

WELCOME TO MEETING STREET!

VOLUNTEER/STUDENT INTERN HANDBOOK



Meeting Street

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Office Hours: Monday - Thursday, 8:30am - 4:45pm and Friday 8:00am - 3:00pm

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Purpose

This handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the policies at Meeting Street. It will also provide you with an understanding of our mutual expectations so that we may work together effectively. Because we cannot explain every policy in this handbook, some details have been omitted to keep it reasonably brief.

The handbook does not constitute a contract or guarantee and should not be viewed as a total statement of our policies. Instead, it is a general guide to some important volunteer considerations. You should consult your advisor or the Director of Human Resources if you have any questions about matters, covered or not covered, in this handbook. This handbook replaces all earlier handbooks, and supersedes all memoranda and prior oral descriptions of the policies at Meeting Street.

Of course, changes in conditions may require Meeting Street to supplement, modify, or eliminate policies described in the handbook to meet the needs of our agency or to respond to our business environment. While we try to give notice of such changes, either by an announcement or memorandum, this may not always be practical. It may also be necessary to deviate from customary practices in certain unanticipated circumstances.

Our relationship is based on mutual satisfaction and understanding. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it for reference.

ABOUT MEETING STREET



Mission

Meeting Street compassionately and innovatively empowers children and their families to thrive by fostering the development of the whole child.

Vision

To be a national leader in child development, education, research and training.

Core Values

- **Respect:** We treat those we serve, each other and ourselves as we would like to be treated – with dignity and understanding.
- **Compassion:** We treat those we serve, each other and ourselves with empathy (identification with an understanding of another’s situation, feelings and motives).
- **Integrity:** Our conduct ensures that Meeting Street’s name is always worthy of trust.
- **Inclusivity:** We believe in, respect and practice the concept that we are all part of one community – a community that reflects and represents people of all backgrounds and experiences.
- **Excellence:** We strive to be the best in everything we do and we acknowledge and learn from our mistakes.

History

Meeting Street was founded in 1946. Affectionately called Meeting Street School, it took its name from the primary school in which it was first housed on Meeting Street in Providence. Meeting Street was established to provide comprehensive educational, therapeutic and developmental services to children with disabilities and special needs. Our founders were Dr. Eric Denhoff, a pediatric orthopedist, and Margaret “Poggy” Langdon, an educator and community activist.

To meet our growing space needs we relocated to the Butler Hospital campus in 1957. That same year, Meeting Street entered into a collaborative long-range Child Development Study with Brown University, focusing on children with cerebral dysfunction. By 1969, a cohort of our professionals received national recognition for their development of the Meeting Street School Screening Test to evaluate kindergarten and first grade students for the early identification of learning disorders.

In our 30th year, the need for even more space prompted the move to the former Nicholson File Company in East Providence. The next year, we developed what was at the time an innovative “mainstreaming” program to prepare teachers, parents and others in the community to embrace children with acceptance and understanding. Today, we refer to this as inclusion and it is the cornerstone of our educational model.

In the 1970s, we introduced a new “team concept” of psychological/developmental evaluations; this model was ultimately accepted as a “best practice” by the national educational and medical communities. Based on the success of our own Early Intervention program and our growing national reputation, Meeting Street was chosen as one of five institutions in the United States to receive a federal grant to develop a comprehensive service delivery model to meet the educational and developmental needs of young children with disabilities. Meeting Street’s Early Intervention program ultimately became a forerunner and model for the federal program established in the 1980s and is still practiced today across the country.

Meeting Street has pioneered many firsts and continues to be a leader in the field of education. While often still referred to as Meeting Street School, our name is simply Meeting Street and speaks to the many programs and services we offer to children from pre-birth to age 22. In recognition of the steadfast dedication of our staff, Meeting Street was chosen as the Outstanding Philanthropic Service Organization of the Year (National Philanthropy Day 2000) by the Rhode Island Chapter of the National Society of Fund Raising Executives. This honor is awarded to an organization that has demonstrated a significant commitment to the community over and beyond what might normally be expected. Upon moving to our new campus in 2007, Meeting Street was awarded the prestigious LEED environmental excellence approval and was the first school in Rhode Island to receive this honor. In 2010, the Providence Business News named Meeting Street its recipient of the Business Excellence Award for “Excellence in a Nonprofit Organization.”

From the day we opened our hearts and doors in 1946, in a small brick building on Meeting Street in Providence, our tiny schoolhouse overflowed with possibility. Today, endless possibilities and opportunities are not just hoped for, they are expected as children of all ages and abilities and their families benefit from our nearly 70 years of hands-on experience and innovation. Meeting Street’s groundbreaking approach can be seen through our core programs that work with children and families pre-birth through age 22.

Programs - Early Childhood Services

Early Intervention

As one of the largest providers of Early Intervention services in Rhode Island, Meeting Street Early Intervention (EI) provides evaluations, therapeutic services and support for children (from birth to age three) who are discovered to have or be at risk of developmental delays. Early Intervention is available at no cost to families who live in Rhode Island and are eligible for these services.

Early Head Start

This federally funded program is an extension of the Head Start program and is designed to prepare young children up to age three to enter preschool healthy and ready to learn. Meeting Street's Early Head Start program provides early education and developmental services for low income Providence children and their families. The primary eligibility criterion for this program is income.

Early Learning Center

Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), The Meeting Street Early Learning Center is unique in offering inclusive opportunities for children six weeks to preschool age. From the warmth and security of our infant rooms to the contagious laughter, playful discovery and learning in our toddler and pre-school classrooms, our Early Learning Center is an ideal setting for children to develop, learn and explore.

Healthy Families America

Healthy Families America is a national evidence-based maternal and child home visiting program that provides free, voluntary, confidential services. The program pairs expectant mothers or families with newborns with a Family Support Worker, who provides home visiting services to the family and their child until the child's third birthday.

School Age Services

The Grace School

One of the nation's first fully inclusive K-5 schools for learners of all abilities, including students with severe and profound disabilities. The Grace School provides a rigorous education for all students. The Grace School provides an enriching, educational environment that features individualized learning plans for all students.

The Carter School

Specializing in life skills and vocational education for middle and high school students with severe to profound special needs, The Carter School integrates education, therapy and work experiences to prepare our students to pursue a range of possibilities when they graduate. These opportunities include supported post-secondary education, vocational opportunities, and recreational and social activities tailored to their specific interests and abilities.



VOLUNTEER/STUDENT INTERN REQUIREMENTS

All volunteers and student interns are required to provide the following prior to the start of their first day:

- **Local BCI check:** If you have had either a BCI within the past 12 months, we will accept a copy of those results. If not, you can go to your local police station for a local BCI. If they cannot accommodate you in a timely manner, you can go to the attorney general's office to have it done but there will be a fee.
- **PPD (TB) Test:** If you have had a PPD test done within the past 12 months, we will accept those results. If not, you must have one done. This will take 48 hours. It will be administered on one day then read 48 hours later.
- **MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) Immunization:** If you were born on or after January 1, 1957, you will need a copy of your MMR. If you do not have one, you will need to have that done.
If you do not have a physician who can do this for you in a timely manner, you can use Concentra at 290 Branch Ave., Providence, RI 02904 Phone (401) 722-8880. (There will be a fee associated with this.)
- **For those volunteering in Early Head Start:** A pre-employment physical is required. Meeting Street will pay for this.
- **For those volunteering in the Early Learning Center:** A Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS) check by the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) is required.
- **Other paperwork:** You will receive orientation information in the mail. You should complete this paperwork and bring it with you on the date of your orientation.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Equal Employment Opportunity

Meeting Street is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Programs will be administered without regard to race, color, religion, marital status, gender, sexual preference or orientation, gender expression or identity, age, national origin or ancestry, legally recognized disability, citizenship status, genetic information, veteran status, socioeconomic background or any other characteristic or category protected by law.

New Volunteer/Student Intern Orientation

Orientation is a time to introduce new staff to Meeting Street and our standards, policies and procedures. Orientation sessions for volunteers and student interns occur every other Monday from 12:15pm – 4:00pm unless otherwise specified. Your advisor or a human resources representative will let you know via email which orientation session you will be attending. Some of the features of our orientation include information “About Meeting Street” and Values & Accomplishments; Health & Safety and Evacuation Procedures; standards and laws including HIPAA, FERPA, and OSHA; notifying staff about your arrival, etc.

Attendance and Advisory

Your attendance is important to the operation of each program. If you are expecting to be tardy or absent on a scheduled day, it is important to notify your advisor in advance. You will be assigned a designated advisor who you will report to directly. At the end of your assignment your advisor may ask you to fill out a volunteer/internship assessment form to assess the effectiveness of the volunteer/internship assignment.

Dress Code

It is important that all volunteers and student interns project a professional and businesslike image. You are expected to take pride in your personal appearance and come to work in attire appropriate for working in a "Center of Excellence".

We consider casual T-shirts with inappropriate phrases and/or graphics, tank and halter tops, mini-skirts, and ragged or cut-off clothing examples of unacceptable dress for working at Meeting Street. Footwear must be appropriate for indoor use and for the position held. Suggested footwear for direct-service volunteers and student interns is closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes or sneakers and for indirect-service staff, low heel shoes. If any volunteer or student intern arrives at work inappropriately dressed or groomed for the work environment, his or her advisor may ask him or her to leave work and return in appropriate attire.

Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Meeting Street to treat everyone with dignity and respect. Our affirmative commitment to equal employment opportunity includes the recognition that harassment of on account of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

If you believe you have been the subject of harassment, you should report the alleged conduct immediately to your advisor or the Director of Human Resources.

No-Smoking Policy

Meeting Street is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is prohibited anywhere on our campus.

Drug Free Workplace

Meeting Street prohibits the use of any illegal drug and/or the abuse of legal drugs or alcohol. Volunteers and student interns are valuable resources to us and we recognize the importance of maintaining a safe working environment.

To ensure safety, and to uphold both state and federal laws, it is our policy to prohibit the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, use, purchase, or sale of a controlled substance

or alcohol at any Meeting Street facility. Any violation of the policy will result in immediate action up to and including termination of volunteer privileges.

If arrested, charged, or convicted of a drug violation, you must notify the Director of Human Resources within twenty-four (24) hours. Failure to notify will result in immediate termination of privileges. The action we take in any situation shall depend on the circumstances. Meeting Street retains the right to take such action, up to and including termination of assignment, as we, in our discretion, deem appropriate.

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy

Meeting Street has adopted a conflict of interest policy to ensure that decisions or actions affecting Meeting Street are made or taken solely on terms that are not influenced by any private profit, or other personal benefit, to individuals affiliated with the Agency. You should also avoid actions that could be perceived or interpreted to be in conflict with the interests of Meeting Street. Any duality of interest or possible conflict of interest must be disclosed to the Director of Human Resources and made a matter of record.

As a private not for profit organization, all programs and volunteers/student interns of Meeting Street are subject to federal and state guidelines under the laws of confidentiality. You cannot discuss client and donor information with anyone, whether part of a record or not.

All volunteers and student interns receive a copy of Meeting Street's Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy during orientation and sign an Agreement Form. Any breach of this policy will result in immediate action up to and including termination of privileges.

Performance and Conduct Issues

It is important for all of us at Meeting Street to conduct ourselves in a manner that is fair to each other. We believe each volunteer and student intern should be treated and respected as an individual. For this reason, advisors approach performance problems or conduct issues in a flexible, case-by-case manner.

Solicitation and Distribution of Literature

Meeting Street prohibits all unwarranted solicitation or distribution of literature on our premises.

Problem Resolution

Meeting Street encourages regular open communication between volunteers/student interns and their advisors. When a concern arises, we ask that you speak to your advisor. If your advisor cannot address the issue to your satisfaction, you may meet with the Director of your department or Human Resources.

Internet and E-Mail

The Internet and electronic mail are dominant communication methods today. Our e-mail system and the Internet should be used for Agency business only. Because e-mail is stored on

the network and hard drive, it is traceable and can be audited and monitored. It must not be used to solicit on behalf of religious causes, outside organizations, commercial ventures, or other non-job-related solicitations. Chain letters are inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

All messages composed, sent, or received over the e-mail system and all files downloaded from the Internet are Agency records. Therefore, as a volunteer or student intern, you waive any right to privacy in e-mail communications or Internet activities on the system provided by Meeting Street. Meeting Street reserves the right to intercept, access, review, and/or disclose any messages, Internet site visits, or files stored or in transit for any purpose without any permission.

When downloading files from the Internet, pay careful attention to the rules and responsibilities related to the file that you are downloading. Any violation of this policy will result in immediate action up to and including termination assignment. You will receive more detailed Technology Policies during orientation.

Telephone and Voice Mail

Meeting Street's telephone and voice mail systems are provided to assist you in conducting our business. We value all of our clients, employees, volunteers, vendors, donors, and others and we expect that you will be responsive, timely, helpful, and courteous in all dealings with them.

All messages left on internal or external voice mail must be courteous, business-like, and professional. They may not contain derogatory, obscene, offensive, or harassing comments about race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, or an individual's disability.

We treat all voice mail messages sent, received or stored as business messages that are Meeting Street property. Meeting Street reserves the right to retrieve, review, audit, and intercept any messages composed, sent, or received and to disclose them to any party it deems appropriate without any permission. You will receive more detailed Telephone and Voice Mail policies during orientation.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Accident Reporting

Guidelines and procedures are in place for ensuring a prompt and efficient response to a medical emergency. You should give the name and daytime telephone number of an emergency contact to the Human Resources Department and your advisor.

If you are injured on the job, your advisor must be notified as well as the Director of Human Resources. If necessary, the Meeting Street School Nurse should be consulted if available.

All accidents, even seemingly minor injuries must be reported. An Incident Report must be completed and forwarded to the Director of Human Resources.

First Aid

Meeting Street School Nurses are generally available to provide any necessary first aid treatment. There are also first aid kits located in the Early Learning Center, School and in the Administrative wing.

Several staff members are certified in Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). In the case of emergency, they may be able to assist you.

Badges

When you begin your volunteer or internship assignment at Meeting Street, you are issued an Identification Badge. All volunteers and student interns are required to wear it visibly while in the building. If you don't have your badge, please get a temporary one from the receptionist.

The Facility Manager issues visitors temporary badges. If you encounter someone you do not know who is not wearing a badge, you should ask if you may assist him or her and escort the individual to the receptionist.

If you lose your badge or need to change the identifying information, please notify the Facility Manager and you will be issued a new one. When your volunteer or internship assignment is complete you must return your ID badge on your last day at Meeting Street.

Safety

Meeting Street provides safe working conditions and follows operating practices that will safeguard volunteers and student interns. You are required to follow safety rules without exception.

You should maintain a professional looking workspace at all times. As a result of fire and safety concerns, personal appliances that have not been approved for use in your work area may not be used.

Crisis Management

Meeting Street has a clearly defined emergency policy to ensure the safety and protection of all our clients and staff.

An emergency or crisis occurs when a client, staff member or family member's behavior has the potential for causing harm to himself, herself or others. Examples include: suicide threats or attempts; violent, persistent aggressive or psychotic behavior or threats; traumatic incidents or extreme distress; or the appearance of incapacitation. A list of trained staff who can assist in a crisis is maintained in the Facilities and Human Resources Departments. The call for help system is also available through the switchboard to get assistance quickly if needed.

Meeting Street Property

You routinely have access to resources that belong to Meeting Street. These include many items from inexpensive supplies to more critical items such as software and confidential information. You may not use the supplies and materials that belong to Meeting Street for your personal gain. Confidential and proprietary information is also considered the property of Meeting Street and must never be disclosed or used for your own benefit or the benefit of others.

Meeting Street records, data files, and computer resources are intended for our business use only. Any other use is prohibited. All computer hardware and software provided by Meeting Street and any documentation produced by, scanned into, or stored in such hardware is Agency property.

Software products purchased by Meeting Street are subject to copyright laws and are intended for use only on our operating systems. Meeting Street does not negotiate software contracts that permit external sharing. It is a criminal offense to copy or send any software that is protected by copyright. Any unauthorized copying, duplication, sale or other distribution of this property is prohibited.

We also consider any procedure, policy, software, application, computer program or hardware developed by, or on behalf of, Meeting Street by an employee or vendor to be Meeting Street property.

All property owned, leased or rented by Meeting Street, that is available for the performance of your assignment, is Agency property and must be properly maintained. You must return all Meeting Street property upon completion of your volunteer or internship assignment.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Holidays

Meeting Street is closed to observe twelve holidays each fiscal year: Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas, New Years Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day and Victory Day.

Inclement Weather and Emergencies

You should call (401)-533-9174 or listen to Channel 10 or Channel 12 for an announcement on the cancellation of programs affiliated with Meeting Street. The cancellation of Meeting Street means that all programs are cancelled. If there is a delay in opening, this will also apply to all programs. An alternate to television is radio. WPRO 630 AM shall carry an announcement as well as 92 PRO FM.

Channel 10 will also have a web site of announcements at www.turnto10.com.

A decision to cancel or delay shall be made as early as possible. Even with this effort, we cannot always control the amount of time it will take for the media to broadcast a message. For those traveling a distance or who have an early morning appointment (i.e., 7:30 AM) please call (401) 533-9174 to access the voice mail with the cancellation status. This number should only be called in the rare occurrence that your work schedule on that day does not permit you to wait for the media announcement.

Individual programs are responsible to inform any consultants, students, volunteers, interns or such entities of the need to listen for or access the cancellation information.

Inquiries and References

All requests for volunteer/student intern verification or references on volunteers/student interns should be directed to the Director of Human Resources for processing. In accordance with Meeting Street policy, advisors and staff may not respond to such inquiries without prior approval from the Director of Human Resources.

Human Resources will respond to other inquiries from sources such as creditors, law enforcement agencies or the courts. Any inquiries from the media must be forwarded to the Chief Operating Officer.

Parking

There is free unassigned parking available for all volunteers and student interns. You must park in the staff parking area. Please be careful not to park in the areas designated for clients and visitors. Meeting Street is not responsible for theft or damage to your vehicle. We advise that you keep your car locked at all times.

Meals

Eating should always take place within the cafeteria. Food at desks is not allowed so that we are able to maintain a clean and professional facility. A section is designated in the cafeteria for staff only. There are refrigerators available to store lunch.

***PLEASE CONTACT HUMAN RESOURCES SHOULD ANY
QUESTIONS ARISE.***

***WE ARE EXCITED TO HAVE YOU AS A MEMBER OF OUR
TEAM AT MEETING STREET!***