

UPSTATE

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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WELCOME

We're glad you've found your place!

Welcome to the Office of Volunteer Programs at Upstate. Volunteers are crucial to our mission, and you are a very important member of our team.

The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide during your volunteer service, so please refer to it often. If you ever have any questions, feel free to contact a team member of the Office of Volunteer Programs in person, by calling 315-464-5180, or emailing volunteer@upstate.edu.

Our goal is to match the interests of volunteers with the needs of the hospital. We understand volunteers seek a fulfilling experience where their contributions are meaningful and acknowledged, while enjoying their time with us.

Volunteer opportunities at Upstate University Hospital and Upstate Community Hospital, along with multiple outpatient sites are constantly evolving. We offer both clinical and non-clinical roles – to meet the interests of everyone.

Thanks again for giving of yourself, your time and your energy to Upstate. We hope your experience here is extremely rewarding!



ABOUT UPSTATE

SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY, is the only academic medical center in Central New York. It is also the region's largest employer with 9,460 employees.

As a biomedical research enterprise, Upstate focuses on the most prevalent human diseases, including cancer, diabetes, heart disease, nervous system disorders, vision, and infectious diseases. The quest for treatments and cures is built upon expertise in structural, molecular and systems biology. Upstate also offers many clinical trials for patients.

The Upstate University Health System serves 1.8 million people each year, often the most seriously ill and injured, and includes Upstate University Hospital; Upstate Community Hospital; Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital, and numerous satellite sites.

Upstate Medical University was founded in 1834. Four different medical divisions comprise the school: College of Graduate Studies, Health Professions, Medicine and Nursing. Nearly 2,500 faculty teach over 1,500 students each year and the University offers degrees that range from Bachelors to PhDs. The residency program boasts 619 residents in 47 accredited programs.

Upstate University Hospital was founded in 1964 and in 2011 acquired Community General Hospital; between the two, there are 752 inpatient hospital beds. Upstate not only operates two hospitals, but many outpatient facilities within 25 buildings on more than 30 acres. Each day, more than 5,500 outpatients are seen by Upstate providers across Central New York.

Always growing, Upstate has moved ahead in key areas of its operation. The transformation of a downtown high-rise into student apartments, the addition of research space in the Institute of Human Performance, the opening of the Neurosciences Research Building, the construction of the CNY Biotech Accelerator, Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital and the Upstate Cancer Center are key attributes for the organization's mission-based growth.



Upstate Medical University Mission

To improve the health of the communities we serve through education, biomedical research and patient care.

Upstate Medical University Vision

To be a leading academic health center in New York State and a national leader in equitable and innovative health care.

Upstate University Hospital Vision

- Upstate will provide comprehensive, seamless and innovative patient and family centered health care to improve the health status of the communities we serve.
- Upstate will be the preferred area employer by offering an environment where employees and volunteers are personally and professionally valued, recognized and supported.
- Upstate will be a clinical center of educational and research excellence by continuously evaluating and adopting innovative practices in technology and health care.

Upstate Medical University Values

- We drive innovation and discovery by empowering our university family to bring forth new ideas and to ensure quality.
- We respect people by treating all with grace and dignity.
- We serve our community by living our mission.
- We value integrity by being open and honest to build trust and teamwork.
- We embrace diversity and inclusion to state that all are welcome here.

THE UPSTATE CODE OF CONDUCT

In order to support the mission and values of Upstate Medical University, all members of the Upstate community are expected to maintain the highest level of professional behavior, ethics, integrity and honesty, regardless of position or status.

Expected and acceptable behavior fosters mutual respect. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Holding yourself and others accountable to our mission, vision and values.
- Interacting with others in a considerate, patient and courteous manner.
- Promoting equality and acceptance of people from diverse backgrounds.
- Demonstrating a caring and positive attitude: smile, greet and acknowledge others, make eye contact, say please and thank you. Give recognition and praise.
- Respecting confidentiality and privacy at all times.
- Providing a secure, clean and safe environment for patients and fellow staff.
- Working together by promoting cooperation, participation and sharing of ideas and information to promote team success. Foster open and honest communication.
- Actively listening to the perspective of others and seek to resolve conflicts promptly.
- Apologizing when mistakes are made or misunderstandings have occurred.
- Utilizing proper channels to express dissatisfaction with policies and administrative or supervisory actions and without fear of retaliation.
- Being honest and truthful at all times.
- Being knowledgeable with and following applicable policies and procedures (e.g., Customer Service Standards, Workplace Violence Policy, Student Code of Conduct, Infection Control, etc.).

Diversity and Ethics

Commitment to Sensitivity and Diversity:

Our community is diverse and comprised of people from many different backgrounds. We are committed to valuing and sharing the strength of our differences in a safe, positive and nurturing environment. An inclusive and open-minded community that engages excellence and embraces diversity is fundamental to the Upstate vision to become the leading regional academic medical center in the nation.



At Upstate, one of our core values is that **"We Respect People"**.

This means that we treat *everyone* with grace and dignity and that we have a sincere commitment to diversity.

A diverse faculty, staff, volunteers and student body are essential for us to fulfill our mission, for ourselves, and for our community.

- Care and service at Upstate is provided without regard to the race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical and cognitive ability, religion and political belief, military status, or marital status of any person.
- It is essential in a patient care setting that people feel respected and understood:
 - * Remember the Platinum Rule: Treat people as *they* want to be treated.
 - * Don't make assumptions based on stereotypes or misinformation.
 - * Be open to understanding that words, emotions and gestures can be interpreted differently by others.

Maintaining Ethics:

All volunteers are expected to maintain the highest professional and ethical standards in the conduct of Upstate business. We value our reputation for honesty, integrity and high ethical standards. You have an obligation to maintain our high standard of care by reporting suspected fraud, abuse, waste or improper/illegal activities.

The Patient Experience

*“The sum of all **Interactions**, shaped by an organizations **Culture**, that influence patient **Perceptions** across the **Continuum** of care.”*

-The Beryl Institute

Friendly faces, a kind gesture, and helping hands can make a difference in someone’s day. When a patient or a loved one is not feeling quite like themselves, these simple gestures can take on a world of new meaning. **Volunteering at Upstate allows you to play a key role in the lives of others — our patients, our visitors, and our hospital staff.**

Volunteers are typically the happiest group on campus – who better to welcome patients and their families? Volunteers are often the first and last person seen by the people we serve and we have many touchpoints during a patient’s stay:

- Greeting at registration & in hallways
- Giving directions & escorting to destination
- Visiting at the bedside
- Delivering mail, cards & flowers
- Transporting to vehicle upon discharge



- **Introduce Yourself:** Let the patient or visitor know your name and how you will be helping them.
- **Communicate:** With patients, visitors and us. Read the **correspondence** we send you.
- **Acknowledge:** What someone has said – let them know you are **Actively Listening**.
- **Respect:** And be open and welcoming to *all*; different strokes for different folks.
- **Empathize:** With everyone; you never know why a person is at Upstate.

Volunteers are *essential* to the Patient Experience at Upstate!

VOLUNTEERING AT UPSTATE



What is a Volunteer?

An Upstate volunteer is a member of a team of individuals who serve under staff supervision and direction without salary. Volunteers help to provide one of the most important ingredients to health care—love and concern for our patients and families. Services provided by volunteers lighten the burden, allowing the professional staff more time for clinical care of patients. An Upstate volunteer, more than any other person on our team, has the time and opportunity to create an atmosphere of friendliness and good will.

Types of Volunteers:

- **Adult** Volunteers are typically year-round (exceptions being snow-birds, those who summer out of town, and of course – vacations).
- **College Student** Volunteers come to Upstate during 3 different semesters – Spring, Summer or Fall. Some come for just one semester, others stay with us their entire college career.
- **Teen** Volunteers are on site during summer recess, when school is out.
- **Special Placement** Volunteers (SPV's) hold non-traditional placements in the institution. The SPV seeks their own placement and is approved by the recruiter/supervisor for the department they will be serving in. Once approved, these volunteers follow a similar path of clearance and on-boarding as a traditional volunteer.

If you are interested in lending a hand to raise much-needed funding for Upstate, then you might want to consider joining one of these important groups, too:

Advocates for Upstate

Advocates for Upstate is a membership organization of volunteers whose mission is to serve Upstate Medical University and its hospitals on both campuses. It does this by raising funds and awarding grants and scholarships to improve patient care and education. To find out more: www.upstate.edu/advocates or call: 315-464-5610.

The Upstate Foundation

If you would like to participate in hospital and community charitable fundraising projects designed to support the welfare, comfort and emotional well-being of Upstate patients and their families, you may wish to become involved with the Foundation. If you have an interest in raising money to support health care in our region, please don't hesitate to contact them at 315-464-4416, or visit: www.upstatefoundation.org.

Onboarding Process

Each volunteer is fully vetted by Upstate and the Office of Volunteer Programs. While we appreciate interest from the public, not every applicant is the right fit for volunteering at Upstate.

Our goal is to meet the needs of the hospital, while matching a volunteer's interests.

Prospective Volunteers:

- Apply, typically online via our website
- Attend an in-person interview
- Pass a Background Check
- Conduct an Initial Medical Clearance (this includes documentation of certain vaccines, as well as a TB Skin Test- which can be conducted by Upstate)
- Attend New Volunteer Orientation

Specific role and assignment training and education is provided on-the-job to new volunteers at the beginning of their service, as well as throughout the year.

It is expected that volunteers fulfill all requirements, on time, for a safe and productive relationship with Upstate. These include, but are not limited to:

- Health Assessments
- Annual Education
- Dress Code
- Adherence to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook and presented at New Volunteer Orientation and Annual Education Sessions

Volunteer Expectations

As a Volunteer, You Have the Right to:

- Be treated as a valued team member
- Have a suitable assignment
- Know as much about the organization as possible—its people, policies and programs
- Train for the assignment and receive continuing education in the position
- Sound guidance and direction and a written service description
- A safe place to work
- Be heard and to feel free to make suggestions
- Be recognized through expressions of appreciation day-to-day and at formal events

The Office of Volunteer Programs and Upstate Staff Have the Right to Expect You to:

- Adhere to the policies and procedures of Upstate and of the Office of Volunteer Programs
- Abide by the mutually agreed-upon service commitment, maintaining a satisfactory standard of performance - volunteering roughly 4 hours each week, or about 200 service hours each year (requirements vary with student programs)
- Be punctual. Arrive on-time on your regularly scheduled volunteer day, ready to fulfill your assignment. Inform the Office of Volunteer Programs and your supervisor ahead of time if you are unable to be present when scheduled
- Take on the volunteer role with curiosity and excitement; approach your duties with enthusiasm and take on challenges with a positive attitude. Communicate questions, comments or concerns
- Behave in a professional manner, maintaining confidentiality at all times
- Cooperate with staff
- Record volunteer hours worked by signing in & out each shift
- Meet the terms within Upstate's Code of Conduct

Limitations

The rule of thumb is that volunteers do not touch patients. This refers to anything considered clinical, including helping a patient ambulate. You *may* put a hand on a patient's shoulder or hand to console or encourage them.

Legally, volunteers are not allowed to perform medical or clinical procedures, including, but not limited to: taking vitals, giving medications, or transferring patients.

Volunteers do not help bathe or feed patients. They do not interact with (including transporting) Isolation/Precaution patients or patients from locked units.

Volunteer Goals:

- Make a difference in the lives of patients, their families and the CNY community as a whole
- Enhance the Patient Experience by providing a personal touch
- Serve as a vital ambassador between Upstate and patients, visitors, community members, employees and fellow volunteers
- Assist the professional and clinical staff with the non-professional aspects of their work
- Form connections with old and new friends alike



Perks & Benefits



There are many reasons to volunteer. One of them is the benefits you receive by giving freely of yourself. Volunteering connects you to others and is good for your mind and body; it can provide a healthy boost to your self-confidence, self-esteem and life satisfaction. It also brings fun and fulfillment into your life.

While volunteering at Upstate, you will:

- Learn new skills and meet new people
- Make discoveries about yourself
- Feel good about making a difference

We will provide you with:

- Free Parking in an Upstate Garage
- A meal allowance for use within Upstate's cafeterias
- Free Flu Vaccines
- A secure place to store small personal belongings
- Letter of recommendation upon request (must meet minimum volunteer service requirements)



Parking at Upstate

Volunteers may park for free in one of Upstate's parking garages while on campus for your volunteer shift. Please be sure to display the orange hang-tag you will be given at New Volunteer Orientation from your rear-view mirror. The tag may be stored in your glove box, center console or side pocket while driving.

Upstate University Hospital – Volunteers park anywhere in Garage West with the exception of the Valet parking area.

Upstate Community Hospital – Volunteers park in the Public Garage on the 3rd floor or higher.

“Cookie Dough” Meal Allowance

For every shift you volunteer, you are allotted a \$5 credit for use in one of Upstate's cafeterias. When you checkout, hand your badge to the cashier, who will deduct \$5 from your total bill. You may use your allowance at one time, or for multiple purchases throughout the day. This allowance does not accrue over time.

Volunteer Service Recognition

We want to ensure that you know just how much you are appreciated – by the Office of Volunteer Programs, hospital staff and management, and by Upstate's patients and visitors. Hopefully you receive several “thank you's” every time you serve!

Volunteers are recognized for their contribution to Upstate in several ways throughout the year:

- We celebrate National Volunteer Appreciation Week every year in April. This is an opportunity for Upstate to publicly recognize and appreciate the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and the services they provide. Celebrations vary each year, and usually involve edible treats of some kind!
- We also like to celebrate Upstate Volunteers with our **Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event**. While the event varies, we have held a sit-down luncheon and program over the last several years due to its popularity.

Other recognition:

- Wall display at each hospital, highlighting years of service
- ID Badge Extenders which highlight hours contributed – a great conversation starter!
- Social media posts
- Appreciation gifts at the Annual Event
- Smiles, hugs*, cards, emails and phone calls from us to you

*When social distancing rules are not in effect



Office of Volunteer Programs Policies and Procedures



Commitment

Volunteers serve on average **one 4-hour shift each week, or roughly 200 hours per year.** Becoming a volunteer at Upstate takes approximately 4-6 weeks, and we are interested in long-term relationships with our volunteers. During the first few months, the Office of Volunteer Programs and/or your volunteer supervisor provides feedback and recommendations for future service. This is a time for the hospital to get to know you and your skills and interests and for you to discover if you are comfortable with your assigned placement. Our staff come to rely on the assistance given by volunteers, and genuinely look forward to seeing you each week. **Your work is important and we depend on you!**

Signing In

Please record your time in and out at the sign-in station located in the Office of Volunteer Programs' administrative office. Our record of volunteer hours is vital; it provides an accurate account of volunteer activity, assists in determining the level of recognition for individual services, and allows us to communicate with you upon each use of the sign-in station. We can also determine where volunteers are located in the event of an emergency.

Calling Out

If you are unable to come in for your scheduled volunteer shift *unexpectedly* due to illness, car trouble, or other personal reasons- please let your supervisor, and the Office of Volunteer Programs know. You may call us at (315) 464-5180 and follow the prompts to leave the team a message – or, you can email us at volunteer@upstate.edu.

Please do not leave a voice mail message on any one team member's direct line. If they are ill themselves, or are not in the office to check their voice mail, no one will know you cannot come in for the day. Unexpected absences make us worry if we do not hear from you.

Communication

News, updates and changes to policies are constant in a health care setting. It is important for us to relay information to you to keep you in-the-loop and safe. It is also important that you read the notices made available and contact us with any questions. **When you sign-in each week, please check for updates and items of interest.**

We will contact you in person, via the USPS, telephone, email, or text. We also post important notices around the office and you may receive a message through the sign-in computer. We will do our best to keep you as up-to-date as possible. We need you to please read such notices when we share them with you.

Your Health

Annual Health Assessment (AHA)

Each year volunteers will be reminded prior to their AHA, which will consist of a health form updating the Employee/Student Health Office (ESH) of your current status – and may involve a TB test and/or visit with the ESH. It is important that the Health Office and your physician agree that you are fit to volunteer.

Volunteers must remain up-to-date on their Annual Health Assessments. Failure to comply may result in termination of your volunteer position.

COVID and Flu Vaccines

Volunteers must be up to date with both vaccines each year in order to continue volunteering during the State Mandate (continuous high flu activity)*.

Flu shots are offered annually by Upstate at no cost to volunteers each fall- or you can obtain your vaccine from your doctor/pharmacy & provide us with documentation.

At this time, Upstate *does not* offer the enhanced flu vaccine.

* If you are unable to receive the flu shot, we will hold your volunteer status until the flu mandate is lifted. You must refrain from volunteering during the entire State Mandate (typically November-April).

Illness

Volunteers should not report when ill because of the risk of transmitting infection/germs to patients. You are not allowed to volunteer at Upstate if you have diarrhea or are vomiting, or are less than 24 hours fever free. Stay home if you are coming down with, or are in the middle of a cold, flu or stomach bug. We truly want you to stay home and take care of yourself. Please keep patients, visitors, staff and other volunteers healthy!

Return to Work

If you are away from your regular volunteer shift at the hospital due to extended illness, injury, surgery or other health related matter, we may require a “Return to Work Note” from your physician. This will allow you to return to active duty with, or without limitations.

Dress Code

First impressions are very important. We want you to be safe, comfortable and positively represent the Upstate Volunteer Program. Your appearance should not attract more attention than the role you are performing.

Please remember that this is a place of business – present a neat and professional appearance that reflects well on Upstate and the Office of Volunteer Programs.

The Upstate Volunteer Dress Code consists of five parts:

1. **Identification Badges:** Are required and should be worn on the yellow lanyard and visible at all times for security purposes during your volunteer shift.
2. **Uniform:** You will have the choice between our volunteer **vest or polo**. You should wash your uniform as needed. If it becomes stained, too big or small – let us know so we can replace it. A conservative (no slogans please) shirt can be worn under vests or polos. Shoulders and midriffs should be covered.
3. **Khakis or Dress Slacks:** Long pants (below the knee) should be worn during your volunteer shift. This is something with a zipper, and not too tight. Jeans, yoga/sweat pants or shorts are not permitted.
4. **Closed-Toe Shoes:** For your safety and comfort, we recommend practical shoes: sneakers are fine. Sandals, flip-flops, Birkenstocks, etc. cannot be worn. Crocs *without* holes are permissible.
5. **Personal Protective Equipment:** Will be issued to you by Upstate.



Please, no: hats, ripped/torn clothing, visible underwear, halter tops/spaghetti straps.

- ✓ Hair should be neat & clean.
- ✓ Clothes should be clean & wrinkle free.
- ✓ Nails should be neat and trimmed.
- ✓ You should have brushed your hair & teeth at least once that day *before* coming in for your volunteer shift.

Fragrance Free Environment

Patients who are ill are more easily disturbed by smells. We try to keep Upstate a “Fragrance Free” environment, and ask that you refrain from applying scents prior to your volunteer shift. While you may be accustomed to it, natural body odor and the smell from cigarettes or cigars can be very overwhelming to many.

Behavior

Upstate is also a place of business. Please remember that while you are volunteering- you represent yourself, the Office of Volunteer Programs and the hospital.

- Treat this like a job – in demeanor, dress and dedication.
- Watch your language – people may overhear you; even if you cannot see them. Inappropriate conversations are not tolerated.
- Do not bring in homework, laptops, or tablets. We know certain areas can be slow at times. Instead, chat with your fellow volunteers and get to know your peers. Please reach out to us if you would like something additional to do.
- Perception goes a long way. We know you want to be helpful and are interested in making a contribution to the hospital. If others view you as distracted or more involved in personal activities, they may view this as a sign of inattentiveness.
- Set a good example – **and** – follow *only* the good examples.

Gift Giving

Volunteers and patients (and their loved ones) can develop very special bonds over time. It is important to remember that you are volunteering and always representing Upstate in your interactions with patients. Volunteers need to maintain some boundaries that ordinary friends do not have. It is never appropriate to accept from or give to a patient (or their loved ones) a gift of any kind.

If a gift is offered by a patient or their loved one: explain that you value their appreciation, but it is against hospital policy for volunteers to accept gifts, including money.

Corrective Action

When appropriate and necessary, corrective action may be taken following an incident involving a volunteer. Examples of corrective action include, but are not limited to: the requirement of additional training, re-assignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension of the volunteer, or dismissal from volunteer service at Upstate.

Cell Phone Use

We request that volunteers refrain from cell phone use during their regular shift. You may have your cell phone with you during your volunteer shift; however, you must not use it when you are with patients or their families. Some units strictly prohibit cell phones. If you need to make/take a call while volunteering, please keep your phone on vibrate, and do so quietly and privately (outside of public view).

Public Relations

All media requests must be pre-coordinated by a member of the Upstate Public and Media Relations Department. Before you speak to the media regarding Upstate or your volunteer service, please be sure to contact the Office of Volunteer Programs. If you are contacted directly by a publication, broadcast, internet media, radio or other type of media representative, please inform the representative that the Upstate Public and Media Relations Department must handle all media requests and approve any information given to the media. See page 32 for information on Upstate's Social Media policies.

Tobacco Policy

Smoking or the use of tobacco and electronic cigarettes is prohibited in all Upstate buildings, offices, parking garages & lots (including in personal vehicles), leased space and near entrances/exits to Upstate properties. If you are interested in smoking cessation, please let a member of the Office of Volunteer Programs know, so we may assist you in obtaining complementary help from Upstate's programs.

Substance Abuse

Upstate is committed to maintaining a workplace that is free from the influence of alcohol and drugs. Hospital policy prohibits the use, possession, manufacture, distribution or sale of drugs and alcohol when on Upstate premises, or elsewhere while on duty. Personnel, including volunteers, may not report for duty under the influence of any drug, alcoholic beverage, intoxicant or other substance (including legally prescribed drugs and medicines) that affects their ability to work safely and efficiently. If you are required by your physician to take a prescription medication during your shift, please secure it in one of the lockers in the Office of Volunteer Programs' administrative office.



General Safety & Emergency Preparedness



Volunteers are expected to become familiar with Upstate policies regarding general safety, fire safety, emergency procedures and more. Please take time to become knowledgeable regarding these issues. For each of the following, always remain calm, maintain awareness of your surroundings, and report anything suspicious to the Office of Volunteer Programs, your supervisor, or the Public Safety Department.

Public Safety services are available on a 24-hour basis, seven days a week. Contact them to:

- Report suspicious activity, aggressive behavior or theft
- Request an escort to your car
- Write an incident report if a patient or visitor has fallen, and it *is not* a medical emergency (i.e. they have slipped on the floor)

Personal Property Protection

Do not leave any items unattended or unsecured – including in your car. This is a precaution against intruders and thieves. Upstate cannot take responsibility for lost or stolen items. Feel free to leave any valuables at home, or secure items in one of the lockers in the Volunteer office.

Weapons Free Workplace

To help ensure a safe environment for patients, families, visitors, and staff, Upstate prohibits weapons on campus. A weapon is any object or instrument with the potential to cause physical injury. All persons who are on Upstate property are barred from carrying or otherwise transporting a handgun, fire-arm, or prohibited weapon of any kind on the hospital premises regardless of their permit status. All weapons observed should be reported to Upstate Public Safety or University Police as soon as possible.

Harassment

Upstate has adopted a “zero-tolerance” policy toward harassment. This means we have zero tolerance for workplace sexual harassment or workplace violence (spoken or written via email, text, smart device, etc.). Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of their sex, race, sexual orientation, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability. Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. Please notify a member of the Office of Volunteer Programs should anything ever happen, or you feel uncomfortable. In addition, if you perceive a situation as sexual harassment, please feel free to call the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at (315) 464-5234 to discuss your concerns.

Disaster Incidents

A disaster is an internal or external event that may disrupt resources, personnel, and patient care services. Departments, including the Office of Volunteer Programs, have Disaster Manuals to follow in case a disaster is declared. In extreme circumstances, evacuation of an area, or of the entire hospital, might be necessary. If you are here when a disaster is declared, continue normal operations unless instructed otherwise.

Volunteers Should:

- Stay Calm
- Return to your assigned area (if you are away from it) and report in to your supervisor – unless your path would be in the area of the incident – then report to the closest department to you
- Wait to receive further instructions
- Return to volunteering as normal when “All Clear” is announced overhead

Never hesitate to relocate or evacuate if there is imminent danger

EMTALA Emergency Medical Treatment & Active Labor Act

Referred to as the "anti-dumping" law, EMTALA was designed to prevent hospitals from transferring uninsured or Medicaid patients to public hospitals without, at a minimum, providing a medical screening examination to ensure they were stable for transfer. It is a federal law that requires anyone coming to an emergency department to be stabilized and treated, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay.

Volunteers & staff must **ESCORT** anyone who presents in a hospital lobby to the public Emergency entrance. **(Do not just give verbal directions)**

This includes people seeking Golisano After-Hours Care when it is closed

Injuries While Volunteering

All injuries and incidents occurring during your shift must be reported to an Upstate staff member *before* you leave the premises. A member of the Office of Volunteer Programs or Public Safety will write an injury report and ensure the safety of others.

If you are injured while volunteering, be sure to do the following immediately:

- Seek care at the Emergency Department or Employee/Student Health Office
- Notify your supervisor & the Office of Volunteer Programs



EMERGENCY

CODES ARE ANNOUNCED VIA THE OVERHEAD PAGING SYSTEM:

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INCIDENT/CHEMICAL SPILLS (CODE ORANGE):

Chemicals are commonly used in a healthcare setting. You should follow these steps if a spill happens **to you**:

- Immediately alert your co-workers and supervisor of the spill
- Seek emergency medical attention through the Emergency Room, if needed

If the code is called for a different area of the hospital:

- Continue normal operations unless instructed otherwise

In the event a hazardous substance is discovered and decontamination is necessary, all exterior doors will be on lockdown. Continue normal operations unless instructed otherwise.

FIRE (CODE RED): If you hear this announcement, continue normal operations unless instructed otherwise.

If you see smoke or flames, immediately: **R A C E**

R – Report the location of the fire. Remove any patients who are in danger, if possible.

A – Activate alarm. Go to the nearest fire alarm station and pull alarm.

C – Contain fire. Extinguish if possible.

E – Evacuate the area – relocate to a safe place.

MISSING ADULT (CODE GRAY) MISSING INFANT OR CHILD ABDUCTION (CODE AMBER):

These codes are used for patients leaving the hospital who should not, who have wandered away unknowingly or have been abducted:

- Go to a public area (if you are not already in one) – especially near exits and stairwells.
- Be extremely observant in case you notice something relevant; in which case, please contact Public Safety, or the nearest staff member.



RESPONSE CODES

ADULT (CODE BLUE) PEDIATRIC (CODE WHITE) MEDICAL EMERGENCY:

A medical team will be dispatched to the location. Continue normal operations unless instructed otherwise. Avoid the area whenever possible to allow teams to work.

HOSTAGE OR WEAPON SITUATION (CODE SILVER)*:**

- Call Public Safety in the event of a suspected hostage situation or a person with a weapon.
- Run (evacuate), Hide, or Fight (and be sure to silence cell phones and/or voceras).

EXPLOSIVE DEVICE OR BOMB THREAT (CODE YELLOW)*:**

Public Safety will respond. Continue normal operations unless instructed otherwise.

***If you choose to evacuate, do so calmly. Your hands should be empty (including cell phones) and raised above your head. **Do not** collect personal belongs before leaving the building.

SEVERE WEATHER (CODE BLACK): Continue normal operations unless instructed otherwise.

OBSTETRICAL MEDICAL EMERGENCY (CODE "C"): Will be called if there is an emergency **outside/off of the Labor & Delivery Unit**; continue normal operations unless otherwise noted.

INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL DISASTER (CODE: INCIDENT COMMAND):

In extreme circumstances, evacuation of an area, or of the entire hospital, might be necessary. Your ID badge must be worn to enter and move around the hospital at this time. If you are here when a disaster is declared, continue normal operations unless instructed otherwise.

ALL CLEAR:

The Code is over and you may resume normal operations.

**Drills are conducted occasionally and will be announced as such.
We will notify you of upcoming trainings whenever possible.**

Hand Hygiene

Stop the spread of germs by regularly and thoroughly washing your hands. Please follow these hand washing guidelines:

- Always wash your hands:
 - Before and after direct contact with patients
 - Before and after eating
 - After using the bathroom
 - After coughing, sneezing
- If hands *are not* visibly soiled, alcohol gel (hand sanitizer) can be used as a substitute

Hand washing technique (Upstate follows the CDC's Guidelines for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings):

1. Wet hands with warm water, apply soap
2. Rub with friction for at least 20 seconds. (Or as long as it takes you to sing "Happy Birthday" **twice**)
3. Rinse with fingertips pointing downward
4. Dry hands with paper towels. Use a clean paper towel to turn off faucets and to open the bathroom door

Hand Sanitizer

It is mandatory to use sanitizer **before and after** entering patients' rooms – regardless of whether or not you have been wearing or will be wearing gloves. Patients appreciate seeing you foam in and foam out for their safety!

1. Push one time to get gel/foam into palm of hand
2. Rub both hands together using friction until dry

Glove Use

Glove use is MANDATORY, when:

- Coming into direct contact with patients (including wheelchair transports) or their belongings, including bed sheets
- Delivering samples/specimens to the lab
- Using sanitizing wipes to disinfect chairs

Volunteers will be trained on how to properly don and doff gloves during their introductory period at Upstate. A new set of gloves should be worn for each task.

ISOLATION PATIENTS

STOP!

Volunteers are **NOT** allowed to enter these rooms.

ISOLATION PATIENTS

- Volunteers are **NOT** to enter these rooms (this includes flower & card deliveries as well as patient transports)
- If you are called upon to come into contact with these patients (including discharges), you can gently remind staff that you are unable to assist with precaution patients and offer your assistance with another task

Outside of an Isolation Patient's room you will see:

- Signs like this at eye level on the door frame (they come in different colors, depending on the sign)
-and-
- You may see a cart with gloves and gowns directly outside of the room



Examples of Contagious Illnesses/Diseases:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------|
| -Corona Virus (COVID-19) | -Chickenpox | -Influenza | -Tuberculosis |
| -Measles | -Norovirus (stomach bug) | | -Smallpox |

**We want to keep you and others healthy –
DO NOT ENTER these rooms!**

HOW TO SAFELY OPERATE A WHEELCHAIR

Everyone who helps in a hospital should know how to operate a wheelchair safely.

1. KNOW THE EQUIPMENT

- Learn the location and use of the following:
 - Brakes (levers on each side in front of the wheels). Be careful- wheelchairs can slide on hospital floors *even* when the brakes are on
 - Footrests/Legrests
- Equipment should be clean & in good working order. Let the Office of Volunteer Programs know if a chair is unusable due to broken/missing parts.

2. APPROACH THE PATIENT

- Introduce yourself to the patient and indicate that you're a volunteer
- Inform the patient of his/her destination

Sample Script: "Hello. Are you John? I'm Donna, a volunteer & I'm going to help you today. We are going out front, so that you may be picked up to go home."

RULES OF THE ROAD:

- Walk on the right side of hallways. Be careful, go S-L-O-W-L-Y. Announce bumps whenever possible.
- Don't push more weight than you can handle.
- Use footrests and leg pads & lock the brakes **before** letting someone in and out.
- Back into elevators (so the patient is not looking at the back while everyone else is facing front).
- Clean wheelchairs after **each use** with disinfecting wipes.
- Return the chair clean, with the leg pads & footrests up, ready for the next person.

RESTRICTIONS:

- * Do not transport patients with attachments, such as large oxygen tanks, IVs, monitors, etc.
- * Volunteers cannot push wheelchairs up the ramp to the garage at University Hospital.
- * Volunteers cannot push wheelchairs *into* the garage – you may stay at the sidewalk (it is recommended that the patient's driver pull around to the front circle whenever possible).
- * Volunteers may not push someone more than 300 pounds. Please speak up and ask for assistance *discretely* if a patient is too large to fit into a regular wheelchair or too difficult for you to handle alone.

IF A PATIENT BECOMES INJURED OR ILL:

If you observe a patient/visitor who appears to be ill or injured notify your supervisor or the nearest staff member immediately

- DO NOT attempt to move the patient yourself. After the person has been taken care of and the incident is over, please notify the Office of Volunteer Programs of the incident



Confidentiality



At Upstate, we take confidentiality, security and privacy of patient information seriously. All information acquired about patients, families or hospital personnel is considered confidential.

All volunteers must read and sign the Upstate Confidentiality Agreement. Confidentiality entitles every patient to privacy and reassures that their personal medical information will be kept confidential. A violation of confidential information is a violation of the law as well as Upstate's ethics, and a volunteer may be dismissed immediately, if such a violation occurs.

HIPAA

HIPAA stands for the **H**ealth **I**nsurance **P**ortability and **A**ccountability **A**ct of 1996. This act requires that everyone, *including* volunteers, safeguard and protect patient information. This information can be oral, written or electronic. All information regarding a patient is confidential. This includes name, address, age or other identifying markers and any information about their medical condition. If you reveal any of this information to someone who does not need to know or without the patient's permission, you have broken the law.

Keep it to yourself. You may overhear private health information, or see someone familiar to you in the hospital. It's up to you to keep that information confidential. Please remember to NOT discuss patients or visitors by name here or outside of the hospital. This includes sharing information with other volunteers or staff – if you do not need to do so to do your job.

Even the trash is private. Patient information on paper should be shredded. Papers without names or other identifying markers should be recycled.

Penalties. *Even* volunteers may be imprisoned or fined up to \$500,000 for HIPAA violations.

Your responsibility is to understand HIPAA and confidentiality. Remember: anything you see, hear, read or observe with your five senses at Upstate must be kept confidential!

Protecting and safeguarding confidential information is a team effort and the responsibility of everyone, including volunteers.

Please respect the trust placed in you.

Social Networking

You are held to the same standard as everyone at Upstate and are required to act accordingly. Disclosing patient information via social networking sites or otherwise, is a violation of the Upstate confidentiality policy. Doing so is also against the law!

Volunteers can be fired, fined and/or imprisoned for breaking HIPAA.

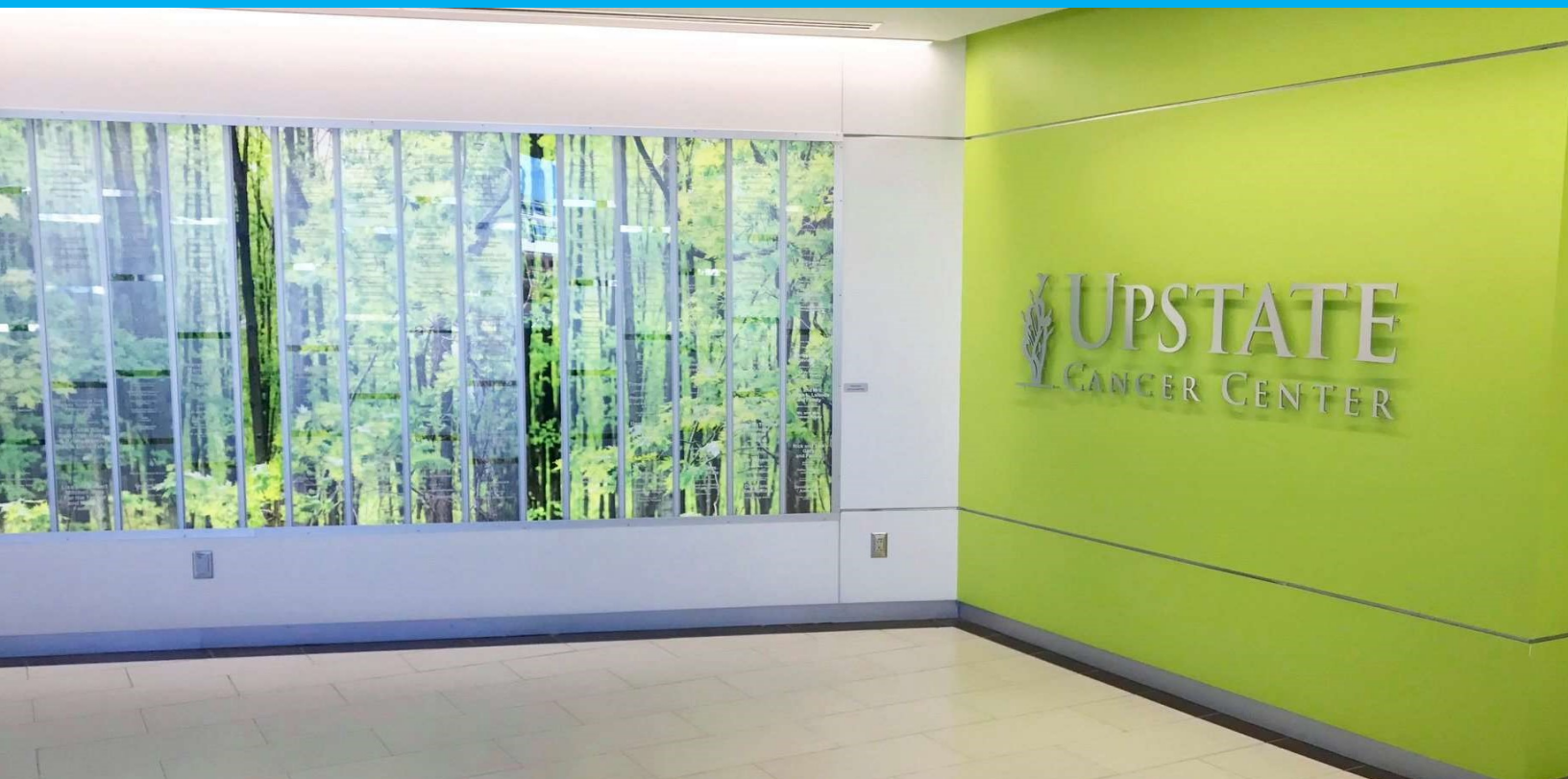
Upstate volunteers may not communicate with patients or families via social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, blogs, etc., even if requested by them. Any communication could be interpreted as disclosing or confirming protected health information in violation of Upstate Privacy, Security, and Patient Rights Policies as well as federal laws such as HIPAA.

Accordingly, you should be aware that some of the same restrictions policies that apply to your conduct and speech while volunteering at Upstate also apply when you use social networking sites:

- Patient privacy is a top priority. Disclosing patient information, via social networking sites or otherwise, is a violation of the Upstate Confidentiality policy and is not permitted.
- Follow the Upstate CODE OF CONDUCT. Remember that harassing, bullying, intimidating or discriminating against patients, visitors, employees, other volunteers or anyone affiliated with Upstate contradicts the Upstate shared values and violates the Upstate CODE OF CONDUCT.
- Proper authorization must be obtained prior to using photos of Upstate employees on social networking sites. Recordings, including photos, may not be taken of patients.
- If a patient (or their family) requests that you communicate on these websites such as Facebook/Instagram, etc., you may respond *“The Office of Volunteer Programs does not allow me to correspond with patients & visitors outside my normal volunteer shift, but I look forward to seeing you the next time I’m here.”*
- Misuse of information through social media breaching the confidentiality policy may result in sanctions up to and including termination.



Interacting with Upstate's Patients and Visitors



The National Integrated Accreditation for Healthcare Organizations requires that all employees and volunteers who work with or around patients understand how to appropriately work and communicate with different age groups. This knowledge is essential for providing care to specific patients. The following are the Environment of Care Competencies for the following age groups seen by Upstate. Keep in mind that every patient is to be treated at all times with courtesy and respect and full recognition of dignity and individuality.

For All Ages

Introduce yourself. Tell them why you are there and be sure your name badge is visible with your name and picture facing outwards. Ask for the names of patients and family members you are helping, then use them. Don't use shortened or nicknames unless they refer to themselves that way and invite you to do the same.

- Take emotions, feelings and ideas seriously
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Be honest & empathetic
- Keep confidential information to yourself
- Respect and privacy are important
- Recognize that all persons have equal value

For Children

- Play is a child's work—encourage and support it
- Each child is an individual—comparisons to others can hurt
- Staring, pointing or whispering about children who look or act different hurts their feelings

Exceptional Customer Service

- Make eye contact, smile & greet (say "hello" or "take care")
- Be approachable – body language speaks volumes
- Offer to help *before* someone can ask for assistance
- On the telephone & in person: identify yourself, speaking slowly, clearly and in a pleasant manner
- Maintain a courteous, calm, and kind tone with patients and families
- Escort patients & visitors at least ½ way to their destination
- If you are unable to handle a situation or do not know the information, find someone who can help and follow through to their satisfaction. (say "I'm not sure, but let me find someone who can help")



Additional Information



Hospital Phone Numbers

At University Hospital, you can reach most departments or employees by dialing 4, followed by the last four digits of the phone number, while on an internal phone. For example, you can reach Public Safety by dialing 4-4000 by using a land-line within the hospital. From a cell or outside phone, you would dial (315) 464-4000.

At Community Hospital, most departments and employees can be reached by dialing their four digit extension, while on an internal phone. For example, you can reach the Main Desk by dialing 5541 by using a land-line within the hospital. From a cell or outside phone, you would dial (315) 492-5541.

Inclement Weather

In the event of severe weather conditions in CNY or near Upstate, your safety is our priority! As a general rule, if Onondaga County schools are closed due to weather conditions, we realize you might not come in for your regularly scheduled shift and you do not need to call; however, if it is safe to do so, you may come in.

We always want you to stay safe. If you don't feel comfortable driving on snowy roads - or can't walk to the hospital in severe temps/weather - we don't want you to attempt to come in. Whether or not you stay home during inclement conditions is your decision – one we will always respect.

Upstate Volunteer Holidays

The Office of Volunteer Programs is closed during the holidays listed below. You are **not expected** to report for your volunteer shift should it fall on a holiday. When a holiday occurs on Saturday, the preceding Friday is *typically* observed; when a holiday occurs on Sunday, the Monday following is *typically* observed.

New Year's Day
Dr. Martin Luther King Birthday
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
4th of July
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Thanksgiving
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Day

Vacation

Notify the Office of Volunteer Programs and your volunteer supervisor if you have a planned absence. While we understand that outside commitments arise, we are not able to hold your volunteer placement if you will be away from Upstate for more than six months in a row. If you plan on being away for more than two weeks, please ask the team for a Vacation Form to help us track your schedule.

Leave of Absence

You are able to take a Leave of Absence if you need to take an extended break. If at any time you feel that you are unable to fulfill your scheduled commitment and need to take a Leave of Absence, contact the Office of Volunteer Programs as soon as possible. When you are ready to return, contact the office. If it's been more than one year since your last volunteer shift, you will need to complete the onboarding process again. If you have been out for a medical reason, we may request a note from your doctor allowing you to return to active service (see Return to Work note in "Your Health" on page 18).

Resignation

When the time comes that you decide you can no longer volunteer, please contact the Office of Volunteer Programs. We will want to thank you for your service and hear about your volunteer experience at Upstate so that we can learn and make changes/improvements to our program. On your last day, please turn in your ID badge and parking hangtag before leaving.

Volunteer Termination

All volunteers deemed unsuitable for continued volunteer service at Upstate will be terminated and prohibited from further volunteer activity at the hospital. Volunteers may be terminated from volunteer service for:

1. Breach of confidentiality
2. Noncompliance with Upstate Code of Conduct
3. Disregard of Office of Volunteer Programs policies
4. Inability to work well with others
5. Any concern Upstate may have for the safety and comfort of our patients and their families

Office of Volunteer Programs Team:

Kristin Bruce, MHA MBA FACHE CAVS CDVS

Director

brucek@upstate.edu

Stephanie L. Mack

Manager

mackst@upstate.edu

Lauren Saldo

Manager

saldol@upstate.edu

Kat O'Hara

Coordinator

oharakat@upstate.edu

Laura Waltar

Program Assistant

waltarl@upstate.edu

Office Locations:

Upstate University Hospital

Rm C 1083

750 E Adams St

Syracuse, NY 13210

Upstate Community Hospital

Rm 1285

4900 Broad Rd

Syracuse, NY 13215

Contact:

volunteer@upstate.edu

315.464.5180

upstate.edu/volunteers



Upstate's Office of Volunteer Programs

Mission

The mission of the Office of Volunteer Programs is to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities which enhance the healthcare experience through *service with compassion*.

Vision

To be a premier volunteer programs and vital partner to all we serve by fostering a culture of empathy and respect.

