



Michigan  
Hands & Voices  
SAFETY POLICIES  
AND PROCEDURES  
MANUAL

Abuse Prevention

MICHIGAN



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Dec. 2021



# Introduction

Dear Volunteer, Contractor or Staff Member,

Welcome to Michigan Hands & Voices!

At Michigan Hands & Voices (MI H&V), we take our responsibility to care for our volunteers, contractors, staff and families very seriously. The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for MI H&V volunteers, contractors and staff members. The following procedures have been adopted by MI H&V and will be strictly enforced to facilitate a safe environment for our organization and the families we serve.

After you have carefully reviewed this Safety Policies and Procedures Manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

*Janel Frost*

Executive Director

Michigan Hands & Voices

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**MICHIGAN HANDS & VOICES IS A PARENT-DRIVEN, PARENT/PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE GROUP DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING REGARDLESS OF LANGUAGE OR COMMUNICATION MODE**

***WHAT WORKS FOR YOUR CHILD IS WHAT MAKES THE CHOICE RIGHT.***



# Overview

Michigan Hands & Voices cares for the families that we serve. We have the desire to protect them as well as our volunteers, contractors, and staff members. MI H&V requires that all personnel serving families through our organization to complete **3 Safety Steps** before their work begins.

## **STEP ONE: Fill out an Application**

Volunteers, contractors and staff members are required to complete the MI H&V Screening Process, which requires them to fill out a Volunteer, Contractor or Staff Application.

Additional steps may be required based on level of responsibility and access to children, such as a face-to-face interview or providing references to be checked.

## **STEP TWO: Review & Sign Policies & Procedures**

Volunteers, contractors and staff members are required to review and sign the policies and procedures outlined in this manual indicating that the applicant has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

## **STEP THREE: Criminal Background Check**

MI H&V requires that all volunteers, contractors and staff members undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing degrees of backgrounds or intensity of background checks may be required.

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# Abuse Prevention

## **REPORTING ABUSE**

MI H&V has a zero tolerance for abuse in MI H&V programs and activities. It is the responsibility of every volunteer, contractor and staff member at MI H&V to act in the best interest of families in every program. In the event that volunteers, contractors or staff members observe and/or suspect any physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any child or family member served by Michigan Hands & Voices, It is the volunteer's, contractor's, or staff member's responsibility to immediately report the observations to an immediate supervisor or the MI H&V Executive Director or Board Chair.

## **ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

MI H&V volunteers, contractors and staff members who supervise other volunteers, contractors or staff members are charged with the diligent enforcement of all MI H&V policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for reassignment, disciplinary action or dismissal from positions for volunteers, contractors and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of MI H&V Board of Directors.

## **RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE**

Any report of inappropriate behavior or suspicions of abuse will be reported to the MI H&V Executive Director or Board Chair, and will be taken seriously. The MI H&V Board of Directors will then review the information reported and take appropriate action on behalf of the MI H&V Chapter, which may include notifying Child Protective Services (855-444-3911) or local police authorities.

***"WHAT WORKS FOR YOUR CHILD IS WHAT MAKES THE CHOICE RIGHT."***

# Volunteer/Staff/Contractor Abuse Prevention Agreement

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Michigan Hands & Voices supports families no matter which language, communication or amplification choices the family has made. MI H&V supports this mission by training parents to act as community leaders to create parent-to-parent networks; provide resources, information, and outreach activities; and by collaborating with professionals and other parent organizations. MI H&V is fortunate to have the strong support of community volunteers for our activities. Without their generous contribution of time, the wide range of services we offer would not be possible.

In order to maintain the highest level of service, integrity and safety for all our participants, we require that each volunteer, contractor or staff member agree with the principles outlined below. Please initial each statement and sign. A link to the background check will be sent to the email you provide.

As a Volunteer/Contractor or staff with MI H&V:

I agree to conduct myself in the most professional and respectful manner with all participants, staff and community partners.

I agree to support communication choices made by individuals and families that may be different from my own personal belief system and not allow bias to interfere with my participation.

I agree to never be alone with a child participant without a parent/guardian or another MI H&V volunteer, contractor or staff person.

I agree to maintain strict confidentiality about any information regarding a participant's child or family.

I have read over the Abuse Prevention Policies and agree to follow this policy.

Typing your name and date in the spaces below will serve as an electronic signature.

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you so very much for your generous gift of time and for assisting families in their quest for their child to reach their full potential.