



# SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

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## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK (ivory)

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## **ALSO REFER TO:**

- APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION
- APPENDIX II: BUSINESS OFFICE PROCEDURES
- APPENDIX III: CONFIDENTIALITY
- APPENDIX IV: COMMUNICABLE DISEASE & AIDS
- APPENDIX V: COMMUNICATIONS
- APPENDIX VI: FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY
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## INTRODUCTION

The role of the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and its staff is, through the provision of learning experiences and by example, to provide the visually impaired students of this State with a foundation which will enable them to achieve to the best of their abilities, both as children and later as adults. It is a residential facility serving blind, visually handicapped and/or multihandicapped students from all parts of the state. In addition to the residential students, the School also serves day students who attend classes at the SDSBVI but live at home outside of the school day. Students may be classified as totally blind, legally blind, or partially sighted. Some have additional disabilities and may or may not be functioning at grade level. Some students have all of their classes at the SDSBVI while others are integrated into the Aberdeen public or parochial schools, the Hub Area Multi-District Vocational Center or the Aberdeen Adjustment Training Center. Many students, especially those 14 years of age or above have part-time jobs either on or off campus. Students also participate in such extracurricular activities as school plays, track, wrestling, swimming, goalball, bowling and cross-country skiing. Each child is under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which spells out what services he/she is to receive and how these will be delivered.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired has been working to improve its programs and services to children who are visually impaired since the school first opened. Developments in technology, educational philosophy and eye conditions themselves have necessitated many changes. It has been necessary to continually adapt the program to meet the needs of a diverse population and utilize the current "best practices" in the field.

The South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired provides a full academic program for students' kindergarten through high school. In addition to the subjects normally taught in public schools, special emphasis is given to adapting teaching materials and methodologies to meet the unique needs of the visually impaired. Specialized coursework in independent travel, Braille, activities of daily living, low vision utilization and use of specialized equipment is included. A completely individualized program is developed for each student to meet his/her needs. Parents, our vision specialists and local school district representatives are all involved in planning the students' IEP.

Specialized programs are used to meet special needs. An early learning classroom provides "readiness" activities for preschoolers who are visually impaired. A Functional Living Program meets the needs of a growing population of students who are visually impaired who have one or more additional disabilities which prevent them from functioning on grade level. The Deaf-Blind/Multihandicapped serves children who have handicaps in addition to their vision loss and need a multisensory program.

Faculty and staff at the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired are dedicated to creating an environment in which students can learn the skills necessary for an independent and successful adult life. Our teachers are trained in vision in addition to their academic certification. This means that the SDSBVI can offer a team of educators who understand the impact of vision loss on the students' learning and who work together to help the students meet the challenges.

**ADMISSION** -Students are referred for admission to the SDSBVI through the local public schools. When a placement team, including the parents, local school district representatives and others as desired, has evaluated a child with a visual impairment and determined that an appropriate educational program cannot be provided within the local school district, placement may be requested at the SDSBVI. Upon receipt of a referral the SDSBVI Admissions Committee reviews the request and all available student data. If necessary, additional evaluations are requested or observations of the child are conducted.

The SDSBVI Admissions Committee makes its decision based upon the child's visual status, identified needs, program requested by the local placement team and child's medical status. Each placement is based on the child's needs at a given point in time, and none run beyond one year. Options include day program, either full-time or part-time, residential or foster care and a combination of services provided by the Aberdeen public and parochial school systems, Hub Area Vocational School, Aberdeen Area Adjustment Training Center, Northeastern Mental Health Center and St. Luke's Midland Regional Medical Center. Once a child is accepted for placement, the SDSBVI administrators, faculty and staff meet with the parents and representatives of the local public school to develop an appropriate Individual Educational Plan. This plan is reviewed at least annually, and the child's need for continued services is assessed.

### ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Before a volunteer is placed in the department or area they wish to volunteer in, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. Following the interview with the Principal, the volunteer will contact the SDSBVI Director of Human Resources to set up an appointment to be oriented to the School's personnel policies, and to complete forms and provide data as follows:
  - A. Forms to be completed:
    1. W-4
    2. Background Investigation
    3. Volunteer Work Agreement
  - B. Data to be provided:
    1. Driver's License
    2. Social Security Number
2. The volunteer will be given a tour of the building by the Principal and a general orientation to the programs offered at the SDSBVI.
3. To view various mandatory films as designated by the Director of Human Resources.
4. To "shadow" a shift in the assigned work area to gain knowledge and confidence in the position.
5. Orientation and Mobility experience.

## WORKER'S COMPENSATION CLAIMS PROCEDURE

As a SDSBVI volunteer, you are covered by an insurance program that pays medical and disability benefits for work related injuries and diseases. The Worker's Compensation Program for state employees/volunteers is administered by the Bureau of Personnel.

**Injury Reporting Procedure:** If you are injured or contract an occupational disease on the job, you must report it as soon as possible. Report the circumstance of the injury or disease to the **Principal and/or the Director of Human Resources for filing the Employer's electronic Report of Injury form, no later than three (3) business days after the occurrence.** Failure to notify your supervisor or the Director of Human Resources may result in denial of your claim. Within seven (7) calendar days after the employer has knowledge of the injury, the electronic First Report of Injury form must be filed within the Bureau of Personnel.

The web link for filing is <https://www.bopweb.com/SiteNavTemplateA.asp?id=850>.

**If you fail to report your claim on time, it may be denied.** Keep in touch with your human resource office to assure the claim is properly filed and monitored. All claims will be thoroughly investigated by the Bureau of Personnel.

**Selection of Medical Practitioner:** You have the right to initially select a medical practitioner. Before seeing your practitioner you need to obtain a Workmen's Compensation Work Status Report Form from the Director of Human Resources. These forms are also located in the infirmary, staff lounge and houseparent supervisor's office. This form needs to be completed by the practitioner and then returned to the Director of Human Resources. **If you want to change medical practitioners, you must submit a written request to the Bureau of Personnel for approval.** If your medical practitioner refers you to another practitioner for further treatment, you do not need permission to see that practitioner. **But remember—if another medical practitioner is consulted for a second opinion without referral or the Bureau of Personnel's approval, it will be at your own expense!**

**You also need to give prior notification to the State's Managed Care Program for hospitalization or surgery, unless it is an emergency.**

If you have already seen a medical practitioner about your injury or disease, be sure that your employer includes the medical practitioner's full name and complete address on the Employer's First Report of Injury form. If the medical practitioner's name and address are not on the Employer's First Report of Injury form, please send that information to the Bureau of Personnel as soon as possible. This same information applies to hospital or other medical practitioners.

Your medical practitioner must submit a report to Dakota Care (14) days after treatment. A medical bill should be attached to the report for faster processing. You must get prior approval from the Bureau of Personnel to purchase orthopedic devices or physical therapy equipment.

## VISITATION GUIDELINES

Parents, relatives and friends are welcome in the dormitories, but there are a few guidelines to protect students' privacy. Please make arrangements with staff on duty. No visitors of the opposite gender, other than parents, should go past the "exit" signs in the dorm. Visiting hours are posted by each dorm.

## **DORMITORY VISITING HOURS:**

Monday -- Friday: 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM and 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM  
Saturday: 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM – 10:00 PM  
Sunday: 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

## OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES, GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING

Parental permission (either in writing or on the telephone with two witnesses) must be obtained before a child can attend any activity not sponsored by SDSBVI, including church. Specific parental notation should address worship services and organized youth groups. This permission can be provided for routine attendance, at the beginning of the year, but permission must be gotten for each situation that is not routine; i.e. swimming, skiing, etc. Any requests must be discussed with Dormitory Supervisor or Student Services Director prior to contact being made with parents.

Guidelines for youth-group attendance:

- Age appropriate activities are necessary – younger students may attend with older ones only if the activities are so designed.
- If an activity is planned somewhere other than in the church, the dorm staff need to be notified the week prior to the planned activity so parental permission may be obtained.

Involvement in activities must follow established SDSBVI safety policies, including:

- Students must always wear seatbelts in vehicles.
- Students need to come back to school immediately following the activity, unless prior arrangements have been made with staff.
- If the student travels with a cane, s/he must always use it when off-campus.

## SCHOOL FACILITIES, USE OF

School property is NEVER to be used, loaned or taken for personal use unless authorized by the Superintendent. Forms must be completed and on file with the Administrative Assistant. Any damage or loss of equipment incurred while loaned shall be borne by the employee using the equipment.

The SDSBVI has a schedule of charges to be followed under which part of the facility can be rented to groups not part of the school. Contact the Superintendent for permission and rates. Any groups using the SDSBVI facilities must complete a release of liability form (forms are available from the Business office), and provide proof of insurance coverage.

## INVENTORY

All items in the school are considered to be the property of the State of South Dakota. Personal items (books, records, etc.) should be marked with the owner's name. The Business Office shall identify each piece of State property valued in excess of \$1000 excluding books, magazines, records, tapes, etc. and shall complete a written description of the same on the appropriate form. The process of inventorying assigns each item to a specific location, and items are not to be moved (other than for daily use) from one area to another without first filling out an Inventory Maintenance Form and placing it in the maintenance mailbox in the Staff Lounge.

Educational items (books, magazines, records, tapes, etc.) shall be inventoried by the faculty member assigned to the room in which these items are stored on the forms provided. These forms are to be completed in duplicate with one copy being retained in the classroom in the three-ring notebook provided and one copy forwarded to the Library.

When any of the above educational items are to be discarded, remove the appropriate sheet from the inventory notebook, write "Discarded" across the face and forward it to the Library so that those records may also be kept current.

## KEYS

All building keys have been inventoried and the Administrative Assistant will issue to appropriate personnel. Loaning or duplicating of keys must be approved by the Superintendent. Please take precautions not to lose keys (especially outside masters) since this will necessitate replacing all outside locks and keys. Please report the loss of any keys immediately to the Administrative Assistant.