

Volunteer Policies Contract

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with ETS Sponsorship Program (ETS-SP)! Your support and commitment allow us to provide service members/Veterans with a certified and dedicated sponsor to serve as a mentor during his or her transition to civilian life. ETS-SP volunteer policies outlined in this document are intended to ensure the highest quality of service is provided to our service members/Veterans, while providing a rewarding experience for our volunteers. Please read these policies carefully to confirm that this opportunity is the right fit for you. Contact an ETS-SP National staff member if you have any questions.

Time Commitment

In order to provide quality services to our Veterans, we ask that volunteers commit to **at least one year of service**. During this year of service, volunteers are expected to fulfill the following duties and responsibilities:

- Set up and attend meetings with their assigned Veteran for the agreed-upon timeframe;
- Act as a resource and guide while respecting the Veteran's right to self-determination and independence; and
- Work closely with ETS-SP staff, affiliates, and partners to provide requested feedback in a timely manner.

Leave of Absence

Volunteers may request a leave of absence from their volunteer commitment. A leave of absence is a period of time during which the individual is not volunteering with ETS-SP. At the end of their leave, the volunteer is able to resume his or her duties without reapplying. Volunteers are asked to request leave from their ETS-SP Regional POC and the ETS-SP National Program Director **at least two weeks prior** to the start date of their leave. Volunteers will be asked to sign a Leave of Absence form that specifies a return date.

Inactivation

ETS-SP reserves the right to inactivate a volunteer sponsor during training and at any point during the volunteer's commitment to the program. Inactivation, evaluated on a case-by-case basis, means that the sponsor will no longer volunteer at ETS-SP. Volunteers who stop fulfilling the requirements of the program for one month without contacting their ETS-SP Regional POC or the ETS-SP National Program Director will automatically be inactivated.

Grievances

Volunteers play a critical part of the team that makes the work of ETS-SP possible. Accordingly, we are committed to recognizing and resolving concerns that our volunteers may have. If a volunteer is unable to resolve a dispute through the ETS-SP Regional POC, he or she may file a written grievance with the ETS-SP National Program Director.

Conduct

ETS-SP adheres to the VA Code of Integrity, which extends beyond technical compliance with laws and regulations. It means demonstrating character and behaving ethically, with no intent of being false or misleading. Acting with integrity means understanding, modeling, and honoring laws and policies regarding harassment, hostile work environment, workplace violence, and standards of ethical conduct.

For more information on the VA Code of Integrity, please go to the following website:
<https://www.va.gov/HEALTHCAREEXCELLENCE/docs/VHA-Code-of-Integrity-March-2019-FINAL.pdf>

References

ETS-SP is happy to provide references for sponsors who have actively served for **at least six months**. Sponsors, or other volunteers with ETS-SP, who request a written reference are encouraged to contact the ETS-SP Regional POC **at least two weeks** in advance of the reference.

Media Inquiries

Media inquiries regarding ETS-SP, or a volunteer's work with ETS-SP, should be referred to the designated ETS-SP National leadership. Sponsors should contact their ETS-SP Regional POC regarding any requests from media outlets, including but not limited to, filming, photography, and interviews. During training and ETS-SP events, volunteers give permission to be videotaped and photographed for the purposes of ETS-SP training materials as well as to inform the public about the program.

Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality is an active, thoughtful, and sometimes difficult thing to do. It is the act of not disclosing information with anyone who does not expressly have permission to receive the information. Often, it is more than just about nondisclosure.

Limits of Confidentiality

Information from sponsor and participant records may be shared with individuals or organizations as specified below under the following conditions:

- Information may be gathered about program participants and shared with other participants, individuals, and/or organizations only upon receipt of signed release forms from sponsors and/or service members/Veterans.
- Personal identifiable information (PII) such as names, military rank, photographs, videos, etc. may be used in ETS-SP publications or promotional materials only with written consent of the sponsor and/or service member/Veteran.
- PII and other information may only be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to valid and enforceable subpoenas.

- Information may be provided to legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving ETS-SP and its participants.

ETS-SP staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters, and, as such, must disclose information if a sponsor or service member/Veteran may be a danger to him/herself and/or others.

Maintaining Service Member/Veteran Privacy Consent Form

This form will be signed, dated, and submitted to ETS-SP National.

In performing my duties as an ETS-SP sponsor, I understand that I will be privy to personal information about the service member/Veteran with whom I am matched, or other sponsors participating in the program. It is my duty to protect each service member's/Veteran's and sponsor's rights to privacy. As such, **I agree to:**

- Treat any personal information with confidence and not disclose such information without permission, including but not limited to, names, addresses, backgrounds, family relationships, status of participation in this organization and others, and the nature of any problems a service member/Veteran or sponsor may have;
- Not leave ETS-SP's name or phone number on a voicemail or with anyone other than the service member/Veteran without their express permission;
- Not discuss such information with individuals outside of the ETS-SP organization unless explicitly directed to do so by the ETS-SP or affiliate leadership;
- Not share information/photographs about service members/Veterans online in any form, including but not limited to email, text messages, phone calls, websites, message boards, blogs, and/or social networking without written permission; and
- Continue my responsibility to safeguard the privacy of the service member/Veteran by complying with the above rules if I cease to be an ETS-SP volunteer.

I have read and understand this document and my typed signature below confirms my agreement to comply with the above items. In the event that I fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct, ETS-SP, as applicable and as it deems appropriate, may reevaluate or inactivate my status as a sponsor in this program.

SPONSOR'S NAME (PRINT)

SPONSOR'S SIGNATURE

DATE