

Morningside Retirement and Health Services, Inc.

Policy and Procedure Manual for Volunteers

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Morningside Retirement and Health Services, Inc.

100 La Salle Street, #MC

New York, NY 10027

Phone 212 666-4000

Fax 212 666-4786

E-mail info@mrhsny.org

Dear Volunteer:

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Morningside Retirement and Health Services (MRHS). MRHS has a long history of voluntarism, beginning in the mid-1960's when it was conceived and formed by volunteers. MRHS continues to be governed by a volunteer board and boasts a volunteer corps of more than one hundred individuals, most of them older residents of Morningside Gardens.

MRHS volunteers perform a wide range of activities, including:

- Planning, leading, and assisting at MRHS educational and recreational activities
- Office work, such as answering the telephone and greeting guests
- Blood pressure screening
- Fundraising activities, such as the flea market
- Language translation for Chinese-speaking clients
- Escorting frail residents to medical appointments
- Serving on various MRHS committees

This manual has been prepared as a resource for you. We look forward to talking to you about the many exciting volunteer opportunities at MRHS.

Sincerely,

Joanna Stolove, LCSW
Assistant Director

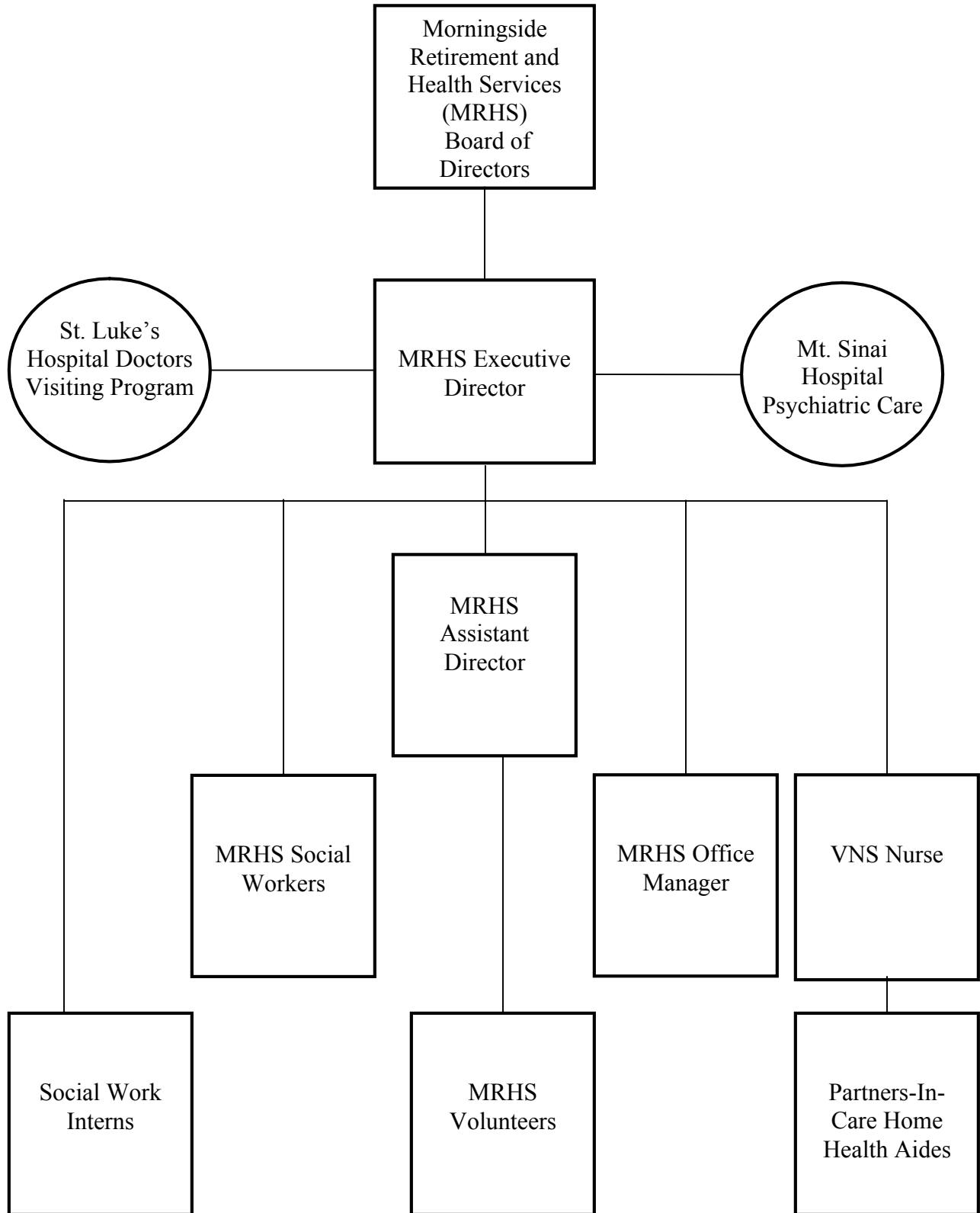
MISSION OF MRHS

1. to help frail and at-risk elderly residents of Morningside Gardens remain in their homes comfortably, safely, and with as much independence as possible for as long as they can; and
2. to provide programs which promote health and provide opportunities for education, socialization and recreation for all older residents of Morningside Gardens, with particular attention to the special needs of the infirm, homebound, and isolated.

VALUES OF MRHS

- Promoting a caring community and enriching community life;
- Preserving the dignity and human rights of older people;
- Promoting and supporting independence by actively involving individuals in managing their own care;
- Preventing isolation by keeping older residents connected to the larger Morningside Gardens community; and
- Reflecting integrity, professionalism, responsibility, warmth and respect, and commitment to diversity.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



HISTORY OF VOLUNTEERS AT MRHS

Morningside Retirement and Health Services (MRHS) was founded in 1966 on two principles: self help for older adults and neighbors helping neighbors. The founders were a group of residents in Morningside Gardens, a middle-income cooperative housing complex in Morningside Heights. The apartment complex was constructed with government assistance and opened for occupancy in 1957 to house approximately 2,000 individuals. A group of forward-thinking older residents organized MRHS nine years later to serve those elderly residents who needed assistance in order to continue to live comfortably and safely in their homes.

For the first 20 years of the program, MRHS was staffed and run solely by older residents, working as volunteers. But by its twentieth year of service, the MRHS Board of Directors recognized that many of the original volunteers had “aged in place,” and themselves needed assistance. Morningside Gardens had become a “NORC” — Naturally Occurring Retirement Community — with more than half of the apartments occupied by residents over the age of 60. In order to address the multitude of problems elderly residents were facing, professional support was needed to guide and supplement the work of volunteers. Several MRHS volunteers formed a committee to raise funds for this purpose, and in 1986 the first professional social worker was hired.

Since that time, the program – still governed primarily by Morningside Gardens residents – has assisted and enriched the lives of hundreds of older residents. Working side-by-side with the professional staff, over one hundred volunteers offer their time and expertise to MRHS.

CLIENT RIGHTS

- As a client of MRHS, you have the right:
- To be treated with courtesy and respect;
- To be informed of your rights;
- To participate in services on a voluntary basis;
- To a full discussion of your plan of service;
- To disagree with your plan of service and to discuss our disagreement;
- To privacy;
- To confidential treatment of information you give us and of your case record;
- To know that information about you cannot be released without your signed consent;
- To be assured that services to you are provided in a manner responsive to and respectful of your race, religion, cultural or ethnic heritage, sexual orientation, disability, or political belief.

VOLUNTEER RIGHTS

- To be treated as a co-worker (not just free help).
- To know as much as possible about the organization – its policies, its people, and its work.
- To a suitable assignment – with consideration for personal preference, temperament, skills, abilities, education and employment background.
- To refuse to do a task requested of them.
- To relevant training for the job, which is thoughtfully planned and effectively presented.
- To sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced and well informed and who has the time to invest in giving guidance.
- To be heard and listened to – have a part in planning and to feel free to make suggestions.
- To a fair and equitable Disputes Procedure.
- To be free of discrimination or harassment because of racial background, religious belief, sex, sexual preference, marital, age or disability status and political background.
- To a safe place to work which is an orderly designated place, conducive to work, and worthy of the job to be done; and a right to safe conditions and practices of work.
- To a written Job Description.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITY

- To accept a position that is realistic based on interests, skills and availability, as well as the needs of MRHS.
- To be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value (worth) of the job to be done.
- To carry out duties promptly and reliably to the best of their ability.
- To respect confidentiality.
- To be willing to learn and participate in orientation and training programs, and to continue to learn on the job.
- To maintain a smooth-working relationship with others and stay within the bounds of the volunteer job description.
- To accept the guidance and decisions of MRHS staff.
- To contribute to supervision by self-evaluation and willingness to ask.
- To provide sufficient notification to MRHS when ending volunteer service.

ACCIDENT AND MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Should an emergency arise during MRHS programs or activities, the following procedures will be followed:

- The MRHS volunteer will immediately contact an MRHS staff person. If no staff person is available, the volunteer will contact the Morningside Gardens Security Office (212-222-1565) as well as any appropriate outside assistance, such as ambulance or police (911).
- The MRHS volunteer will remain present until the emergency situation is under control and will provide reassurance to other MRHS participants who are present.
- The MRHS volunteer will file an incident report with Joanna Stolove at the conclusion of the emergency.

MRHS VOLUNTEER DISPUTES PROCEDURE

It is a policy of MRHS to develop and maintain a high level of volunteer morale, and to retain skilled and committed volunteers. As an integral part of this policy, it is extremely important that volunteer's grievances be promptly and fairly addressed.

Should a volunteer have a problem regarding the program, he/she should bring it to the attention of the Assistant Director. Many problems can be resolved by talking them over, and this discussion may lead to a resolution. The grievance may be presented in private. The grievance will be addressed promptly.

If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the volunteer may request a meeting with the Executive Director. If necessary, the Executive Director will bring the grievance to the MRHS's Board of Directors for a final decision.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Escort: Provide escort services to doctor's appointments, the bank and the grocery store.
- Administrative Support: Provide administrative support to MRHS programs and services.
- Handyman: Provide odd jobs or various tasks around the home.
- Telephone Reassurance: Provide reassuring regular phone calls, support and information. Telephone Reassurance helps lonely and isolated older adults feel safer and more connected to their community.
- Fairway Pick-Up: Provide access to high quality fresh foods.
- Other opportunities are available based on needs of the residents and the interests of the volunteer.

Full job descriptions are available upon request.

MRHS VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ *Cell:* _____

E-mail: _____

Best way to reach you: _____

Emergency contact: Name: _____ *Phone:* _____

Availability: (How much time and when are you willing to commit?) _____

Work Experience: (Please explain) _____

Volunteer Experience: (Please explain) _____

Special Skills: (Please explain) _____

What do you hope to gain from this experience? _____

References:

Name: _____ *Phone:* _____

Name: _____ *Phone:* _____

The undersigned volunteer hereby acknowledges receipt of a copy of the manual, *Morningside Retirement and Health Services, Inc. Policy and Procedure Manual for Volunteers*, and certifies that he or she has read it, or will read it over the next week, and is responsible for knowing its contents.

Volunteer's Signature

Date of Receipt

Volunteer's Name Printed