

## **ADOPTTEEN LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

No one really knows a “best way” or “fast track” or “hidden code”. Not when it comes to how you got to where you are now. You didn’t find a cheat sheet or some secret universal remote. The only 100% sure thing you can say about how you got here is that your journey was yours and yours alone. No manual. No lighted pathways. And for all you know, you’re still lost.

Remember this when you’re a leader. Don’t forget it. Did you write it down? Did you frame it? You should probably frame it.

Being an Adopteen Leader does not mean you have finally finished this long, tireless journey. You aren’t here to look down at the people still climbing and tell them what they’re doing right and wrong. Don’t be that guy.

If we can take a moment to brag a little bit... What sets Adopteen apart from any other organization is the simple belief that we are all in this together. Adopteen exists to celebrate each other as individuals and as a community, inspire fellow adoptees and friends in the larger community around us, and take pride in where we have been, where we are right now, and where we’re going. It’s not an opinion, it’s a conviction. We’re not here to be experts; we’re here to be honest, invested friends. That’s it. And that makes you the most important part of this whole thing.

As leaders, we are here to make sure that all three of our goals are achieved to their fullest potential. We’re all going to work our butts off to make sure that everyone is having the best possible experience at Adopteen because it is what we are passionate about and what we want them to be passionate about. Easier said than done, but you are here because you believe you can help make that a reality.

Now for the cheesy but genuine part. You are our inspiration and real life superheroes. Have fun, be confident, never get too high, never get too low, always keep moving, and always look for ways to help your team members. You’re here. You’re amazing. You’re changing lives.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Amy Zhong & Art Zhong  
Co-Founders of Adopteen

## **A. GENERAL:**

The Adopteen Leadership Team is the driving force behind everything we do. Adopteen is run by teen and young adult adoptees, for teen and young adult adoptees. The main responsibility of our Adopteen Leaders is to serve as Camp Counselors during our Adopteen events throughout the year, but also to organize and plan each event.

This is an opportunity to play an even bigger role in the Adopteen community! We aren't here just for laughs. We want to build strong, positive leaders and show the world what incredible things we are capable of.

The Leadership Team primarily helps develop, organize, and lead the Adopteen Camp-Conference and Midpoint Retreat. However, the Leadership team also provides promotional and organizational help with the Adoptees Giving Back Orphanage Service Trips, Adoptween, and other programs we put on throughout the year. It's a busy job and a year-round commitment.

As an Adopteen Leader, you will be expected to:

- Participate in promotional efforts throughout the year
- Be responsible for a group of 8-10 campers through a Midpoint and/or Camp-Conference event
- Maintain consistent and positive communication with the Adopteen community
- Maintain consistent and constructive communication with the entire Adopteen Leadership Team
- Organize and plan workshops and overall event schedules
- Set up and take down events
- Maintain exemplary conduct as representatives of Adopteen outside of and during Adopteen events

Adopteen management will regularly review your input into each of our events – if it is determined that you aren't contributing during any phase, you may be subject to dismissal.

## **B. REMUNERATION**

In exchange for your time as a Leader with Adopteen, the registration fee for any Camp-Conference or Midpoint that you attend as a leader throughout your year of service is waived. All Leadership members also receive a 20% discount on all Adopteen Shop merchandise throughout your year of service.

**C. MIDPOINT/CAMP-CONFERENCE WORKING HOURS:**

All Leaders are expected to attend all pre- and post- event planning and debrief meetings. Meetings are held one week after Leadership selection and as needed a month after that. Attendance at all meetings is **compulsory** – they will be scheduled around given availability, and any leaders missing more than one meeting may be dismissed. Leaders are expected to arrive one day prior to any Midpoint that they intend on volunteering for and three days prior to any Camp-Conference that they intend on volunteering for. Leaders are also expected to arrange travel plans to leave camp no earlier than 5PM the last day of the event that they are working. Accommodations will not be provided for leaders that wish to stay on campus with Adopteen staff after the Adopteen event has officially ended.

All Leaders are expected to work and be available to their campers from the start of each day's schedule to the end of each day's schedule, in addition to debriefs and additional meetings. As a general rule, Adopteen coordinators and leaders work until the job is done. If available, please review the planned itinerary for the specific Midpoint/Camp-Conference event that you intend on volunteering for to ensure your ability to meet these requirements.

**D. BACKGROUND CHECKS:**

Leader agreements for leaders ages 18+ are subject to successful pass of background checks by the CBI and FBI. Leaders ages 18+ should provide a reliable mailing address to Adopteen, which will be used to supply you with fingerprinting cards and a background check form, which you will then take to your local sheriff's office to be fingerprinted. Background checks are good for three years with Adopteen.

Background check forms and fingerprinting cards must be returned to Adopteen Headquarters in Colorado 30 days before the event that you are signed up to volunteer with. Any expenses incurred by volunteers for fingerprinting fees are reimbursable. Failure to provide these forms in time could result in a dismissal from the Leadership team.

**E. NONDISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT:**

To the extent required by federal, state and local laws, Adopteen does not discriminate against volunteers with respect to any terms and conditions of engagement including but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, and training.

**F. CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES AND ALCOHOL ABUSE:**

Adopteen establishes and maintains a zero tolerance Controlled Substance and Alcohol Policy for the health and welfare of its employees, volunteers, and the public. Adopteen strictly prohibits: (a) the possession of controlled substances (including tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, or any other scheduled substance) at or during an Adopteen Event;

(b) reporting for or being at the Adopteen Event, on Adopteen time, on Adopteen premises, in Adopteen vehicles, or representing Adopteen at any time while under influence of controlled substances or alcohol.

1. A volunteer will be assumed to be “under the influence” and in violation of this policy whenever the presence of a controlled substance or alcohol in any amount whatsoever is determined to be on or in an employee’s body. A positive determination may lead to disciplinary action including immediate dismissal.
2. Volunteers who use a medically prescribed drug which is known or advertised as having symptoms or side effects such that they do or would affect behavior must notify their supervisor prior to starting work.
3. Failure to comply with any provision of this policy may lead to immediate dismissal from the Adopteen Leadership Team.

**G. EXPENSES:**

Any expenses incurred as a representative of Adopteen (i.e. workshop materials, fingerprinting fees, parking fees, etc.) are reimbursable. Any volunteers that believe they have incurred expenses related to their duties as an Adopteen volunteer should fill out a reimbursement form within one week of the expense and return to the Program Manager with a reliable mailing address. Volunteers can expect to receive reimbursements within two weeks from submission.

**H. HARRASSMENT:**

The law prohibits harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or veteran or marital status. In compliance with applicable law, Adopteen prohibits any employee from making, as a condition of any person’s employment, unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature; using a person’s submission to or rejection of such conduct as the basis for or as a factor in any employment decision; or otherwise creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment by such conduct. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the telling of “dirty” jokes in the workplace or during working hours, reference to coworkers by derogatory sexual terms, or other conduct which reasonably could be construed by other employees as creating or contributing to the degrading, threatening, or otherwise offensive or hostile work environment. Sexual remarks, graffiti, jokes, posters, writing, gestures, actions, or other communications are strictly prohibited, as are racial, ethnic or religious jokes or slurs, or any other communications or conduct disparaging or downgrading any racial, minority, ethnic or religious group.

Harassment is extremely serious misconduct, as is filing a false statement that harassment has occurred, and may result in discipline, up to and including termination. Harassment may also subject the harasser to personal legal and financial liability.

If you believe that you have been harassed or observe harassment of another employee, report the incident to your supervisor or the Director of Adopteen, or if the Director is your supervisor, then to the Executive Director of the Agency. You should not attempt to resolve incidents you observe or hear about from others, but are expected first to report the matter promptly.

To the extent possible, any investigation will be handled in confidence. However, Adopteen cannot promise anonymity to persons who report harassment. Adopteen will not tolerate retaliation against any individual who brings a harassment complaint in good faith.

If you have any questions concerning this guideline, you are responsible for contacting your supervisor or the Program Manager for clarification.

## **I. CONDUCT:**

All Adopteen Leadership Team members are expected to be in the presence and involved with Adopteen Camp-Conference and other event campers. While you are around campers, you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that represents Adopteen and our values – act sensibly and appropriately.

*Please keep the following in mind:*

As a camp leader, you are a role model for young and impressionable camp members. It is very easy, since we do not focus on age at Adopteen, to forget how young some of our campers are. Please be aware that the stories you share and the things you say should all be toned down to a PG-13 audience. Stories of drug or alcohol use, sexual conduct, or similar content with campers is absolutely prohibited.

All leaders must be familiar with the schedule of the event they are responsible for, and keep any changes made in the moment ascribed to memory or written down. If a camper asks you what we are doing next, you should always be able to answer.

No matter what we are doing at the time, when you are around campers, it is exciting, amazing, and fun! Leaders must be actively engaged with and enthusiastic about the material.

Stay awake! Stay excited! We know that Adopteen days can be very long, and very tiring. Keep your body and your mind in check and realize that time unnecessarily spent up all night before campers even arrive will be felt the third or fourth night of camp. If you feel yourself fading, it is absolutely okay to let your teammates know and step away for a half hour to take a quick power nap so that you can come back ready to take on the rest of the day's activities. We rely on you, and we want you to always be at your best.

Keep cell phones and social media in check. Always check with both campers and other leaders and acquire consent before you take a picture of them or post anything on social media. If in doubt, do not post.

*Inappropriate Conduct:*

Fraternization with campers, regardless of age, is strictly prohibited. As a leader, you take on a position of responsibility and trust within Adopteen. Any intimate relationships with campers are an abuse of that responsibility.

Respect everyone's privacy and refrain from excessive physical contact. Use common sense in any situation and make sure that you always have consent for any physical contact.

Sexual jokes, banter, or profanity of any kind is not allowed. No discussions or pictures of any sexual nature with campers or other leaders will be tolerated. **Violation of this policy is grounds for immediate dismissal, and may lead to further legal and financial action taken against you.**

Further, if you are found to engage in tobacco, drug, or alcohol use, or sexual conduct of any kind **you will be dismissed immediately and it may be grounds for further legal and financial action taken against you.**

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, received a copy of the Adopteen Leadership Guidelines and acknowledge that I have read and understood completely all items addressed. The signature below confirms my promise to comply with all detailed guidelines stated above as an Adopteen Leader.

Signature:

Date: