



PRIDEChicago Volunteer Handbook

Purpose of the Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to PRIDEChicago!

Volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization. Each year, hundreds of dedicated volunteers join our all-volunteer Board of Directors to bring the iconic Chicago Pride Parade to life.

This Volunteer Handbook is here to help you get to know PRIDEChicago and understand our volunteer policies and programs. While it can't cover every question, our Volunteer Coordinator(s) are always available to help.

Please take time to review and familiarize yourself with the handbook's contents.

We're grateful for your time, energy, and passion — and we hope your experience with PRIDEChicago is positive, fun, and rewarding!

About PRIDEChicago

Our History

The Chicago Pride Parade honors the Stonewall Rebellion of June 28, 1969 — when patrons of the Stonewall Inn in New York City stood up against a police raid, igniting the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement.

Inspired by Stonewall, Chicago held its first Gay Liberation March on June 27, 1970 — one day before similar marches in New York and San Francisco — making Chicago the first U.S. city to host such an event. Though only about 100–150 people attended, it was a defining moment for Chicago's LGBTQ+ community.

Today, the Chicago Pride Parade draws nearly 1 million attendees each year, standing as one of the oldest and largest Pride celebrations in the world.



Mission, Vision & Values

Mission:

Founded in 1974 by Richard Pfeiffer, our mission remains steadfast to inspire, educate, and commemorate the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities in Chicago, while celebrating our diverse culture.

Vision:

We are proud of our history and excited about the work we are doing to create a brighter future for all. We are committed to creating a world where all people can live authentically, and unapologetically.

Values:

We expect all parade participants, volunteers, and spectators to support the LGBTQ+ community and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with our values of respect, kindness, integrity, and positivity.

- Volunteers should promote the Mission, Vision and Values of PRIDEChicago in all dealings with the public on behalf of the organization.



Volunteer Program

Who is a Volunteer?

Volunteers are uncompensated individuals who perform services for PRIDEChicago without expectation or guarantee of pay, future volunteer opportunities, or future employment with PRIDEChicago.

The PRIDEChicago Volunteer Coordinator(s) and/or Board of Directors are responsible for properly screening, engaging, and managing all volunteers.

Volunteer Guidelines

- Must complete and sign the Participation Release, Waiver & Indemnification Agreement
- Must meet experience, qualification, and training requirements for assigned tasks (as determined by the PRIDEChicago Volunteer Coordinator(s) and/or Board of Directors, which vary by role)
- No payment for services or reimbursement for expenses will be approved by the Board
- Volunteers, the PRIDEChicago Volunteer Coordinator(s), and/or Board of Directors may end volunteer service at any time for any reason without prior notice.

How to Apply

Applications are accepted year-round. Shift sign-up timelines are shared in advance of each event. Applications must be submitted through VolunteerLocal. All applications are subject to approval by the PRIDEChicago Volunteer Coordinator(s) and/or Board of Directors. PRIDEChicago retains the right to deny any application for any reason without liability.

Requirements:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Attend volunteer orientation
- Read this Handbook/Code of Conduct and acknowledge agreement
- Sign the Participation Release, Waiver, and Indemnification Agreement
- Consent to a background check as may be required for some volunteer leadership positions.



Registration:

- New Volunteer: Begin the registration process by [clicking here \(INSERT LINK\)](#)
- Returning Volunteer: If have already registered through the VolunteerLocal platform, click [here \(INSERT LINK\)](#)

VolunteerLocal is the volunteer management software of choice for PRIDEChicago. As a volunteer, you will be using VolunteerLocal to sign up for, view and remove your volunteer shifts. If you have any technical questions, contact volunteer@pridechicago.org.

Volunteer Group Activations:

Community and corporate volunteer groups are welcome. All volunteers—including those in groups—must register individually through the VolunteerLocal platform. Each group must designate a Group Captain (single point of contact) for communications, roster management, and day-of coordination.

Volunteer Commitment

Minimum of one 5-hour shift.

Benefits include:

- Free souvenir T-shirt
- Invitation to Volunteer Appreciation Reception
- Networking with like-minded community members
- Personal satisfaction in making a difference

Volunteer Roles

PRIDEChicago offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities and schedules to fit a variety of strengths and skill sets. Descriptions are posted on our online registration platform. Here are some examples:

- Captain
- Group Captain (community or corporate)
- Parade Marshal



- Route Marshal
- Check-in Hospitality
- Photography

Leadership Roles:

- Commit to 8–10 hours on parade day
- Monthly contact with Volunteer Coordinator(s)
- Attend 3-5 preparatory meetings and trainings prior to parade day

Year-Round Opportunities:

- Marketing Committee
- Parade Committee
- Events Committee

Individuals interested in leadership roles and/or year-round opportunities should contact the Volunteer Coordinator(s) volunteer@pridechicago.org

Code of Conduct

All parade participants, volunteers, and spectators are expected to support the LGBTQ+ community and conduct themselves in alignment with PRIDEChicago's values of respect, kindness, integrity, and positivity.

- Respect: Treat everyone fairly, with dignity and with respect
- Kindness: Be friendly, considerate and generous
- Integrity: Act honestly and ethically at all times
- Positivity: Foster a safe and welcoming space for all

Volunteers should always use respectful, inclusive language when interacting with participants, attendees, partners, and other volunteers—in person and online.

Policies & Procedures

Accountability



Volunteers must:

- Act honestly, ethically, and within the law
- Follow PRIDEChicago policies, including the Code of Conduct, and training
- Comply with both the letter and the spirit of any orientation and/or training provided
- Operate within assigned authority by the Volunteer Coordinator(s) and/or Board of Directors
- Use good judgment when interacting with the public

Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are important factors. If you will be late or absent, notify the Volunteer Coordinator(s) at least 24 hours in advance if possible. You may remove your volunteer shifts using VolunteerLocal.

Confidentiality

PRIDEChicago prioritizes protecting the personal information of donors, sponsors, and volunteers.

- Do not share confidential information about PRIDEChicago, donors, sponsors, or volunteers during or after your service.
- Posting any unauthorized PRIDEChicago information on social media is prohibited.

Dress Code

Wear attire appropriate for your assigned role.

PRIDEChicago T-Shirts (if provided) must be worn while on duty and may not be altered, torn, or written on.

Apparel Restrictions:

- No clothing or accessories with unrelated messages, slogans, or logos.
- Items conflicting with PRIDEChicago's Mission, Vision, or Values are prohibited.



- Non-compliant items must be removed or covered – failure to comply may result in reassignment or removal.

Personal Belongings:

- PRIDEChicago does not provide secure storage or take responsibility for lost/stolen items.
- Travel light – avoid bringing backpacks, purses, coats, extra clothes, or electronics.

Health & Safety

PRIDEChicago strives to foster a safe, welcoming environment for volunteers, participants, and attendees. Safety is a shared responsibility. Volunteers are expected to exercise care and good judgment and to follow all safety instructions.

- Volunteers must comply with all Federal, State and Local laws and regulations during their event participation.
- No firearms and/or weapons of any kind are permitted at any volunteer space or any PRIDEChicago event.
- Adhere to instructions from public-safety officials.
- Volunteers will not apprehend or physically engage any person for any reason at any time.
- Immediately report any unsafe conditions, incidents, or injuries to the Volunteer Coordinator(s).

Media Conduct

All requests for media releases, interviews, and other media engagement must be immediately brought to the attention of the Board Co-Chairs. Board Co-Chairs are the only individuals authorized to engage with the media, unless explicit permission is granted to other volunteers based on their area of specialty. Unauthorized public statements may result in dismissal of volunteers.



Personal and Emergency Contact Information

It is the responsibility of each volunteer to regularly update their personal contact information and emergency contact information. This update can be made online through the VolunteerLocal portal.

Photo Release

By volunteering, you give PRIDEChicago permission to photograph or film you and use the images or footage for marketing, advertising, and public relations (including print, radio, TV, internet, and social media).

You also agree to waive and release PRIDEChicago and its team from any claims related to the use of your image, name, or likeness — including, but not limited to, privacy, misappropriation, or defamation claims.

Reporting Concerns and Resolution

If a volunteer witnesses or experiences inappropriate behavior, they should report it as soon as possible to:

- Volunteer Coordinator(s) volunteer@pridechicago.org
- Any Board of Directors Member

All reports will be handled with discretion and appropriate action will be taken.

Solicitation Policy

PRIDEChicago prohibits any volunteer from soliciting any of its participants, volunteers, and spectators, and/or distributing any literature, pamphlets or other materials while on duty or on event premises, except as approved by the Volunteer Coordinator(s) and/or Board of Directors for approved PRIDEChicago business.



Substance Use

Volunteers must not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty or on event premises. Violations may result in immediate dismissal from the shift and/or future volunteer opportunities.

- Smoking/vaping is permitted only in designated areas.

Training

All volunteers must attend a brief orientation before their first shift to learn about PRIDEChicago's mission, policies, and procedures. Volunteers will also receive instructions specific to their assigned role(s).

Service at the Discretion of the Organization

Volunteers understand that their service is subject to the sole discretion of PRIDEChicago. Volunteers agree that PRIDEChicago may decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the organization or make changes in the nature of the volunteer assignment at any time and for any reason. All decisions are final and without liability.

Dismissal: PRIDEChicago may dismiss volunteers (temporarily or permanently) for:

- Policy or procedure violations
- Safety or security concerns
- Conduct disrupting operations
- Any other reason as determined by PRIDEChicago

Resignation: Volunteers may cancel their application or shift at any time through VolunteerLocal.

Zero Tolerance for Abuse

PRIDEChicago does not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse of any kind. Violations will result in removal and possible further action, including, but not limited to, a temporary or permanent ban on volunteering with the organization .



Acknowledgment

Volunteers must acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Volunteer Handbook. A completed application must include a signed Participation Release, Waiver, and Indemnification Agreement ("Release & Waiver").

PRIDEChicago may update or modify the Handbook and the Release & Waiver upon providing written notice to volunteers. Volunteers will have three (3) business days from the date of notice to contact PRIDEChicago with any concerns or to request removal from current or future assignments. Continuing to volunteer after the effective date constitutes acceptance of the updated terms.

Non-Discrimination Policy

PRIDEChicago prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military status, or any other legally protected category.

All volunteers must uphold this policy and act with respect and compassion toward everyone.



Helpful Information

Board of Directors

Current Board of Directors information can be found at <https://pridechicago.org/ourteam>

PRIDEChicago Mailing Address

3656 N. Halsted
Chicago, Illinois 60613

Contact Us

Office: 312-847-8093
General Email: info@pridechicago.org
Volunteer Email: voluteer@pridechicago.org
Website: <https://pridechicago.org>
Volunteer Portal: <https://volunteerportal.pridechicago.org>