10. Communicate Absences: If you must be absent, inform the school. While students may be disappointed, they will appreciate knowing you care enough to call.

Volunteer Information/Procedure Checklist

It is important to confirm the following with the teacher/staff member overseeing the volunteer activity:

- Scheduled days and times available to volunteer.
- Procedures for ongoing communication between the volunteer and designated staff (i.e., regular conferences, telephone calls, emails, notes, informal meetings).
- Alternate plans when the teacher/supervisor is absent.
- School/department procedures and rules (i.e., storing personal belongings, emergency procedures, etc.).
- Protocol for notifying school/department about a volunteer's delayed arrival or absence.

Interacting with Students from Varied Backgrounds

ACPS serves more than 16,000 students who hail from more than 119 countries and speak 121 languages. Cultural differences significantly influence a student's background knowledge, learning style, behavioral approach and social skills. As volunteers engage with students, it is helpful to make an effort to understand and

appreciate their cultural backgrounds and offer them support as they navigate the school environment.

ACPS Staff Contacts for Volunteers

The designated staff member at each ACPS school for a volunteer activity or program serves as the main point of contact and can assist volunteers with any questions, concerns or problems. If a volunteer continues to have a concern or question that is not resolved by the designated staff member, then these should be brought to the school principal or member of school administration. Anything not resolved with the school should be referred to the ACPS volunteer team, which supports all schools in managing the volunteer program.

Volunteers may find it helpful to keep the following information readily available:

Assigned School: _____

School Telephone: _____

School Address: _____

Teacher(s)/Designated School Staff Contact(s): _____

Other Contact(s): _____

Principal: _____

ACPS Volunteer Team: volunteer@acps.k12.va.us or 571-547-1697 (should not be used to report volunteer delays or absences)

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ELEMENTARY AND PREK-8 SCHOOLS

John Adams Elementary School (Grades K-5) 5651 Rayburn Avenue,
Alexandria, VA 22311 703-824-6970

Charles Barrett Elementary School (Grades PreK-5) 1115 Martha Custis Drive,
Alexandria, VA 22302 703-824-6960

Early Childhood Center (PreK)
5651 Rayburn Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22311 703-578-6822

Ferdinand Day Elementary School (Grades K-5) 1705 N. Bearegard Street,
Alexandria, VA 22311 703-619-8430

Patrick Henry Elementary School (Grades PreK-8) 4643 Taney Avenue,
Alexandria, VA 22304 : 703-461-4170

Jefferson-Houston School (Grades PreK-8) 1501 Cameron Street,
Alexandria, VA 22314 703-706-4400

Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology (Grades PreK-5)
3600 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22305 703-706-4420

Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy (Grades K-5) 530 S. St. Asaph Street,
Alexandria, VA 22314 703-706-4430

Douglas MacArthur Elementary School (Grades K-5) 1101 Janneys Lane,
Alexandria, VA 22302 703-461-4190

George Mason Elementary School (Grades K-5) 2601 Cameron Mills Road,
Alexandria, VA 22302 703-706-4470

Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School (Grades K-5) 600 Russell Road,
Alexandria, VA 22301 703-706-4440

Mount Vernon Community School (Grades K-5) 2601 Commonwealth Avenue,
Alexandria, VA 22305 703-706-44

James K. Polk Elementary School (Grades PreK-5) 5000 Polk Ave.,
Alexandria, VA 22304 703-461-4180

William Ramsay Elementary School (Grades PreK-5) 5700 Sanger Avenue,
Alexandria, VA 22311 703-824-6950

Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School (Grades K-5) 435 Ferdinand Day Drive,
Alexandria, VA 22304 703-933-6300

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Francis C. Hammond Middle School (Grades 6-8) 4646 Seminary Road,
Alexandria, VA 22304 703-461-4100

George Washington Middle School (Grades 6-8) 1005 Mount Vernon Avenue,
Alexandria, VA 22301 703-706-4500

Alexandria City High School—Minnie Howard Campus (Grades 9-12)
3801 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA 22302 703-824-6750

Alexandria City High School—King Street Campus (Grades 9-12)
3330 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302 703-824-6800

Alexandria City High School—Chance for Change Campus (Grades 6-12)
216 South Peyton Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 703-888-1204

Alexandria City High School—Satellite Campus (Grades 9-12)
1340 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314
703-619-8400

Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center School (Grades 6-12)
200 South Whiting Street, Alexandria, VA 22304 703-461-4086

ACPS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Tel: 571-547-1697
www.acps.k12.va.us/volunteer
Volunteer@acps.k12.va.us



Thank you, ACPS Volunteers!

ACPS Volunteer Program

- **Online:** www.acps.k12.va.us/volunteer
- **Email:** Volunteer@acps.k12.va.us
- **Volunteer Phone Line:** 571-547-1697

