

**HEAD START**



**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL  
OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY**  
2455 St. Lucie Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
(772) 562-4177  
[www.eocofirc.net](http://www.eocofirc.net)



# **VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION PACKAGE**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To transition at-risk individuals and families from poverty to self-sufficiency through our agency programs and public/private partnerships.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

To be a partner in the creation of a community wherein low-income individuals and families, especially at-risk populations, will have the opportunity to become educated, self-sufficient, improve the conditions in which they live, and achieve their full potential.

## **EOC & HEAD START CONTACTS:**

We encourage volunteers to contact us at any time with questions or concerns.

**Erica Johnson**  
**Family & Community Partnership Specialist**  
**(Volunteer Coordinator)**  
Head Start Administrative Offices/Douglas Center  
8445 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Wabasso, FL 32970  
772-589-8008 Ext.2114

**Lead Volunteer –**

**Franklin Johnson**  
**Head Start Director**  
Head Start Administrative Offices  
2455 St. Lucie Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
772-562-4177 Ext. 1119

**Nancy McCurry**  
**Development Director**  
**Volunteer Grant Administrator**  
EOC Administrative Offices  
2455 St. Lucie Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
772-562-4177 Ext. 1114

**Angela Davis-Green**  
**Executive Director**  
EOC Administrative Offices  
2455 St. Lucie Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
772-562-4177 Ext. 1114

## SERVICE LOCATIONS

### Administrative Offices & Community Services

2455 St. Lucie Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
Tel: (772) 562-4177  
Fax: (772) 794-7597

### **INDIAN RIVER COUNTY:**

#### Citrus Head Start Center

(on campus of Citrus Elementary)  
2771 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32968  
Tel: (772) 569-4902  
Fax: (772) 794-0744

#### Dodgertown Head Start

(on campus of Dodgertown Elementary)  
4350 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Gifford, FL 32967  
Tel: (772) 213-9922  
Fax: (772)-794-7597 (Main Office)

#### Douglas Head Start Center

8445 64th Avenue  
Wabasso, FL 32970  
Tel: (772) 589-8008  
Fax: (772) 589-1191

#### Fellsmere Head Start Center

1339 N. Willow Street  
Fellsmere, FL 32948  
Tel: (772) 571-1234  
Fax: (772) 571-9682

### Indian River Academy Head Start Center

(on campus of Indian River Academy)  
500 SW 20th Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32962  
Tel: (772) 794-2375  
Fax: (772) 794-1908

### St. Helen's Head Start Center & Early Bird Classroom

3550 41st Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32967  
Tel: (772) 567-4347  
Fax: (772) 562-0375

### **OKEECHOBEE COUNTY:**

#### Northside Head Start Center

1798 NW 9th Avenue  
Okeechobee, FL 34972  
Tel: (863) 357-8677  
Fax: (863) 357-6817

#### Seminole Center

(on campus of Seminole Elementary School)  
2690 N.W. 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave.  
Okeechobee FL 34972  
Tel: (863) 357-8677  
Fax: (863) 357-6817



## **SPECIFIC VOLUNTEER POSITIONS**

The following are some specific positions we are looking to fill. See the following page for additional ways you might help; or, you may have your own idea how you would like to help. We encourage you to share your ideas with us.

### **CLASSROOM**

Examples:

- Reader
- Book Area
- Playground
- Woodworking Area
- Water Play
- Computer Area
- Floor toys
- Art Area

### **MAINTENANCE**

### **OFFICE WORK**

### **GARDENING**

### **EXTENDED DAY WORKER**

### **SUBSTITUTE COOK/FOOD SERVICE**

### **SUBSTITUTE TEACHER**

### **SUBSTITUTE BUS DRIVER**

### **SUBSTITUTE BUS MONITOR**

### **EVENTS**

### **FUNDRAISING**

### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP AT HEAD START

- ❖ Play spelling, phonics, language, math games
- ❖ Work with non-English speaking children
- ❖ Participate in home visits and parent conferences
- ❖ Read or tell a story
- ❖ Serve food (need a Food Handler Card)
- ❖ Work closely with one child
- ❖ Get materials ready to use for a project
- ❖ Play a game
- ❖ Play a musical instrument
- ❖ Talk with a child
- ❖ Save or collect recyclable materials
- ❖ Sew smocks, dress-up or doll clothes, or aprons
- ❖ Help write, type, or draw for the parent newsletter
- ❖ Assist children in an activity
- ❖ Work with a small group
- ❖ Share a hobby or talent
- ❖ Give your ideas
- ❖ Help in the office
- ❖ Assist children on the playground
- ❖ Clean up after meals
- ❖ Bring a pet to share (check with staff first)
- ❖ Sing a song
- ❖ Take pictures
- ❖ Help plan and assist on field trips
- ❖ Encourage dramatic play
- ❖ Arrange a bulletin board
- ❖ Cut lawn, general maintenance
- ❖ Assist in cleaning buses
- ❖ Lead large motor activity
- ❖ Attend parent meetings or program retreat
- ❖ Repair toys, books or other equipment
- ❖ Donate supplies
- ❖ Call other parents (phone tree)
- ❖ Help with fundraising/make a donation
- ❖ Be a member of the Policy Council
- ❖ Serve on our Board of Directors or another committee

## Guidelines and Information

As a volunteer you will be assisting the staff at EOC or a Head Start Center to provide an enhanced experience for clients and students. Your contribution is a vital one and will become an important part of our mission. Staff, teachers, clients, students, and parents will be counting on you. Be sure that you take seriously your responsibilities as a member of EOC's Volunteer Team.

Volunteers always work under the supervision of staff members. Make sure that you are working in an open, visible area and do not allow yourself to be in a situation where your actions might be misconstrued. All volunteer activities take place at the EOC Office or on Head Start Center grounds during operating hours, under general supervision of EOC/Head Start staff. Exceptions can include field trips and "away-from-school" volunteer activities such as projects done at home and agency level activities.

### Volunteer Application

Individuals must submit a completed volunteer application that includes a copy of your driver's license and your social security number. For those volunteering with Head Start students, this is required EVERY school year, so that EOC can undertake an annual criminal record and sexual predator check. Applications are available at each school and at the EOC Administrative Offices. In case of accident, please notify the Site Manager, the Head Start Health Specialist or the Head Start Director immediately. Statements found to be false will be immediate cause for dismissal. The Economic Opportunities Council reserves the right to refuse volunteer placement to individuals convicted of felony level offenses, or other offenses that violate the "Jessica Lunsford Act". All volunteers are screened through the FDLE Sexual Predator Check. Any volunteer, who volunteers more than 10 hours per month, will be screened at a Level 2 (Fingerprint) screening clearance.

### Volunteer Coordinators (Contact Information on Page 2)

**Head Start** – Erica Johnson, Family & Community Partnership/Volunteer Coordinator

In addition, each center has a designated Site Manager. We recommend that you record your center's contact information.

**EOC** – Nancy McCurry, Director of Development/Volunteer Grant Administrator

### Signing In-Out/Name Tags

All volunteers must sign-in and sign-out and wear their name tag each time they come to the EOC office of Head Start Center, and/or school campus. The sign-in sheet will indicate the name of the volunteer supervisor. Mentors and college volunteers need to sign in on designated forms. Records are maintained for security purposes as well as documentation of community involvement hours which may be used for recognition as well as data for grant proposals. **We recommend that you keep track of your hours in a personal log for future reference.** Once a volunteer's screening(s) have cleared, a badge will be issued to the volunteer that must be worn at all times while on site. School based sites will have badges issued directly from the school district; all other centers/offices will have badges issued directly from EOC.

### **Confidentiality**

Work with clients and students is always confidential. We don't mind your sharing your experiences with others, but it is very important not to use full names. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a client, student, a family, and the volunteer program. If you have questions or concerns, talk with your volunteer coordinator, the teacher, the Site Manager, or Family and Community Partnership Specialist.

### **Attendance/Punctuality**

It is imperative that you be prompt, dependable and regular in attendance. Reliability is expected because teachers and staff plan for volunteer assistance. If you must be absent, call the school as soon as possible.

### **Discipline in the Head Start Classroom**

It is the teacher's responsibility to discipline the students, not the volunteer's.

### **Conduct/Dress Code**

As a volunteer, you are considered to be a "paraprofessional." You are a role model for clients and students and should dress and act appropriately. The agency's Staff Code of Conduct prohibits dress (including accessories such as jewelry and body piercings/body art) which would be a distraction to learning in Head Start Classrooms. Ask your Volunteer Coordinator what attire will be appropriate for your assignment.

## **VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **As a volunteer, I agree to abide by the following code of conduct:**

1. I will complete and submit a new Volunteer Application. I will do this each year if working directly with Head Start Children.
2. Immediately upon arrival, I will sign in at the office (Lead classroom at school based sites).
3. I will wear a volunteer name badge at all times while on campus.
4. I agree never to be alone with individual students who are not under the supervision of teachers or Head Start employees.
5. I will maintain confidentiality of all school or classroom information.
6. I will share with teachers and/or Head Start administrators any concerns that I may have related to student welfare or safety.
7. I will not supervise a class in the absence of a teaching staff.
8. I will not discipline students.
9. I will not establish or make decisions about instructional objectives.
10. I will abide by the Economic Opportunities Council Policy, "Transporting Students by Private Vehicles," when transporting students.
11. As a role model for the students, I will dress and act appropriately.
12. I agree only to do what is in the best interest of every child with whom I come into contact.

**I agree to follow the Volunteer Code of Conduct at all times or risk being dismissed from my volunteer placement**

## Emergencies

In case of emergency or when you have concerns for students' safety, please report immediately to a staff member.

## If you need help

If you need more instruction in order to perform a task, just ask. Establish a method of communication with the teacher, either written or verbal. If you need to change your assignment, contact your Volunteer Coordinator.

## Checklist

Find out about:

- ✓ Days and times you're expected
- ✓ Volunteer procedures and practices of your center
- ✓ Building layout and parking facilities
- ✓ What is expected of you as a volunteer
- ✓ What to expect of the student(s)
- ✓ Discipline and classroom policies
- ✓ What to do if you are absent or student is absent
- ✓ What to do if supervising teacher is absent
- ✓ Fire drills and safety policies

## What does EOC/Head Start expect of the volunteer?

Promptness	Courtesy
Dependability	Positive attitude
Enthusiasm	Creativity
Initiative	Support
Flexibility	Tact
Patience	Non-disruptive influence
Discretion	Cooperative attitude
Sensitivity	Concern for clients, students, and students' families

## Working with Individual Students

- Volunteers must always work under the supervision of center staff members. Make sure that you are working in an open, visible area and do not allow yourself to be in a situation where your actions might be misconstrued.
- Introduce yourself and tell the student why you are here and when you'll be volunteering. Learn the student's name and how to pronounce and spell it.



- Get acquainted. Find out what interests the student has; tell her/him some things about you. Try to establish rapport, but be patient. It may take time for you both to feel comfortable. By your words and actions, let the student know that you care.
- Be dependable. You are modeling responsible behavior for the student. If you must be absent, call the center and ask that the student be told you cannot come that day. The student will be disappointed but reassured that you care enough to call.
- Build the student's self-confidence. Praise your student honestly and frequently. Attentiveness and effort can be as important as performance. Accentuate the positive, minimize the negative.
- Everyone makes mistakes. Let the student know that making mistakes is a normal part of learning. Don't be afraid of making mistakes yourself. We can learn from mistakes!
- Listen attentively, but keep the student focused on task.
- Reinforce specific goals that the student can achieve. Break down long-range goals into achievable increments.
- Keep your explanations and expectations few, short and clear.
- Rather than giving the answer automatically, direct the student's thinking so the student can discover the answer on their own.
- Do not get discouraged if you do not see immediate, significant changes in the student's attitude or academic achievement. His present situation has probably been building over time, and it will take time to change it. Believe that you ARE making a difference, even though you may not even be around to see the positive results.