



2017-2018 Staff Policy & Procedures

Project MotiVATe seeks to create a positive, mutually supportive atmosphere and encourages each participant to share their thoughts and feelings regarding policies and any other subject pertaining to PM. As members of the PM community, we commit to listening to each other with respect and to collectively seek solutions to any problems which arise.

For the purposes of this document, “staff” refers to all adults working with Project MotiVATe, including Program Director, Coordinators, Mentors, Volunteers, and members of the Board of Directors. “Coordinators” include Program Director and Coordinators.

In order to participate in Project MotiVATe, staff must be over 18 years of age.

Section 1: Legal Obligations

1. All mentors, volunteers, and coordinators must complete a LiveScan fingerprinting for a background check.
2. Any staff who transports mentees must be fingerprinted and have copies of their driver's license and automobile accident insurance on file with Project MotiVATe.
3. Any staff who interacts with mentees outside of study hall must provide information about the interaction via contact logs. Contact logs should be entered each time a staff member has contact with a mentee. See Appendix A for contact log procedure.
4. Any staff who suspect that a mentee may be at risk for abuse must inform the Program Director and Mentor Coordinator immediately for mandated reporting. See Appendix C for more information on mandated reporting.

Section 2: Staff Conduct

1. Appropriate Dress: All staff must maintain proper attire when representing Project MotiVATe or at events sponsored by Project MotiVATe. Inappropriate attire includes tops exposing cleavage; midriff tops exposing your stomach or belly button; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans. Pants or shirts should not expose undergarments. Dress, skirt, and short length should be at a length at which you can sit comfortably in public. Try to limit your perfume and cologne as some people are allergic to certain chemicals.

If clothing attire fails to meet these standards, as determined by the Project MotiVATe Coordinators, the staff member will be either sent home or asked to put on additional attire or flip the clothing item inside-out. He/She will also be asked not to wear the inappropriate item to

Project MotiVATe events again.

2. Professionalism: All staff must maintain a professional image when representing Project MotiVATe or when they are at events sponsored by Project MotiVATe. Staff may not smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol in the presence of mentees.

3. Language: In order to create a “safe space” where youth can develop self-confidence, share their perspectives, and trust other members of the PM community, all PM staff should ensure that their language is respectful and inclusive. Use of profanity and cursing is prohibited in any language. Staff should also refrain from acting/speaking in a way which discriminates on the basis of race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age or physical ability, or any other difference. In cases where mentors/volunteers witness mentees behaving in an intolerant or discriminatory way, including bullying or teasing, staff are encouraged to directly address the issue with the youth, with support from Coordinators. In cases where staff witness or experience language from other staff members which does not follow PM guidelines, they are encouraged to seek support from Coordinators and/or Board members to address the situation (see #9, Grievances).

4. Event attendance and late arrival: To run PM effectively, we depend on regular attendance from coordinators and mentors. PM understands that schedules may sometimes conflict with attendance, study halls and monthly events. Mentors must inform a member of the Coordinating Team if they will be absent or late to an event, with as much prior notice as possible. If unexcused absences or lateness become excessive, then the Coordinating Team will address the issue directly with the mentor.

5. Mentee attendance: It is the responsibility of all PM staff to encourage regular attendance of mentees to study hall and monthly events. In the event that a mentor knows their mentee will arrive late or be absent to an event, it is the responsibility of the mentor to communicate with the Coordinating Team.

6. Confidentiality: PM wants to protect the privacy of all participants in the program, mentees and staff. Mentors should build a trust relationship with their mentee and use their best judgment when sharing private information. Information about mentees shared within mentor meetings and via contact logs is strictly confidential and should not be shared with other mentees or anyone outside of the PM program. In cases that a mentee shares information that indicates they are at risk (see list in Appendix B), the mentor should tell the mentee that the Coordinating staff will be informed so that additional support can be provided to the mentee.

Mentors should be sensitive to how they introduce the mentee to friends and acquaintances when on outings. Some mentees may not wish to be introduced by name or as a participant in Project MotiVATe. Mentors and mentees should discuss the issue before going on outings and determine what works best for them.

Confidentiality extends to internet, social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.), TV/radio and articles about PM. Staff members must not share identifying details about a mentee's name, history or background with members of the media or on websites. Photos of mentees may only be used with their consent.

7. Media: All requests for interviews and media appearances should be directed to the Coordinating Team. Staff members are welcome to promote and share information about PM through social media, including their own Facebook page, blog, or website. Staff who post negative or critical information about Project MotiVATe in the media or on the internet should consider the impact of the statements on the PM participants and the image of PM in the community. If any staff or Board member has feedback for the program, they are encouraged to contact the Coord Team directly.

8. Social Media Etiquette: Project MotiVATe's social media pages are meant to be a safe space where all staff, mentees and other community members can interact. PM's social media pages can be viewed publicly, so it is important that all content is enjoyable for every audience. PM aims to hold a positive image at all times, so all exchanges through the social media pages must comply with the following social media standards.

Content should not contain any offensive or inappropriate material. Examples of things that will not be tolerated are:

- Sexually explicit content
- Anything that sexually harasses others
- Anything that explicitly promotes the consumption/use of alcohol, drugs, other illegal substances.
- Anything that is discriminatory towards specific groups of people
- Violence
- Cyber bullying
- Profane/Vulgar language

Anything that is posted on Project MotiVATe's public pages can and will be removed by the Coordinating team if it is found inappropriate. Those who choose to post on PM's public pages must understand that what they post is subject to review at all times. In the case that the Coordinating team is made aware of inappropriate content, they will remove it and issue a warning to the person who posted it. Repeated offenses may result in a loss of privilege to use PM's social media pages.

9. Grievances: Project MotiVATe attempts to maintain a positive, respectful, mutually supportive atmosphere. We encourage all staff and members of the Board to engage in direct communication and work through conflicts as they arise. If you are unable to resolve the issue and need support, please consult with the Program Director and/or Chair of the Board of Directors. See Appendix D for grievance procedure.

Section 3: Limits and Boundaries when working with mentees

1. Personal contact: In order to facilitate contact between mentors and mentees, mentors may exchange phone numbers and other personal contact information with their mentee and the mentee's family. It is the responsibility of the mentor to set boundaries for contact with the mentee and his/her family. If the mentor needs assistance in setting boundaries (for example, if the mentor is receiving too many calls or requests from the mentee and family), the Coord Team can provide support.

2. Home visits: All staff are allowed to visit a mentee at home only when a parent/guardian or other family or household member is present. Mentees may not visit a staff member's house unless the house is the location for an official activity sponsored by Project MotiVATe. Mentors should meet with mentees in a public place during informal mentor-mentee outings. Staff should follow an "open door" policy when visiting mentees: staff members are not permitted to be in a room with a closed door with a mentee.

3. Social media: A current staff member cannot be "friends" on a social media site such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Myspace with a current mentee of Project MotiVATe. If the staff member receives a "friend request" from a mentee, the staff member should inform the mentee about this policy and encourage the mentee to join the PM Facebook Page to interact with the PM community. Exceptions to this rule may be made with the approval of the PM Coordinating Team.

4. Prohibited activities: All mentors, volunteers, coordinators, and board members may not involve mentees in any illegal activities, including but not limited to: taking mentee to R-rated movies if mentee is underage, offering illegal drugs to mentee, offering any prescription medications to mentee, and offering alcoholic beverages to mentee.

Staff members who are trained in first aid will be authorized to administer basic first aid as needed during PM study hall, monthly events, and summer camp.

5. Drugs and Alcohol: All mentors, volunteers, coordinators, and board members may not have contact with mentee (phone or in-person) while under the influence of any drugs (legal or illegal) that would impair judgment or decision-making of the staff member.

6. Gifts and other money issues: Mentors cannot accept money from mentees or a mentee's family. If the mentee or parents want to thank the mentors, they may do so with donations in-kind to Project MotiVATe as a whole, not to an individual. Mentors should not give extravagant gifts to the mentee or mentees' family (over \$25). Mentors are not allowed to give money to mentees or mentee's families or pay for things (i.e. clothes, supplies, phone bills, etc.). Mentors may not cosign any loan or contract with mentees or a mentees' family.

7. Physical Contact: In order to respect mentees' personal space and avoid compromising situations, staff and Board members should be aware of maintaining appropriate physical contact

when working with PM youth. Handshakes, high-5s, pats on the back, and side hugs are preferable to full body hugs.

8. Sexual Activity: All mentors, volunteers, coordinators, and board members may not engage in any sexual relations or activity leading up to sexual relations with any present mentee of the program (including but not limited to holding hands, kissing, and sexual intercourse).

9. Sexual Harassment: Project MotiVATe is committed to promoting an environment that is free from sexual harassment. Harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexual jokes or innuendo, touching or grabbing of a sexual nature, or posting sexually demeaning or offensive pictures in the PM office. If staff or members of the Board experience harassment, they are encouraged to discuss the situation with the Program Director or Chair of the Board so appropriate action may be taken.

Section 4: Transportation

All mentors, volunteers, coordinators, and board members who transport mentees must obtain written or verbal permission of the mentee's parents. Additionally, those who transport mentees must be fingerprinted and have copies of their driver's license and automobile accident insurance on file with Project MotiVATe.

Verbal or written confirmation must be obtained from the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that the parent(s)/guardian(s) give permission for the outing. The parent(s)/guardian(s) confirmation must be submitted into the mentee contact log. PM staff members are responsible for ensuring that parent(s)/guardian(s) are aware of their child's location.

The person transporting the mentee must ensure that the mentee's parents have a phone number to call in case of emergency. The person transporting the mentee must also ensure that the mentee has a way to get back home.

PM Study Hall: Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to study hall. In the event that a mentee's family cannot arrange transportation for the mentee, PM staff may be asked to transport the mentee. Staff may do so at their discretion. If a mentee's parent/guardian is consistently unable to transport a mentee, the mentor and Coordinating Team will discuss the situation with the mentee's parent/guardian.

PM Monthly Events: Parents are responsible for transporting mentees to monthly events. The Coordinating Team will provide permission slips (liability waivers) to parents at least one week prior to the event, and mentees must return the slips to the Event Coordinator prior to participating in the event. PM makes every effort to require that parents/guardians provide transportation to the event. In the event that a mentee's family cannot arrange transportation for mentee, PM staff may be asked to transport the mentee. Staff may do so at their discretion. If a mentee's parent/guardian is consistently unable to transport a mentee, the mentor and Coordinating Team will discuss the situation with the mentee's parent/guardian.

Mentor-Mentee outings: These outings are not formally organized by Project MotiVATe and all transportation is the responsibility of the mentor. PM staff must obtain verbal or written permission from the parent/guardian prior to taking the mentee on any mentor-mentee outings.

Impaired Driving: No staff or Board member may transport a mentee if he/she is under the influence of any medications or substances that may impair their judgment while transporting the mentee. Under no circumstances may a PM staff or board member consume alcohol if transporting mentees.

Accidents: In the event of an automobile accident during the transporting of a mentee, the staff and/or board member must notify the mentee's family and Program Director immediately for insurance purposes.

Transporting mentees of the opposite sex: A staff member cannot transport a mentee of the opposite sex unless there is a second adult present. Exceptions to this rule may be made with approval of the Program Director.

Friends: A staff member cannot transport a friend of a mentee in any situation.

Monetary Reimbursement: For the 2017-2018 school year, all PM mentors will be provided up to \$50 reimbursement for expenses that occurred during the outings with the mentee. Mentors will be responsible for expenses that exceed \$50. In order to receive the reimbursement, the mentor must submit an expense reimbursement form with the receipt attached to the PM Coordinating team, and a contact log must be submitted for the outing. The reimbursement does not apply to PM volunteers.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of all mentors, coordinators, volunteers and members of the Board of Directors to follow these procedures and protocols to ensure the safety of the mentees and the integrity of the program. In the event that protocol is neglected by a member of the Project MotiVATe staff or Board, legal accountability will become the responsibility of the staff or board member and PM will nullify all legal liability for the staff/board member's actions.

APPENDIX A: CONTACT LOG & INCIDENT REPORT PROCEDURES

Section 1: Procedure for “Heads up!” Contact Logs:

Why does Project MotiVATe require “Heads up!” contact logs?

- to provide a history of a mentee’s involvement in the program
- to allow Coordinators to provide support to Mentors as needed
- to ensure that Mentors keep in regular contact with their mentee

Steps to Create a Contact Log

1. Go to <http://www.projectmotivate.org>
2. Scroll down to the bottom of the website and click “Log in”
3. Log into the WordPress site using:
 - a. Username: mentor
 - b. Password: mentor
4. Under the “Mentee Profiles” section (right side), click the link for the mentee that you wish to write a contact log for.
5. On top of the page, click the link, "Submit a Contact Log for _____"

****Monetary reimbursement will not be provided unless a contact log for that activity has been submitted.**

****If volunteers spend time with mentees outside of study hall, they are also required to complete a contact log.**

****When writing the contact log, please write the log from an objective standpoint and avoid including information that may lead other staff members from prejudging the mentee.**

Please document events including, but not limited to, the following:

- Mentor spends time with mentee outside of study hall
- Mentor attempts to contact mentee outside of study hall, even if mentee doesn’t respond
- Mentor phone calls and text message conversations with mentee
- Mentor interactions with parent
- Mentor is struggling to establish a healthy relationship with their mentee
- Mentee is experiencing death of a relative/friend
- Mentee solicits staff for money
- Mentee is lying to parents/staff
- Mentee is experiencing divorce/separation in family

Section 2: Procedure for Incident Reporting:

Why does Project MotiVATe require Incident Reports?

- to ensure the privacy of sensitive information pertaining to our mentees
- to allow Coordinators to prepare a plan for dealing with delicate situations

- to provide documentation in case a mentee is at risk of harm

All confidential contact logs can only be accessed by the current Coordinating staff. Mentors will not receive any notifications of such logs. If your mentee shares any of the below information, you must submit a confidential contact log and please inform the Mentor Coordinator or the Program Director immediately. Your Mentee:

- is showing signs of depression
- has thoughts or attempts of suicide
- has sexual relations with a partner over 18 if the mentee is a minor
- has fear of pregnancy
- is practicing unsafe sexual activities or risk for STDs
- is stealing
- is engaging in any illegal activity
- is attending a court hearing for violent or non-violent crime
- has thoughts or attempts to harm themselves or others
- is using of illegal drugs

**If you believe the mentee to be in a life-threatening situation, contact the police immediately.

Confidential contact logs may be submitted by one of two ways

1. Obtain a hard copy of this form at Study Hall. All confidential contact logs must be filled out and submitted immediately.
2. Online submission
 1. Go to <http://www.projectmotivate.org>
 2. Scroll down to the bottom of the website and click “Log in”
 3. Log into the WordPress site using:
 - i. Username: mentor
 - ii. Password: mentor
 4. On the right side below the “Mentee Profiles” section, click on “Submit a Confidential Log”

APPENDIX B: PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCIES

In general, when handling a crisis, you are not alone in deciding what to do: talk it over with the Program Director, the Mentor Coordinator, or the Mentee Coordinator.

Typical emergencies:

- 1) The mentee is suicidal or threat to themselves:
 - First, assess risk level (if imminent, call 911).
 - Second, find out if mentee has a plan of action.
 - Third, make a “suicide contract” with the mentee where the mentee promises to call you if contemplating harm to themselves.
 - Fourth, call the Program Director or Mentee/Mentor Coordinator to consult
 - Fifth, provide resources to the mentee and their family

- 2) The mentee is threatening harm to others:
 - First, assess level of risk/threat (if imminent, call 911)
 - Second, call the Program Director or Mentee/Mentor Coordinator to consult
 - Third, try to de-escalate the situation
 - Fourth, if unable to de-escalate, call 911 for help
 - Fifth, provide resources to the mentee and their family

- 3) Mentee is injured in a car accident or other accident during an outing:
 - First, assess level of harm. Call 911 if needed.
 - Second, call parents to notify them of the incident.
 - Third, call the Program Director to discuss next steps.

Other emergencies may include: the mentee is arrested, the mentee experiences domestic violence or sexual assault, the mentee runs away from home. In all cases, first figure out whether the mentee is in danger and if his/her parents know where he/she is. Consult with the Program Director and Mentee/Mentor Coordinator to figure out next steps.

APPENDIX C: PROCEDURES FOR MANDATED REPORTING

In the United States, mandated reporters are individuals who are obligated by law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. In general, any person who has contact with children or youth in a professional capacity is a mandated reporter. Mandated reporter laws are designed to catch abuse in its early stages, so that children do not suffer long term damage. Child abuse includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse along with neglect.

- Physical abuse is defined as a non-accidental injury. Neglect is a circumstance in which a youth is not being adequately cared for (i.e. malnutrition), posing a potential threat to his or her health and well being.
- Sexual abuse is sexual activity between children and older children or adults. Reporters should report sexual intercourse between a minor who is 14 or 15 years old and a partner 21 years or older. Consensual intercourse or touching between a 14 or 15 year old and a partner who is aged 14-21 does not need to be reported.
- Emotional abuse includes emotional maltreatment of a child. Reporters can also report emotional damage, including severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or aggressive behavior towards self or others.

All of these types of abuse are harmful physically and emotionally, especially if they take place over prolonged periods of time. Suspicious signs include bruises, lacerations, physical or emotional trauma, emotional unpredictability, and evidence of improper care. If a youth discloses an abusive situation to mandated reporters, they should report the disclosure.

Mandated reporters who suspect that any type of abuse is occurring must report it to the state. Any individual can make a report of suspected child abuse to the state, which will dispatch Child Protective Services to investigate the claim. Mandated reporters must file paperwork when reporting suspected abuse, and cannot be anonymous.

At Project MotiVATe, **ALL STAFF** act as mandated reporters and should complete the formal procedures to inform Child Protective Services of abuse or neglect. Mentors, volunteers, coordinators and Board members all have responsibility for being aware of potential abuse and informing the Program Director and Coordinating staff of any concerns.

Action Steps:

1. Document in writing everything that you have observed or heard that leads you to have "reasonable suspicion" of child abuse or neglect.
2. Inform the Program Director and Mentor/Mentee Coordinators that you will make a report.
3. Report the abuse or neglect to the Orange County Welfare Department (Child Protective Services).

Resources:

<http://ag.ca.gov/childabuse/forms.php>

<http://www.capcsac.org/laws>

APPENDIX D: PROCEDURES FOR GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

The purpose of this procedure is meant to ensure that all staff with a grievance relating to their involvement with Project MotiVATe can be provided a quick and fair resolution.

1. **Informal Discussion:** We encourage all staff and members of the Board to engage in direct communication and work through conflicts as they arise. If you are unable to resolve the issue and need support, please consult with the Program Director and/or Chair of the Board of Directors.
2. **Statement of Grievance:** If a staff member feels that a conflict cannot be resolved through informal discussions, they should consult the Program Director or Mentor Coordinator and submit their grievance in writing.
3. **Grievance Meeting:** Shortly after a written complaint has been submitted, an invitation will be extended so that the alleged grievance can be discussed. *Corrective Action* can be issued in writing at the discretion of the Program Director or Mentor Coordinator based on severity of the grievance and/or repeated grievances. This may include exit or dismissal from the program and will include details on how to appeal.
4. **Appeal:** If the matter is not resolved to a staff member's satisfaction, a request for an appeal may be made where the staff member will be invited to a meeting to discuss the grievance with two or more Board Members who were not involved in the first meeting. The Board Member hearing the appeal will promptly issue a *final decision*.