



National Alliance on Mental Illness

nami | Multnomah

Volunteer Handbook



Purpose of NAMI Multnomah

NAMI Multnomah is a local chapter of National Alliance on Mental Illness. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for people with mental illness and their families through support, education, and advocacy. We are one of more than 1,100 local affiliates of NAMI – and we're focused directly on helping people in Multnomah County, Oregon.

Our thirty-year plus history wouldn't be possible without the dedicated volunteer team that has been improving the lives of persons living with mental health issues. NAMI Multnomah board and staff thank you for your interest, insight, and time!

Role of Volunteers

NAMI is a grassroots organization and volunteers play a vital role in the life of NAMI Multnomah. They are the teachers, mentors, support group facilitators, NAMIWalks Team Captains, HelpLine staff, education coordinator supporters, membership database managers, website developers, and more.

How Volunteers Benefit NAMI

Volunteers provide for the ongoing needs and direction of the organization. Our Board of Directors is made up of volunteers who provide oversight and strategic planning. The health and well-being of the organization is dependent upon volunteers being trained to step into whatever the organization needs.

Volunteers make it possible to keep members updated and events successful. They provide a listening ear to the many callers we have each weekday. Our education programs would not be available to the thousands of individuals and families without volunteers.

Volunteers enable NAMI Multnomah to live out its mission so that our services and outreach can remain strong and continue to grow within the larger community.

How NAMI Benefits Volunteers

As a NAMI Multnomah volunteer, you are provided training, ongoing support, and encouragement. You will receive specialized training to fulfill your job. You will have opportunities to utilize your expertise in meaningful ways. Through mentoring, volunteers become knowledgeable advocates for those whose lives are touched by mental illness. Through volunteering, you will help the lives of those who seek NAMI's help and support. Volunteers are recognized and celebrated for providing vital support services.

Getting Started

A person wanting to become a volunteer will:

- Fill out a volunteer form
- Attend a volunteer orientation
- Be placed in a position that best fits the need of the organization and the volunteer's interests
- Be trained for their volunteer role
- Learn the job; attend trainings, shadow experienced volunteers, etc.
- Work out a participation schedule



Background Checks

Every NAMI volunteer and staff person is required to undergo a background check before they can work in the organization. NAMI Multnomah will do the required filing of the paperwork for you. If you have lived out of the state in the previous three years, you will need to be fingerprinted.

Volunteer Opportunities: *(Placement and use of volunteers is at the discretion of NAMI Staff)*

Teachers, Speakers, Facilitators for Education Programs

(All require training provided by NAMI Oregon, and experience in classes/support groups as a participant)

Train to be a:

- Family-to-Family teacher: If you are a family member of someone living with mental illness and you have taken the Family-to-Family course, you may be interested in becoming a teacher for this class. If you have not yet taken this class, you may look into registering now!
- Peer-to-Peer teacher: If you are someone living with mental illness and you have taken the Peer-to-Peer course, you may be interested in becoming a teacher for this class. If you have not yet taken this class, you may look into registering now!
- NAMI Basics teacher: If you are a parent of a child who has a mental health barrier and you have taken the Basics course, you may be interested in becoming a teacher for this class. If you have not yet taken this class you may look into registering now!
- NAMI Homefront teacher: If you are a family member of a Veteran living with mental illness and you have taken the Homefront course, you may be interested in becoming a teacher for this class. If you have not yet taken this class, you may look into registering now!
- In Our Own Voice presenter: If you are someone living with mental illness and are inspired to share your story with an adult audience you may be interested in becoming a presenter for In Our Own Voice or First Step.
- Ending the Silence presenter: If you or someone you love lives with mental illness are you are inspired to share your story with a middle school or high school audience you may be interested in becoming a presenter for Ending the Silence. ****These trainings are provided online and by NAMI Multnomah.****
- Connections Support Group facilitator: If you are someone living with mental illness and you are interested in leading a support group with a co-facilitator, you may be interested in training for this opportunity.
- Family Support Group facilitator: If you are a family member of someone living with mental illness and you are interested in leading a support group with a co-facilitator, you may be interested in training for this opportunity.
- And more!

Work in the NAMI Multnomah Office

- Maintenance of website
- Social Media Outreach
- Data entry and verification of membership
- Office support with mailings and/or phone calls
- HelpLine support
- Education Programs support
- And more!

Community Outreach

- Represent NAMI at fairs or community events
- Deliver brochures or posters
- NAMI Walk in May
- Event coordination and support
- And more!

Long-Term vs Short-Term Volunteers

Long-Term: To become a regular volunteer, you would come in on a regular basis, such as one time per week or two times per month. If you are interested in becoming a regular volunteer, we require a six-month time commitment. With the training involved, we would like to be able to utilize your resources over an extended period.

Short-Term: These are one-time volunteer roles to help with a specific task or event. Volunteers are on-call when a need arises.

Training

For many volunteer positions, training is required. Training for teachers, speakers and facilitators is provided by NAMI Oregon. All teachers of education courses and group support facilitators are required to take this training.

Office and outreach volunteers are trained and mentored in the office. Our staff will work with a volunteer to make sure that the individual and the volunteer position are compatible. The Executive Director is in charge of overall volunteer program.



Policies

Accountability and Privacy

All persons connected with NAMI Multnomah are held accountable to NAMI standards of confidentiality, respect, courtesy, honesty, and sensitivity. Our staff and volunteers strive to make everyone feel welcome and to treat everyone in a caring, respectful manner. Privacy and confidentiality are safeguarded whenever possible. Resources are used responsibly. As a rule of thumb, volunteers do not speak to the press on behalf of NAMI Multnomah without prior approval from the Executive Director. If you ever have questions about the proper thing to do, or if you observe anything you think may be improper, please contact the Outreach Coordinator immediately— or anyone on the team that you feel comfortable talking to.

Those using the computer system do not have a personal privacy right in any matter created, received, sent or stored on NAMI's computer resources, whether or not the matter is designated as private or confidential.

Confidential organizational information should never be transmitted or forwarded to outside individuals or companies not authorized to receive that information and should not be sent or forwarded to other employees inside the organization who do not need to know the information.

We understand that you are giving your time, talents and energies to NAMI, and it is important to us that you feel the respect we hold for you. Likewise, we expect you will give the people you work with and our community similar respect. That always means safeguarding your and others' privacy and confidentiality. We ask that you follow the basic principle of demonstrating care in what is said, to whom and where. Consider all conversations with contacts private and confidential and not to be repeated unless privacy safeguards are in place. Keep all confidential information you record in a secure place.

Electronic Communications

NAMI Multnomah is committed to providing an environment that encourages the use of computers and electronic communications as essential tools to support the work. All persons using NAMI's computers, with electronic mail and access to the Internet are subject to NAMI's responsible use policy. Everyone is responsible for ensuring that this technology is used for NAMI Multnomah business and in a manner that:

- Is responsible, professional, and legal.
- Does not compromise the confidentiality of propriety or other sensitive information.
- Does not compromise the security of NAMI's computer resources.

Firearms and Weapons Policy

NAMI Multnomah respects the right of individuals to lawfully carry firearms. Our top priority is the health and safety of our constituents, volunteers, and staff. As such, we have elected to exercise our right **to prohibit the carrying of firearms and other weapons** (knives, swords, etc.) **by anyone** (except duly sworn law enforcement officers) **at all NAMI Multnomah events**, including but not limited to classes, support groups and meetings. Additionally, firearms and weapons are prohibited in all NAMI Multnomah offices.

Harassment Policy

NAMI Multnomah is dedicated to maintaining an environment that is free of harassment and is sensitive to the diversity of our volunteers and staff.

NAMI Multnomah prohibits any form of harassment based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, familial status, marital status, source of income, mental or physical disability, Vietnam Era status, or other protected status. We will not tolerate any form of harassment directed towards any volunteer or employee.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- 1) Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and all other verbal or physical conduct.
- 2) Offensive comments, jokes, innuendos, and other sexually oriented statements.

Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedures

If you feel that you have been treated unprofessionally, or contrary to policy, you should discuss the situation with the Outreach Coordinator or the Executive Director. If neither of these persons is able to assist you, contact the Board President. NAMI will respond promptly and conduct a thorough investigation. These complaints will be treated with sensitivity and kept confidential. If it is determined that an employee or volunteer inappropriately discriminated against another, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the offending person.

NAMI Multnomah will not retaliate in any way against you for reporting an incident of discrimination or harassment and will not permit any other volunteer to retaliate against you.

Volunteer Hours

Volunteers need to record their volunteer hours each month. These hours will be helpful when NAMI applies for grants or creates an annual report.

Please see the Outreach Coordinator for the Volunteer Hour Tracking form.

Ending a Volunteer Tenure

Whenever possible, we ask that you provide a minimum of two weeks' notice before leaving the program. Our expectation is that during those two weeks you will help train, recruit, or in some other way work to ensure a smooth transition. This is important for the people we serve and helps maintain good relations and stability within NAMI Multnomah.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

I understand that I am accountable for my own behavior and will keep personal opinions and actions separate from those made as a representative of NAMI Multnomah. I understand that my actions and behaviors reflect the integrity of NAMI Multnomah and impact the public perception of NAMI Multnomah as an organization.

The purpose of this code is to provide a safe and respectful environment for all NAMI Multnomah staff, participants, and visitors during NAMI Multnomah's business hours, events, and activities. To that end NAMI Multnomah requires adherence to the following standards:

- No bullying, stalking, abusive, or threatening language or behavior
- No physical violence either actual or threatened
- No possession of explosives, firearms, or weapons of any kind
- No possession, distribution or being under the influence of illegal drugs and/or alcohol
- No harassment whether verbal, visual, written, or physical
- No conduct endangering life, safety, health, or well-being of others
- No theft or unauthorized removal or possession of property including identity theft
- No unauthorized use of NAMI Multnomah equipment (i/e/ phones, copier, fax, postage)
- No offering of financial information or advice
- No refusal to cooperate with NAMI Multnomah staff or authorized supervisors

Thank you!