



## AARTI FOR GIRLS: VOLUNTEER GUIDE

Since inception, Aarti For Girls has been blessed with volunteers. Volunteers bring invaluable skills and resources for our programs, as well as an international awareness for our young residents and students. They help our organization by teaching classes in Aarti School, spearheading skill-building and creative projects, running extracurricular activities for children at Aarti Home, and providing us administrative help and expertise. In addition, our volunteers are proactive in fund-raising efforts and in spreading awareness of the issues of female abandonment and infanticide around the globe.

As you can see, tasks accomplished by our volunteers vary based on individual interests and talents, as well as organizational need. In the past, volunteers have:

- Designed English curriculum for Aarti School and Preschool.
- Offered Aarti School teachers training on a wide array of topics including interactive learning, growth mindset, and computer literacy.
- Conducted leadership workshops.
- Facilitated classes such as physical education and drawing.
- Planned field trips for the children at Aarti Home.
- Beautified the school and home with murals and other paintings.
- Aided the organization's outreach and advocacy programs by helping to draft and edit proposals and reports.
- Updated the foundation website.
- Implemented Khan Academy for Aarti School mathematics classes.

All who come to Aarti leave knowing that they will always have a second home. When asked if she would recommend Aarti to others, Elle S., who came in 2011 and 2015, responded, "EVERYONE should come to Aarti- I would recommend it to any and everyone." When Aana K., who stayed for 7 months in 2015, was asked the same question, she replied, "What kind of a question is this? Are there any volunteers who wouldn't go back? For me, Aarti is not just an orphanage; it's a place where love and kindness come together and heals everything. It's a home for everyone, who needs it and hope for everyone."

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What helpful talents and/or skills should volunteers possess?**

We are looking for passionate, kind, and energetic people who care about the cause and are comfortable working with children! Volunteers must be proficient in English and strong communicators. It is also important that they are culturally competent and understand what it means to live and work in a foreign country. Volunteers who are self-starters and can work independently are greatly desired.

### **What would a typical day be like?**

Volunteers usually eat breakfast around 8:30 A.M. before beginning their workday. Between the hours of 9:30 A.M. and 4 P.M., volunteers will be working on their specific projects detailed above, either at Aarti Village or Aarti School. As school ends at 4 P.M., children usually return to Aarti Village around 4:30 P.M. It is at this time that volunteers can hold small groups with the children and create fun activities. Children then have prayer at 6:00 P.M. and study hour from 6:30-8:00 P.M. Dinner is served at 8:30 P.M. The work week in India is Monday-Saturday, with Sundays off. Past volunteers have nicknamed this as “Sunday Funday” and have utilized most Sundays to take the children to the park, play games, or create fun activities for the children to enjoy.

### **What is appropriate attire within your region?**

Volunteers are expected to dress modestly, as is the culture in Kadapa. Females should not wear skirts or dresses above their knees nor should tank tops be worn. Male volunteers should wear long shorts or pants. It is very hot in the summer, so light cotton is key! Sandals and flip flops are recommended since shoes are taken off before entering most buildings.

### **Do you regularly have volunteers working with you?**

We do indeed! Volunteers at Aarti come from all over the world, including the US, UK, Estonia, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, and more.

### **If there is a mandatory language requirement, what language and how fluent must the fellow be?**

Volunteers must be proficient in English.

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**Contact Person:**

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**Location of Organization:**

Vijay Foundation Trust (Assn)  
D.No. 20/539-B,  
Opp. Municipal Stadium, Kadapa – 516 001.  
Y.S.R. DISTRICT,  
Andhra Pradesh (State), India

**What is the nearest airport (with airport code)?**

Chennai International Airport (MAA)

**What are housing options and costs?**

Housing will be provided for volunteers either in the intern apartment or guesthouse. There will be no cost for housing or food. Volunteers should bring money for any activities or shopping they would like to do.

**Please provide an estimate of other costs/week that the volunteers will need to pay for themselves (i.e. food, lodging, local transportation, etc):**

Food: All meals will be provided. If volunteers choose to eat out one day, they should bring money for these expenses.

Lodging: Housing will be of no cost.

Transportation (to and from airport, during the day): A car from the airport to Aarti is approximately \$70 or 5,200 rupees. Autos from Aarti Village into town cost about 30 rupees or \$2.

Other: Many of our volunteers buy products from the tailors at Aarti Home and enjoy some shopping at the markets in Kadapa. On average, volunteers may spend as little as \$50-\$100 in a month's time or as much as a couple hundred depending on their outside expenses.

**What are some possible weekend excursions/activities for young people?**

- Aarti Village is at the base of the foothills with a nice hike up to a temple. Volunteers often hike on the weekends here.
- There are several temples close by that volunteers have been known to travel to.
- There are overnight busses and trains to both Hyderabad and Bangalore cities (however, it should be noted that volunteers should never travel alone).

**Can you provide a list with suggestions on what volunteers should pack?**

- Modest attire. For ladies, bring long skirts or loose pants, avoid anything sleeveless or above the knees. For the summer, cool light-weight attire is recommended.
- Toilet paper (it can be purchased at local stores, but an 'extra' roll was recommended from previous volunteers).
- Toiletries: soap, shampoo (past volunteers have recommended bringing lice shampoo, just in case!), comb, razor, contact solution, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.
- Glasses, extra contacts, extra pair of glasses (and prescription)
- Antibacterial Wet Wipes/ hand sanitizer
- Lightweight, quick-drying towels

- Nalgene bottles/other water bottles (filtered water will always be available, as the girls also drink it).
  - Power bars, granola bars, snacks, trail mix, peanut butter, favourite candy (for snacking on in between meals or while travelling).
  - Rehydrating/electrolyte packets, power drink mixes (recommended for if you get sick).
  - Basic first aid kit.
  - Insect repellent (bring more than you anticipate needing) and anti-itch cream (highly recommended! You will most likely have many mosquito bites).
  - Sunscreen, lip balm, sunglasses, cap/hat
  - Small backpack/pouch for day use
  - General medication (for pain, cold, upset stomach, allergies etc./other personal medication (what you use at home)
  - Photocopies of important documents (passport, driver license, etc.)
  - Journal and pens
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