



WTTW VOLUNTEER FAQs

How do I sign up?

All volunteer opportunities are posted on this page and emailed to all volunteers in our database as soon as dates and times are finalized. Just select as many as three dates in order of preference and send us an [e-mail](#) at to reserve your spot(s)! All shifts are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

What exactly does a pledge volunteer do?

The majority of a pledge volunteer's time is spent answering telephone calls from viewers and prospective donors. While taking these calls, volunteers enter callers' information (name, address, phone number, thank-you gift items, method of payment, etc.) via laptop computer. *Basic typing skills and a comfort and familiarity with computers are required of all volunteers.* Thorough training is provided so all volunteers are comfortable and confident using our software, laptops, phones, and headsets.

What can we expect during a pledge shift?

Each shift begins at our front reception desk where you're greeted by a volunteer assistant and asked to sign in. Next comes a meal graciously donated by a local restaurant or caterer. We typically allot 30 minutes to eat. After mealtime, our pledge supervisor escorts volunteers to the studio to begin training. This training session typically lasts 45-60 minutes -- plenty of time to learn how to take pledges properly and comfortably. Our pledge supervisor and assistant(s) are available throughout the shift to answer any questions that may arise. We are also often able to offer snacks and dessert for all volunteers.

When does WTTW conduct their pledge drives?

WTTW hosts its quarterly pledge drives in March, June, August and December. Live pledge shifts are offered weeknights, as well during weekend afternoons and evenings.

When is the volunteer schedule updated?

Our pledge schedule is updated with specific dates approximately six weeks prior to each drive.

After selecting shifts, when do I receive a confirmation?

WTTW receives many requests to volunteer from individuals and groups alike. We schedule on a first-come, first-served basis, depending on group size and production needs. We make every effort to update our posted schedule and assign shifts that are most appropriate for each request. Confirmations and follow-up emails are typically sent between three and four weeks in advance of each drive. **We will also send out an email to confirm your attendance on the day before or the day of the drive, so please look out for that email, and respond.** We have had people who have had to drop out last minute, and this helps us plan accordingly if that happens.

Do we need to arrive early for training?

There is no need to arrive any earlier than your assigned arrival time, as indicated in your confirmation email. Your scheduled shift includes time to eat and be trained.

Where are the WTTW Studios?

5400 N. St. Louis Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625
(773) 583-5000

Is there parking?

Free parking is available in the WTTW parking lot.

What is the minimum age for volunteering?

All participants must be at least 16 years of age. Organizations that have youth members must supply one chaperone for every ten teenagers. Young individuals may volunteer, but should be accompanied by a parent or guardian, especially for evening shifts, per local curfew laws.

If my organization is volunteering, how many people can we bring and will we be recognized?

WTTW's Pledge Studio holds a maximum of 35 volunteers. Groups can be as small as 5 and as large as 35. We ask group coordinators to guarantee a minimum of ten people per group, as groups of ten or more receive our on-air thanks during each pledge program! Your group name will be read verbally on the air, and your group name/logo will appear on screen. Your group can also wear matching shirts with a logo or text, but no white apparel is allowed. Unfortunately, volunteers cannot wear caps or variations of hats, and we cannot display company or group banners on the set.

Can high school groups volunteer?

High school group participation is welcomed! All students must be 16 years of age or older, and school groups must supply at least one chaperone for every ten students. Recent groups have included National Honor Societies, cultural clubs, and broadcasting, journalism, and history classes. We are also happy to sign off on service learning hours for students who volunteer with us.

Is there a dress code?

Business casual dress is preferred, though jeans are permitted. Volunteers dressed too casually or sloppily will be asked to change, so please err on the side of caution and dress professionally, as you will be the face of WTTW when you volunteer here! Shirts and tops with company or group logos are acceptable in all colors except white. Please avoid wearing anything bearing endorsement for a controversial issue or political candidate.

Can we tour the studios?

WTTW will make every effort to offer studio tours during pledge shifts. Tours may be offered between live pledge breaks, but if a pledge shift is extremely busy, tours may not be possible.

What does "non-live" or "not-live" or "(NL)" mean?

When you see "Non-Live" or "Not-Live" on the volunteer schedule, this indicates that we are in need of volunteers to answer calls, but we will likely not be live on camera in our studios while taking viewers' calls. This strategy helps us maximize our fundraising efforts and keep operational costs to a minimum. This has proven to be very effective, and groups that have the most fun are oftentimes those who join us for non-live shifts! Plus, this is also a perfect opportunity for volunteers who may be intimidated by live television or camera shy, but still want to volunteer their time at WTTW. We will make special effort to offer studio tours to volunteers who are able to join us for a non-live shift.

Are there other volunteer opportunities available?

At this time, we are only able to offer volunteer opportunities during our pledge drives. However, when special events require volunteers, notification is sent out via our volunteer database. In the past, these events have included *Antiques Roadshow*, *Soundstage*, WTTW's Fun & Run, and more! Be sure to sign up to receive email updates on getting involved at YOUR public television station, WTTW Channel 11!