

VOLUNTEER SAFETY

Parishes in the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon are very fortunate to have the support of many dedicated volunteers; their resources are vast and instrumental in assisting with many various day-to-day operations and activities.

The following guidelines present general safety practices and recommendations for volunteer services.

Before allowing volunteers to begin service, think about the potential hazard associated with the task(s), for example:

- Does the job require special equipment?
- Is there potential for physical injury?
- Is this a job that would normally be performed by contractors with specialized equipment and skills? (e.g. roofing, electrical, plumbing)
- Are there any environmental concerns regarding lead, asbestos or chemicals?

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Working with Ladders

- ***Prohibit Volunteers work above 6 feet from ground level.*** Falls, even from modest heights, can result in serious injury.
- Ladders should be inspected before each use to assure side rails and rungs are in good condition.
- The manufacturer's directions for use (generally affixed to the ladder) should be strictly observed.
- Wear shoes with non-slip soles.
- Make certain ladders are secured at the bottom.
- Always keep two feet and one hand on the ladder rung.
- Don't overreach.
- Discard and do not allow use of defective equipment.

Scaffolds

Volunteers should be prohibited from climbing or using any scaffolding.

Portable Work Platforms and Lifts

Volunteers should be prohibited from operating or working from portable work platforms and lifts (such as scissors lifts, boom buckets, cherry pickers, etc.).

Painting

Consider the following safety issues regarding painting projects:

- 6 foot height limit for volunteers
- Proper lifting of heavy materials
- Use and disposal of solvents

Additional recommendations for painting:

- Use of "airless" spray painting equipment by volunteers should be avoided.
- Use of water based paints is recommended.
- Volunteers should not be allowed to perform any paint removal or participate in demolition projects involving any asbestos containing material, lead based paint, hazardous or toxic chemicals, or strippers.

Electrical and Structural Work

Due to the possibility of injury to the volunteer and potential related property losses, all electrical and structural work should be performed by licensed and insured professional contractors.

Plumbing

Due to the possibility of property damage, including water damage, fire from welding torches, etc., it is recommended large plumbing jobs be performed by licensed and insured professional contractors.

Hand and Power Tools

- No one under 21 years of age should be allowed to operate power tools.
- Volunteers should not use power tools such as pneumatic nail guns, power augers, concrete saws, abrasive saws, power saws, etc.
- Power tools owned by volunteers should not be used.
- Frequent inspection of equipment is essential. All power tools provided to the volunteer should be inspected to ensure proper working order before the project begins.

- Appropriate personal protective equipment, such as safety glasses, must be worn by anyone operating power tools.
- Any defective equipment must be removed from service immediately.

Lawn and Garden Equipment

If volunteers are allowed to operate powered lawn and garden equipment, the recommendations outlined below should be followed:

- No one under 21 years of age should be allowed to operate motorized or power garden equipment or tools.
- All fuel should be stored in properly labeled and approved containers. Type II safety cans are recommended for fuel storage.
- Quantity of fuel storage should be limited to five gallons or less.
- Safety glasses and hearing protection should be worn at all times.
- Manufacturer's maintenance and safety guidelines for all equipment should be followed.
- Persons under the age of 21 should be given tasks appropriate to their age and skill level.

Tree Trimming

Except for light pruning at six feet or lower, tree trimming should only be performed by licensed and insured professional contractors.

Roof Work

Volunteers should not work on or about the roof, which includes the job of cleaning or repair of gutters. All roof repair should be performed by a licensed and insured professional contractor.

Security Services

Volunteers should not perform security services for parish events. Use of professional security contractors, who are licensed and insured, is recommended.

Automobiles and Driving

When a volunteer uses their private vehicle for volunteer service on behalf of the parish, insurance coverage for the volunteer's vehicle is considered primary in the event of an accident, injury or property damage.

If an auto accident occurs in which the damages exceed the volunteer's automobile policy limits, the Archdiocese of Portland Insurance Fund may review the claim for possible secondary coverage.

VOLUNTEER ACCIDENT INSURANCE COVERAGE REVIEW

The Insurance Fund provides excess accident coverage to volunteers when they are acting in the course and scope of assigned volunteer duties.

If a volunteer is injured while serving on behalf of the Archdiocese and requires medical treatment, the volunteer may submit their claim to the insurance carrier for review. The insurance provides "excess coverage." The carrier will consider medical costs associated with the injury, after the volunteer's primary coverage has exhausted benefits.

Forms are located in the "Claim Reporting" section of this manual.

VOLUNTEER ACCIDENTS –PROCESSING A CLAIM

- Volunteers should know who to contact at the parish in the event of an emergency or in case of an injury.
- Before doing anything else, provide medical care or first aid if needed.
- The parish will complete a *Volunteer Accident Report* and fax or email it to the Risk Management Office as soon as possible.
- In the event the volunteer does not have medical insurance or would like to pursue excess medical coverage, they should be provided with a current *Volunteer Accident Insurance Claim Form*.

Parish Administration:

- Complete the Policyholder's section of the claim form, and the volunteer will fill out the remaining details

Volunteers submit the following:

- Submit all completed claim forms with any other pertinent information directly to NAHGA Claim Services (currently serving as the claims administrator for this excess accident insurance policy)
- A copy of the original claim form should be included with each subsequent submission of bills and claim correspondence for the relevant claim
- Any receipts and bills that include:
 - Patient's name
 - Provider name, address and tax identification number
 - Diagnosis, dates of service and description of service

- Amounts charged to the Insurance provider as indicated on the claim form
- Explanation of Benefits provided by the volunteer's primary insurance carrier, if applicable.
- Benefits under this policy will be based on the outstanding amounts that are not paid by any other insurance carriers. such as the volunteer's insurance provider.
- Coverage will be considered up to 52 weeks from the accident date.