

TDCJ Volunteer Application Submittal and Training Process

Before you can become an approved prison volunteer, you must submit a **Volunteer Application**, receive approval from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), and attend the **TDCJ Volunteer Orientation Training Class**.

To start this process:

1. Download the TDCJ application from the TDCJ website at:

<http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/pgm&svcs/pgms&svcs-vlntrcoorcom.htm>. ON this page, scroll down to the link that says "Volunteer Application (PDF)". This will allow you to print the application form.

OR

Open the **TDCJ Volunteer Application** that is on our Michael Unit website at http://www.michaelunit.org/TDCJ_Volunteer_Application.pdf. This will allow you to print the application form.

2. Fill out both pages of the application, then sign and date it. Mail both pages to TDCJ **Chaplaincy Department** at the address shown at the top of the form. **MAIL IT** back to Huntsville. They won't accept a fax copy...**they want an original signature in their file**.
3. Once your application is reviewed and approved, **TDCJ** will send you a letter. You may have to wait **up to a month to get it**. The letter is your "**ticket**" for attending the **Volunteer Orientation Program**. The orientation location and times will be listed on the letter. Plan on 3-4 hours for training.

Important:

- Be sure to check the "**Chaplaincy**" box on the application, and write "**Kairos**". Otherwise, it will be assumed by **TDCJ** that your work will be "**secular**" in nature, and the unit may not be permitted to use your services as a religious volunteer. (When you attend the orientation, be sure to check "**Chaplaincy**" boxes on the forms there also).
- **If you don't get a timely reply letter from TDCJ**, the chaplain at the unit where you plan to volunteer can check on your status, or you can contact the **TDCJ Religious Volunteer coordinator** at **(936) 437-7180**.
- Once you get your letter, contact the place you plan to attend training to get directions to the unit, dress code, what you can bring into the unit (the less the better, no purses for the ladies if possible, absolutely no cell phones or beepers).

Nothing happens quickly in prison ministry! But patience and perseverance pays off.