



# Volunteer Handbook

[www.readtothrive.org](http://www.readtothrive.org)

## **Welcome to Read to Thrive**

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to Read to Thrive! We are very excited that you have chosen to volunteer with us. Our organization is completely run by volunteers, so without dedicated and committed volunteers like you, we would not exist.

The Volunteer Handbook provides answers to many of the questions you may have about our volunteer program. It includes our policies, procedures, and mutual responsibilities. You are responsible for reading and understanding the Volunteer Handbook and adhering to Read to Thrive policies and procedures. If anything is unclear, please send an email to [tara@readtothrive.org](mailto:tara@readtothrive.org).

Again, we welcome you to our volunteer family. Thank you for taking time to help us spread the love of reading, one child at a time.

Sincerely,  
Tara Mandava  
Director, CEO

## **Mission & Vision**

### **Mission**

Create a passion for reading in children.

### **Vision**

We envision a world in which children from all backgrounds grow up to be confident and successful adults. Read to Thrive seeks to make reading fun for children and inspire lifelong learning.

# **Volunteer Expectations**

## **What You Can Expect from Read to Thrive**

- Inclusive and welcoming culture
- Appreciation and respect for your time and commitment
- Continuous support

Read to Thrive is an inclusive and supportive organization where we treat our volunteers with respect. Our programs are run solely by our volunteers, so we really appreciate your help and commitment. We wouldn't exist without you!

## **What Read to Thrive Expects from You**

- Be reliable and consistent
- Maintain positive and open communication with us

More detailed expectations are outlined in the Policies & Procedures section.

## **Volunteer Guidelines**

All of our programs are run by volunteers. We look for volunteers who are passionate about reading, believe in the mission of Read to Thrive, and can commit to at least one year of service. Read to Thrive offers two types of volunteer opportunities and you can find basic guidelines for each opportunity type below. Please note that volunteers will be provided with more specific training and support throughout their volunteering period at Read to Thrive.

### **Book Club Facilitators**

Book club facilitators lead engaging discussions that inspire a love of reading. The main responsibilities include:

1. Read the book and create discussion notes
2. Create a vocabulary list and optional activity based on the book
3. Conduct the book club session
4. Choose books for upcoming meetings (we're happy to help with this)

### **Common Discussion Questions**

- Introductions - introduce yourself and ask each child to share their name, grade, and school
- Did everyone read the book?
- Who liked the book? Why?
- Who didn't like the book? Why? (It's okay to not finish the book or to not like it)
- Ask one child to summarize the book, then encourage others to add to the summary
- Predict, Visualize, Question, Connect

### **Literacy Session Tutors**

Literacy session tutors work one-on-one or in small groups with children who are struggling with reading. These targeted sessions help build foundational literacy skills. The main responsibilities include:

1. Assess each child's current reading level and specific challenges
2. Create individualized lesson plans focused on phonics, comprehension, or fluency
3. Conduct regular tutoring sessions (typically 30-60 minutes)
4. Track progress and communicate with parents and Read to Thrive staff
5. Provide encouragement and build confidence in reluctant readers

### **Key Literacy Session Strategies**

- Use age-appropriate leveled readers matched to the child's ability
- Focus on phonemic awareness and decoding skills for early readers
- Practice fluency through repeated reading and modeling
- Build vocabulary and comprehension through discussion

- Celebrate small wins to build confidence and motivation
- Maintain a patient, supportive, and encouraging approach

## **Policies & Procedures**

### **Absences & Tardiness**

Read to Thrive programs are completely run by volunteers, so consistency in attendance is critical to the success of our programs. If you cannot make it to your session or will be delayed, please inform us as soon as possible by emailing [tara@readtothrive.org](mailto:tara@readtothrive.org).

### **Background Checks**

Volunteers at certain locations may be required to complete a background check prior to volunteering. Read to Thrive will help you with the logistics for this process.

### **Dress Code**

As our volunteer, you are responsible for presenting a positive image to our clients and community as a representative of Read to Thrive. Please dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of your duties.

### **Equal Volunteering Opportunity**

Read to Thrive provides equal volunteering opportunity to everyone regardless of race, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, medical condition, genetic information, military or veteran status, or disability. We welcome all volunteers who are able to perform the duties of the opportunity reliably.

### **Harassment Policy**

We are committed to a volunteer environment that is free of harassment for all volunteers. We prohibit any form of unlawful harassment based on race, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, medical condition, genetic information, military or veteran status, or disability. Harassment includes, without limitation, verbal, physical, visual, and insinuations. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome and/or unsolicited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Report any form of harassment immediately. All complaints and related information will be kept confidential and investigated to the fullest extent possible.

### **Resignation**

We understand that you might need to leave your volunteer opportunity with us because of various changes in your life. We would appreciate it if you could let us know as soon as you are aware of your plans.

### **Substance Abuse**

We expect all our volunteers to be free of the effects of any mood-altering substances when they are volunteering for our program. Volunteers who are found otherwise will be dismissed immediately from the program.

### **TB Testing**

Volunteers at certain locations may be expected to test for TB annually. Read to Thrive will help you with the logistics for this process.

### **Termination Policy**

We have the right to terminate a volunteer from their position without cause. Generally, failure to adhere to our policies will lead to immediate release.

### **Unacceptable Behavior**

In general, we expect all of our volunteers to act in a responsible manner at all times. Volunteers who are found otherwise will be dismissed from the program immediately.

## **Volunteer Agreement**

Read to Thrive would like to create a positive and nurturing environment for the children we work with and also ensure that our volunteers have a fulfilling volunteering experience. In order to meet these goals, we expect our volunteers to read this handbook and follow it.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Read to Thrive Volunteer Handbook. I understand the guidelines and expectations given in this document and agree to follow them.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_