



## BASTROP COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. Safety and security are the top priorities for everyone working in the Bastrop County Sheriff's Office and are also the primary considerations for every action and decision in the Jail.
2. Individuals will not be denied access to the volunteer program based solely on sex, race, national origin, physical handicap, religion, or political belief.
3. Individuals interested in becoming a volunteer in the jail must submit a Bastrop County Sheriff's Office Jail Volunteer Application to the Jail Programs and Projects Coordinator. Sheriff's Department personnel will conduct a criminal history and background check on all volunteer applicants. Volunteer applicants with pending criminal charges or a history of criminal convictions may be disqualified. Application information must be kept current by reporting changes to the Jail Programs and Projects Coordinator as soon as possible.
4. Volunteers must be at least 21 years old.
5. Volunteers must be of good moral character.
6. Volunteers must sign in and out of the visitor log register.
7. Volunteers must follow all written and verbal directions given by the Jail staff.
8. Never report for volunteer duty at the Jail under the influence of alcohol or drugs (unless prescribed by a physician).
9. Never bring in or give personal property to an inmate. Never take any personal property from an inmate.
10. **Immediately** report all breaches of security, threats of suicide or escape attempts/plans, and any inappropriate staff/inmate behavior including sexual abuse or sexual harassment to the appropriate Jail staff.
11. Notify the Jail Programs and Projects Coordinator when a relative or friend is a current inmate.
12. Do not give legal advice to inmates or discuss confinement status.
13. Do not make any telephone calls for the inmates.
14. Do not testify in court on behalf of an inmate.
15. Do not debate any issues involving Jail rules or regulations.
16. Do not contact an inmate on behalf of any person on the outside of the Jail.

17. Do not pass messages between inmates or between an inmate and a person on the outside of the Jail.
18. Leave personal items outside of the Jail (cell phone, purse, backpack, etc.). You will be required to present a photo identification card when entering the Jail.
19. **Never carry contraband into or out of the jail.** Contraband is defined as any item not issued through health service staff, not authorized by Jail Administration or any permissible item altered, changed or converted into something other than its original form. Examples: dental floss, food, money, gum, alcohol, drugs, scissors, hand lotion, perfume, umbrella, spiral bound notebooks, over the counter medication (aspirin, Tylenol, etc.), pictures, letters, personal papers, drugs, knives, guns, pens, paperclips, metal objects, string, staples, gifts, hard-cover books, magazines, cigarettes, matches, lighters. Attempts to smuggle contraband into or out of the jail may result in criminal charges.
20. Jail Administration may terminate a volunteer's access to the Jail with or without cause at any time. When a volunteer's access is terminated, notification will be made in writing.
21. Volunteers should present a professional image by dressing appropriately, keeping in mind the population with whom they work. Casual clothing that is neat and comfortable is suggested. Sloppy or provocative attire is not allowed. Jail staff may deny entry into the facility if they deem a volunteer's clothing to be inappropriate.
22. All volunteers are subject to searches of their person and any items they bring into the Jail.
23. Do not share personal information about yourself, Jail staff or other volunteers with the inmates. This includes address, telephone number, family activities, vacation plans and places of employment. Personal relationships must be avoided.
24. Never leave the inmates unsupervised.
25. A Jail Supervisor may cancel a program at any time for safety/security reasons.
26. When a Jailer tells you to do something, do so as soon as possible. The request may not make sense to you at the time, but the Jailer may have a good reason for the request. The Jailer is trained to be aware of potential and real problems in the jail that may be a threat to your safety as well as the security of the jail.
27. Your conversations may be monitored and the closed circuit TV system may be recorded.