H4N Volunteer Code of Conduct

Training Guide

Our Commitment

Hope For Neighbors exists to support people and families affected by immigration detention with compassion, dignity, and respect.

As an H4N volunteer, you represent H4N whenever you are participating in H4N activities, communicating with people we serve, interacting with other volunteers, or using H4N resources.

This Code of Conduct provides basic expectations for everyone in our volunteer community.

> **Our shared standard: serve with dignity, compassion, respect, confidentiality, integrity, and appropriate boundaries.**

1. Treat Everyone With Respect

Volunteers are expected to treat everyone with:

- Dignity
- Compassion
- Courtesy
- Patience
- Respect

This applies to people we serve, their families, other volunteers, H4N leaders, attorneys, community partners, and facility staff.

> **We do not tolerate harassment, bullying, threats, intimidation, or discriminatory behavior.**

2. Respect the People We Serve

People who are detained are in vulnerable circumstances. Volunteers should:

- Listen without judgment.
- Respect people's choices.
- Avoid making assumptions.

- Respect cultural and religious differences.
- Be mindful of language barriers.
- Avoid treating people as projects or cases.
- Allow people to share only what they are comfortable sharing.

> **Our goal is to support people, not control their decisions.**

3. Maintain Appropriate Boundaries

Healthy boundaries protect both volunteers and the people we serve. Volunteers should not:

- Make promises they cannot keep
- Pressure someone to share personal information
- Use their volunteer position for personal benefit
- Pressure someone to participate in advocacy, fundraising, media, or social media activities

If a situation feels uncomfortable or unclear, talk to a team leader.

4. Protect Confidential Information

Volunteers must protect private information obtained through H4N. Do not share confidential information with people who do not have a legitimate need to know it.

This includes information about:

- Legal cases
- Immigration status
- Medical situations
- Family circumstances
- Financial needs
- Addresses
- Phone numbers
- A-numbers and other identifying information
- Children
- Personal histories

> **When in doubt, don't share it until you have asked.**

5. Use Social Media Responsibly

Do not use your H4N volunteer position to publicly share someone's personal story without authorization.

Do not post photographs, names, identifying information, legal information, or personal details about people we serve unless you have followed H4N's established process for doing so.

> **A good intention does not automatically equal permission.**

6. Do Not Give Legal Advice

Unless you are an appropriately licensed attorney acting in an authorized professional capacity, you should not provide legal advice.

Volunteers may:

- Listen to legal concerns
- Gather information according to H4N procedures
- Explain that H4N has a legal triage process
- Refer questions to the appropriate person
- Help someone locate approved resources

Volunteers should not:

- Tell someone what legal action they should take
- Predict the outcome of a case
- Promise bond
- Promise release
- Tell someone what they should sign
- Interpret legal documents as legal advice
- Represent themselves as an attorney

7. Communicate Responsibly

Volunteers should:

- Respond to H4N communications when necessary.
- Report important concerns promptly.
- Use appropriate H4N communication channels.
- Avoid spreading rumors or unverified information.

> **When something is uncertain, say that it is uncertain rather than presenting it as fact.**

8. H4N Activities, Protests, and Political Activity

Hope For Neighbors' volunteer work is focused on supporting people and families affected by immigration detention. H4N is not associated with, and does not sponsor, organize, endorse, or participate in protests or demonstrations as H4N activities.

Volunteers may make their own personal choices about civic or political activities outside of H4N. When doing so, they should make clear that they are acting as individuals and not on behalf of H4N.

Volunteers should not:

- Use the H4N name, logo, volunteer lists, communication channels, or other H4N resources to organize or promote protests without authorization.
- Represent a protest, demonstration, political campaign, or partisan activity as an H4N-sponsored event.

- Claim to speak for H4N about a protest, political candidate, party, or campaign unless specifically authorized to speak on behalf of the organization.
- Pressure the people we serve or other volunteers to participate in protests or political activities.

Personal civic activity should remain clearly separate from H4N volunteer activities and H4N resources.

9. Represent H4N Honestly

Do not represent yourself as speaking on behalf of H4N unless you have been authorized to do so.

Do not:

- Make promises on behalf of H4N
- Commit H4N funds without authorization
- Speak to media on behalf of H4N without authorization
- Make public statements claiming to represent H4N without authorization
- Create agreements or partnerships on behalf of H4N without approval

10. Respect Other Volunteers

H4N volunteers come from different backgrounds and may have different experiences and opinions. We expect volunteers to:

- Disagree respectfully.
- Assume good intentions while addressing concerns.
- Avoid personal attacks.
- Avoid gossip.
- Give others an opportunity to speak.
- Keep disagreements from interfering with our work.
- Bring serious concerns to the appropriate leader.

Our shared mission comes before personal disagreements.

11. Ask Before You Act

One of the most important H4N volunteer rules is:

WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK.

You will encounter situations that aren't covered in a training document. That is normal.

Before making a commitment, sharing sensitive information, spending money, giving legal information, or taking an unusual action on behalf of H4N, check with the appropriate leader.

A Final Word

Being an H4N volunteer is an opportunity to make a meaningful difference in someone's life.

Sometimes your role may be as simple as listening.

Sometimes you may connect someone with a resource.

Sometimes you may help a family through an incredibly difficult day.

Sometimes you may not be able to fix the situation at all.

Your presence still matters.

We ask every volunteer to approach this work with humility, compassion, integrity, and a willingness to learn.

> **Thank you for being a neighbor to someone who needs one.**