



Frequently Asked Questions

A DECADE OF DEDICATION: A FUTURE FULL OF BLESSINGS 2018 NATIONAL VOLUNTEER CONFERENCE

June 24–26, Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza River North, Chicago, Ill.

Who will be in attendance at the conference?

Hosted by the Blessings in a Backpack National Office, the conference is open to all program coordinators and volunteer team members across the country.

Why should I attend the conference?

Our inaugural volunteer conference brings dedicated and passionate volunteers together with peers for two days of interactive workshops, best practices, skill building, and resources and connections needed to sustain and/or expand your local program.

When and where is the conference taking place?

The conference will be held June 24–26, 2018, at the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza River North, 350 West Mart Center Drive in downtown Chicago.

What is the theme of the conference?

The theme for the 2018 conference is "A Decade of Dedication: A Future Full of Blessings."

How do I register for the conference?

To register for the conference, click [here](#) to register for the conference.

What is the cost of registration?

There is no cost to register for the conference. However, volunteers are responsible for all related expenses such as air travel, ground transportation, lodging, and entertainment.

What is included in the registration?

Your conference registration includes full and open access to all workshop sessions and networking events. Meals include breakfast, lunch, dinner, evening reception, and snacks.

What is the registration deadline?

Please Note: Early Bird Registration ends March 24.

Volunteers must register for the conference by June 17. Hotel reservations must be booked by May 22 to receive discounted room prices.

Are there incentives for early registration?

The first 50 volunteers who register for the conference AND book their hotel rooms will a swag bag and be entered in to a drawing to win a junior suite upgrade at the Holiday Inn.

How can I obtain a receipt for registration?

Upon registering for the conference, volunteers receive an immediate response that their registration has been received.

Conference Registration Cancellation Procedure

Please contact your program manager or [Anita Knazze](#) to cancel your conference registration. Room reservation cancellation policy is 24 hours prior to reservation arrival date to avoid a 1-night room and tax penalty. Failing to call to cancel or no show the first night of a reservation will result in cancellation of the remainder of the reservation. Please contact the hotel directly to cancel your room reservation.

Will I receive an attendee information package before the conference?

Volunteers will receive a conference packet upon registration check-in.

What topics will be covered during the conference?

Workshop topics include a variety skill building and best practices subject areas including, fundraising, grant writing, volunteer recruitment and retention, succession planning, social media and marketing, community engagement and much more! The workshop topics and schedule will be posted to the conference website once finalized.

Do I have to pre-register for the sessions I want to attend?

Once the workshop schedule is finalized, volunteers will receive a link to select the workshops they would like to attend.

Where will meeting sessions be held? How long are the sessions? Who will lead the sessions?

All workshop sessions will be held at the Holiday Inn and will last approximately 75 minutes, including Q & A. Workshops will be facilitated by professional leaders in the field and internal staff.

Will there be presentation handouts provided onsite?

Workshop presentations and materials will be posted to the PC Toolkit after the conference.

Is Wi-Fi Provided?

Complimentary Wi-Fi is available in guest rooms and the main meeting areas.

What is the attire?

The dress code for the conference is business casual. Meeting room temperatures will vary, so bring a lightweight jacket to ensure your personal comfort. We also recommend comfortable shoes.

What should I bring with me to the conference?

The following items may be helpful to bring to the conference:

- BIB Business Cards - template found on PC Toolkit
<https://www.blessingsinabackpack.org/get-involved/pc-toolkit/pc-toolkit-marketing-tools/>
- Notebook & Pen
- Portable charger for electronics
- Lightweight jacket

Volunteers are strongly encouraged to check weather prior to travel as Chicago weather varies.

Is there an attendee list?

An attendee list will be provided in your registration packet upon check-in.

I have special needs (dietary, mobility, etc.). How can I inform you of them?

Please note all special needs on the registration form. We will make every effort to meet your specific accommodation needs.

How do I make my hotel reservations? Are there special rates for volunteers?

Hotel reservations can be made when registering for the conference. Please click [here](#) for information and details on discounted room rates.

Can I share a room with another volunteer to save money? How do I find one?

Discounted King (1 bed) and double (2 beds) have been blocked for the conference. Blessings in a Backpack will not be matching volunteer roommates, however, you're more than welcome to post your roommate needs on the PC Facebook page.

What is the closest airport? How do I get to hotel from airport? What is the cost?

Click [here](#) for travel information including transportation to and from O'Hare and Midway airports.

What is there to do while in Chicago?

There are a lot of fun and exciting things to experience during your stay in the Windy City. Click on the links below when planning your trip.

<http://www.choosechicago.com/>

<http://www.choosechicago.com/articles/view/get-official-guides/160/?fmid=451>

Am I allowed to fundraise to help pay for travel expenses for the conference?

To defray the cost of travel and accommodation expenses associated with attending the National Volunteer Conference, volunteers may fundraise to cover those expenses.

[Click here](#) to download the fundraising materials, including guidelines and letter templates, to assist you in securing donations. These tools can also be found in the **PC Toolkit**.

Additional questions not covered in this FAQ? Contact [Anita Knazze](#) or call 312-366-2751

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!