

Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility & Requirements

Q: Is there an age requirement to volunteer at BIDMC?

A: Yes, all volunteers must be at least 15 years old at the time they apply.

Q: I don't have a Social Security Number. Can I still volunteer?

A: If you are 18 or older, a Social Security number is required so we can complete a background check. Unfortunately, we cannot proceed without it.

Q: Why is a background check necessary?

A: To ensure a safe and secure environment for our patients, staff, and volunteers. This does not include a credit check.

Health Requirements

Q: What if I can't find my immunization records?

A: Start by contacting your doctor or your school's health office. If you're unable to obtain the records, contact the BIDMC Employee Health Clinic at **617-632-0710** and mention you're applying to volunteer.

Q: What is a TB test?

A: A TB (tuberculosis) test checks for exposure to tuberculosis, a contagious bacterial infection. It is typically done through a simple skin test or a blood test. Volunteers can receive this test free of charge at our Employee Health Clinic. If you choose to get tested elsewhere, you'll be responsible for any associated costs and must provide official documentation of your results.

Q: I've already had a TB test this year. Do I need another?

A: If your TB test was done within the last 6 months, you do not need to repeat it. Please provide documentation of your most recent test and results.

Q: Do I need a flu shot to volunteer?

A: Yes. An annual flu vaccine is required and provided free of charge. If you get vaccinated elsewhere, just bring proof to our clinic.

Q: What if I can't receive the flu vaccine due to allergies or religious reasons?

A: Please contact the Employee Health Clinic at **617-632-0710** to discuss your options.

Application & Interview Process

Q: What should I bring to my volunteer interview?

A: Please bring any outstanding health records or forms not already submitted. If you're 18 or older, bring a government-issued ID for the background check.

Q: Who should I list as references?

A: Choose two non-relatives. Students should try to include a teacher, coach, counselor, or advisor.

Q: What will my references need to do?

A: After you apply, your references will receive a brief online form. It includes a few rating questions and a short comment section. The form takes less than 10 minutes to complete.

Scheduling & Commitment

Q: What is the time commitment to volunteer?

A: We ask for a minimum of **50 hours over 12 months**, typically through weekly 3–4 hour shifts. We usually don't place volunteers who can't commit for at least four months, unless part of our Summer Health Corps.

Q: Do I have to volunteer every week?

A: Not necessarily. Some roles allow for less frequent participation. We understand students have exams and everyone takes vacations—just keep us informed of any absences.

Q: Can I volunteer on weekends or evenings?

A: Opportunities during these times are limited and fill quickly. If you have flexibility, please note that on your application.

Training & Placement

Q: What kind of training will I receive?

A: All accepted volunteers complete online training modules and review our handbook. You'll also have a one-on-one orientation with the Director, receive your uniform, and possibly shadow a current volunteer, depending on your assignment.

Q: Will I be able to shadow doctors or nurses?

A: No. Volunteers support non-clinical needs and are not permitted to shadow medical staff. Volunteer Services also cannot arrange shadowing or internships.

Q: Does Volunteer Services handle internships?

A: No. If you're seeking an internship, reach out directly to the employee you wish to intern with. They will coordinate with HR to set it up. Some schools have formal arrangements with BIDMC for internships.

Q: Will volunteering lead to a job at BIDMC?

A: Volunteering does not guarantee employment. All job openings are managed through our **Human Resources Department**. You can view current listings at jobs.bidmc.org.

Logistics & Support

Q: Where should I park for my interview or shifts?

A: Use the garage at the main entrance: **330 Brookline Ave.** Your parking will be validated.

Q: Are there any costs to volunteering?

A: No. Volunteers receive a free uniform shirt (or scrubs if needed), validated parking, and a **\$5 cafeteria voucher** for each shift.

Q: I've applied but haven't heard back—what should I do?

A: We receive many applications and review them in the order they're received. If your availability and interests align with an opening, we'll be in touch. Delays can also occur if we're waiting on your references.