



## Volunteering for the Make-A-Wish Foundation

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### **Can I volunteer around my work schedule?**

Yes. Many volunteers are working professionals. We ask for a time commitment in order to ensure volunteers are properly trained and can make timely progress in granting children's wishes. Administrative volunteers may volunteer during business hours, while fundraising event volunteers can select specific days and times based on event needs. Wish Ambassador volunteers offer speeches at events, which also vary by nature. We strive to be as flexible as possible with our volunteers' time, and we ask the same in return.

### **Why do I have to undergo a criminal background check?**

Make-A-Wish volunteers commonly are trusted to work directly with our wish families, and may handle Make-A-Wish resources (including money or donated goods) as they arrange wishes or volunteer at fundraising events. For the protection of the wish families and the Foundation itself, we require criminal background checks of all staff and volunteers. We do not enlist the services of volunteers who have criminal records. Additional information on background checks can be found on our website at <http://www.nwwishes.org/volunteer/background.asp>.

### **How do I apply?**

To become a volunteer, please review our [application process](#).

### **What does the application process involve?**

- Successfully complete "Wish Granting 101" orientation.
- Complete a phone interview with the Volunteer Manager.
- Complete Volunteer Application packet.
- Complete online National Background check (for a cost of \$20).
- Attend and complete Wish Granting training – either in-person or online.

### **How long is the application process?**

Depending on the type of volunteer role and our training schedule, it usually takes between three weeks and three months from the time your application is received until the time you can begin volunteering. Once you are on board as a volunteer, though, we usually have you volunteering right away!

### **Are volunteers very involved with the children?**

Wish granting volunteers have the highest level of involvement with children and their families. They make the initial contact with the family, determine the child's most heartfelt wish, and coordinate the details of granting the wish with Make-A-Wish staff. Even so, wish granters meet a family at the beginning and end of a wish, but may rely on telephone and email correspondence during the rest of the wish. Our emphasis is on delivering a one-of-a-kind wish experience, rather than on developing ongoing relationships with families or children. As a new volunteer, you will receive training and be partnered with an experienced volunteer to ensure that you are comfortable in meeting with the families.

### **Do you have volunteer positions that aren't emotionally demanding?**

In many cases, the Foundation's work has a high emotional content. In such cases when volunteers are interested in supporting our mission while limiting their involvement with families, we suggest volunteer roles in fundraising events or administrative support. All volunteer positions contribute equally to the Foundation's mission.

**Can anyone be a volunteer?**

Volunteers must be positive, outgoing, and passionate about children and our mission. It is important that volunteers like people and work well with others. All volunteers must pass a background check due to volunteer interaction with wish children and the occasional handling of money.

**Can wish families volunteer?**

Frequently, wish families have asked to become volunteers for the Foundation after their wish is complete. Most families decide to involve themselves either through public speaking as a speakers' bureau volunteer or as a wish granter. We request that wish parents wait at least a year after their child's wish is granted before becoming a wish granter volunteer.

**Does volunteering require additional training?**

Wish granter and Wish Ambassador volunteers require training. Contact the Volunteer Manager at [volunteer@nwwishes.org](mailto:volunteer@nwwishes.org) for an upcoming training schedule.

**Do I need to participate in a wish to be a Make-A-Wish volunteer?**

No. There are many areas of the volunteer program beyond wish granting that can draw on your abilities, from planning, organizing or promoting, to writing, designing or administrative assistance.

**What if I have limited time available to volunteer?**

If you have limited amounts of time, you may want to be a fundraising event or Wish Ambassador volunteer, or participate in our Ribbons & Bows program. There are various assignments to choose from that can fit your interests and availability.

**Do I need to make a financial contribution to Make-A-Wish Foundation before I can volunteer?**

No. We welcome cash and in-kind donations from all supporters, but it is not a requirement for volunteering.

**How much time does a wish require to fulfill?**

Some wishes, like gift wishes, are quickly and easily fulfilled. Other wishes, like travel wishes, could take longer because the family travels on their timetable, usually based on the child's medical condition and treatment. Celebrity wishes can be the longest to fulfill as we rely on the availability of each celebrity to schedule the wish accordingly. Generally, a wish will take about 15-20 hours of your time but, happens over the course of several months.

**I'm not 21 years old, can I still volunteer for the Make-A-Wish Foundation?**

Although all wish granter volunteers must be 21 years old, there are a number of other opportunities, such as volunteering at fundraising events, working at the Make-A-Wish office, and organizing [Kids for Wish Kids®](#) and [Wishmaker's on Campus® Programs](#), to accommodate younger volunteers.

**Do wish granting volunteers travel with the family/child?**

No, there are Make-A-Wish chapters around the country with their own volunteers. When wish families visit another state, the local chapter helps to facilitate the wish.

**Why are wishes handled by wish teams rather than individuals?**

A two-person team provides emotional support and helps to balance the workload. Working in teams also helps to protect volunteers from potential accusations of impropriety.