

Guidelines for Volunteer Activities

Students who wish to organize or engage in in-person volunteer activities should read the following guidelines.

1. Location and Facilities

- Outdoor activities

Volunteer activities that take place outdoors are encouraged as they present a lower risk of infection, especially if all preventive measures are taken and the location is carefully selected.

- Indoor activities

The risks of infection are higher indoors than outdoors so student-volunteers must be mindful of the vulnerability of the participants involved. In addition to following basic preventive measures, organisers should make sure that the activity and participants conform to local safety guidelines and that the facility is clean and well-ventilated.

2. Guidelines Common to Indoor and Outdoor Activities

- Activity areas

Before committing to an in-person activity, students should carefully check the infection rate in the area where the activity is being held, as well as local guidelines regarding the use of public facilities.

- Overnight activities with accommodation

Students are discouraged from participating in activities that involve overnight stay, unless they are confident that the accommodations are safe. If staying overnight is unavoidable, each student must have a separate room that is thoroughly cleaned and ventilated.

There have been many clusters of infection in Sendai and around the country due to training camps and dinner/drinking parties organized by student clubs. For safety reasons, the university prohibits such camps.

- Eating and drinking

Volunteer activities should not involve eating and drinking in groups. If meals are necessary, students must keep sufficient physical distance from each other, refrain from conversations while eating, and ensure that the food is cooked and served safely. Students shall make smaller groups to eat to reduce the risk.

- Transportation

If the activity requires group travel, the university recommends using chartered buses with a reduced number of passengers in each bus. Seats in-between passengers should be kept empty, and ideally, each row should only have one passenger. Everyone must wear a mask, and the buses should have good ventilation.

If students travel by car, please ensure that everyone wears a mask and conversation is kept to a minimum due to the small, enclosed space.

3. Extra Guidelines for Indoor Activities

- Check the health status of everyone involved, including the host organization and the beneficiaries of the activity. If anyone is unwell or at risk, the activity should be put on hold until it can be held safely.
- Because some people - such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions - are at high risk of contracting COVID-19, activities should not involve contact with outside groups, such as other organizations or other universities.
- When planning an activity, organisers must first check the local guidelines of public facilities, meeting places, etc. to ensure that the activities conform appropriately and safely to the rules.
- High risk activities such as large social gatherings, eating and drinking parties, karaoke, close range conversations, are still prohibited.
- Some activities have guidelines that have been published. Participants should be familiar with:
 - Measures to reduce the participation of people who are unwell (temperature checks etc.)
 - Measures to be taken if a person is suspected of being infected (create a contact list for tracing)
 - Measures to handle crowds (restrict the number of people in the room, keep them distanced from each other etc)
 - Measures for closed rooms (open windows, check for ventilation, etc.)
 - Countermeasures against contact infection (wash hands thoroughly, use alcohol disinfectant etc)
- Communicate effectively with everyone involved so that the purpose of conducting the in-person volunteer activity - and the safety measures - are clearly understood.
- Activities organised by Tohoku University groups should only proceed once all safety measures have been taken and all participants (including the beneficiaries of the activity) understand and agree to the guidelines.

If organisers need help, or if student-volunteers have questions or concerns, they can contact the Center for Service Learning and Extracurricular Activities (CSLEA).

4. Consider Online Activities

- There are many different types of volunteer activities that students can get involved in, including work that is done online. Student-volunteers are encouraged to consider taking part in activities online where they can also make a difference, without the risks of in-person contact.

A final note –

While the university strongly supports all students in their desire to help the community through appropriate volunteer work, careless or reckless behavior that puts any person in danger, will not be tolerated. Please be responsible.

Contact

Tohoku University

Center for Service Learning and Extracurricular Activities (CSLEA)

Email: volu-s@grp.tohoku.ac.jp