How to become a certified volunteer ambassador for Bunny Besties!

**PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT:** This document’s purpose is to help the new volunteer to understand the process to become Bunny Besties Certified.

**BECOME A BUNNY BESTIE!**

Bunny Besties is an all volunteer organization and we are always looking for great people to share their time helping us to serve our mission in our community! **​**  
Bunny Besties offers a creative way to volunteer in the Twin Cities community.  Join our Bunny Bestie Brigade to volunteer with us at the UMN or in the greater community.  Our mission is to work to improve mental health by incorporating AAI (Animal Assisted Interactions) into programs that provide support to those in need.  With our supportive team we will help our volunteers to succeed in helping the cutest little nonprofit in town!  
  
We love having as many rabbits in our organization as possible but we also really want people who just support us and want to lend a helping hand at our many events.  Volunteers who do not have rabbits are greatly appreciated!!!  It takes a dedicated team to deliver the greatest Bunny Bestie experience across the Twin Cities.  We need lots of volunteers to help with the therapy rabbits of Bunny Besties.  Your support is critical in so many ways!  
  
Bunny Besties registers and certifies its own team members.  Meaning we extensively train and mentor our team in our registration process.  When volunteering as a Bunny Bestie you are insured with up to $2 million of liability insurance.  We provide local support for your needs and are proud to say our rabbit therapy specific training is a unique and comprehensive.

We work to provide comfort and support and strive to help those who are in stressful situations.  We work in hospice, homelessness, nursing facilities, hospitals, therapy support group settings, and at the University of Minnesota PAWS program (Pet Away Worry and Stress).  We also offer the programs of Bunny Story Time and Reading to the Rabbits in schools and libraries.  We work hard to give those in need of stress relief a bunny break in their day.  We work in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, USA.

To become a Bunny Besties Certified Ambassador**,** volunteers have done the following:

1. Completed a background check.
2. Completed a Volunteer Application form.
3. Have taken our Orientation Training class.
4. Have completed six hours of mentoring with a Bunny Bestie Senior Member.
5. Have been tested for skill level when mentoring is completed.
6. Have turned in all applicable volunteer paperwork and fees for registration.

Bunny Besties is proud of our efforts within our community.  We received the Presidential Volunteer Service Award – Gold Level – in 2017 and 2018.  We also encourage all volunteers to work towards a PVSA within our organization. We are a registered PVSA certifying organization.

When you are volunteering with Bunny Besties and have completed the certification process you will be considered a Bunny Besties Certified Ambassador. This certification means that you have trained extensively to do work within our community. If you have any questions throughout your journey please email Jennifer Smith at [jsmith@bunnybesties.org](mailto:jsmith@bunnybesties.org).

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**Rights as a Volunteer with Bunny Besties:**

1.    To be treated as a co-worker, who is an integral member of our team.  Not just free help.

2.    To know as much about the organization of Bunny Besties and all of the policies, procedures and people involved.

3.    To a volunteer position description when requested.

4.    To be trained in your volunteer role and receive continuing education that includes training to gain additional responsibilities if desired.

5.    To new opportunities and new experiences in regard to therapy animals and animal assisted interactions.

6.    To sound guidance and direction from supervisor.

7.    To be heard.  Feel free to make suggestions and have a part in planning events.

8.    To be recognized for great efforts!  To look for communication from the supervisor on progress through day to day expressions of appreciation and by being treated as a bona fide co-worker.

9.    To treat your position as a volunteer job and see the members of the team as your co-workers.

**Your** **Responsibility as a Volunteer**:

There are responsibilities that accompany your rights as a volunteer.  All those involved in the working relationship must have a respect for one another and for the mission we have on campus.  As a volunteer your responsibilities are:

1.    Be prompt and reliable in reporting for scheduled work.  Keep accurate record of your hours by signing in and signing out through our flipcause app at events.

2.    Be prompt in signing up for events and if you can’t attend please let us know at least 24 hours ahead of time.  Please see this as good communication.  Know this is the first step in volunteering with us.

3.    Come appropriately dressed with a Bunny Besties Shirt, pants and closed toe shoes.  During summer you can wear shorts but they must be an appropriate length.  No ripped clothing.

4.    Be considerate and respectful of other team members, respect the abilities and gifts that our diverse team brings, and work as a member of the team.

5.    If you have feedback about another person, please convey it to the supervisor and keep business on the up and up.

6.    Always bring a good attitude.

7.    Carry out assignments in good spirit and seek the assistance of senior team members that require special guidance.

8.    Decline work that is not acceptable to you or to our Best Practices.  Do not skimp on our best practices as our professionalism is of utmost importance.

9.    Maintain an open mind in regard to other people’s standards and values.  We have a wonderfully diverse team and our mission is to embrace each other with love and acceptance.

10.    We are always looking to improve our offering.  Please feel valued to share your feedback, suggestions, and recommendations to your supervisor.  They will be welcomed!

11.    Communicate personal limitations to supervisor and team members.

12.    Accept the right of Bunny Besties to dismiss any volunteer for poor performance, poor attitude and poor attendance or lack of communication.

13.    Give notice to Jennifer Smith with Bunny Besties if you cannot continue in your volunteer position.

14.  Most importantly to be an Ambassador for the Bunny Besties organization.

**Waiver:** As a volunteer and ambassador of Bunny Besties I realize our organization does not provide mental health therapeutic services to volunteers or clients. We are trained to get help for someone who is in crisis but will not offer psychological or psychiatric services. Those types of services require a high level of expertise. If a volunteer is in need of mental health services they are asked to seek the help of a psychologist, psychiatrist or licensed social worker.

By signing here, I affirm that I have read through my roles as a volunteer and accept them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PRINT NAME:** | **DATE:** |
|  |  |
| **SIGNATURE:** |  |
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CHECKLIST FOR CERTIFICATION:

Purpose: This checklist is to help guide the new volunteer through the process to become a Bunny Besties Certified Ambassador. We require all volunteers to wear a Bunny Besties t-shirt at all events. It can be purchased on our web site under Volunteer > Bunny Bestie Boutique. We also require all volunteers 18 and older to go through an annual background check. We ask for a donation of $25 to complete this check.

An important part of the Bunny Besties Certification process is to work with a mentor in our organization at three events. Please work with the Executive Director to sign up for those events and put the names of those places in the checklist. This mentoring starts at the home base location and continues all the way through bringing supplies back and storing them with the rabbits at their home base location.

Fees to be registered and certified with Bunny Besties are $120 annually or a recurring payment of $10 a month. These should be completed on the website. This includes our training, administrative costs, booking of events as well as $2 million in liability insurance.

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| DONE | TASK TO COMPLETE: | DATE: | APPROVED BY: |
|  | Purchase a BB t-shirt for events. |  |  |
|  | Complete web volunteer application. |  |  |
|  | Sign Agreement and Waiver. |  |  |
|  | Background Check if 18 or older. |  |  |
|  | Introductory Meeting with Executive Dir. |  |  |
|  | Sign up for 3 events to be mentored. |  |  |
|  | Event 1: |  |  |
|  | Event 2: |  |  |
|  | Event 3: |  |  |
|  | Completed Orientation Training. |  |  |
|  | Online training completed. |  |  |
|  | Completed Testing Requirements. |  |  |
|  | Turned in all appropriate documents by scanning and emailing them. |  |  |
|  | Paid registration fees. |  |  |
|  | Meet with leadership to get Certification Document for Ambassadorship. |  |  |

Notes and Questions here: