Mercer Health

800 West Main Street
Coldwater, Ohio 45828
Telephone: 419-678-5119
Form 308 Revised 12/2025

Job Shadowing Requirements

1. Only students in **high school or higher** are eligible. Student should be a graduate of a Mercer County (or adjacent county) school system.

2. This is a short-term experience. Anything ongoing needs to be coordinated through the Director of Volunteer Services.

3. Access to certain areas may be restricted.

4. The Observer/Job Shadowing Questionnaire must be completed and returned.

5. The student must sign the Observer/Job Shadowing Confidentiality Statement and verbalize understanding of the importance of confidentiality.

6. If the student has had a PPD (tuberculosis) test within the last year, attach a copy of the results. If not, a one-step PPD test will be needed and can be obtained from your local health department or Mercer Health Occupational Health & Wellness Services who can be reached at 419-586-1220. There is a small fee for this test.

When these requirements have been met, send the questionnaire, signed confidentiality statement and PPD test results to:

Betsy Schoenleben
800 West Main Street
Coldwater, OH 45828
Fax: 419-678-5674
Phone: 419-678-5119
E-mail: bschoenleb@mercer-health.com

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In What Departments Can I Job Shadow?

There are several different departments that you may choose to job shadow. Below are listed some of the departments available for job shadowing. If you are interested in a department that is not listed, please do not hesitate to call and ask if that area is available for job shadowing.

- ✓ Cardiac Rehab
- ✓ Dietician
- ✓ Disease Management
- ✓ Emergency
- ✓ Health Records
- ✓ Human Resources
- ✓ Laboratory
- ✓ Marketing
- ✓ Medical/Surgical/Pediatric Nursing
- ✓ Obstetrics
- ✓ Occupational Health Nursing
- ✓ Outpatient Nursing
- ✓ Pharmacy
- ✓ Radiology
- ✓ Rehabilitation Services: Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Athletic Training
- ✓ Respiratory Therapy
- ✓ Social Services
- ✓ Surgery
- ✓ Telemetry/ICU Nursing

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Job Shadowing Dress Code

It is the responsibility of those job shadowing at Mercer Health to present a high standard of professionalism and reduce the infection control risk factor. The following standards have been set to accomplish the above:

1. Appropriate smocks, jackets or scrubs may need to be worn depending upon the department.

2. Hair and cosmetics must be neat, clean, moderate, avoiding extremes. Perfume and cologne can be offensive to patients and should be avoided.

3. Jewelry should be in moderation, no visible body piercing is permitted (other than ears).

4. Shoes and socks – comfortable, neat, clean, quiet. Shoes – no sandals or flip- flops, and sock or hosiery must be worn at all times.

5. Clothing – must be neat, clean and allow freedom of movement. Khaki or black pants required. Top should be a sweater or shirt with a collar. **NO** t-shirts, leggings, jeans, or sweatpants.

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HIPAA – Guarding Our Patient's Privacy

What is HIPAA?

HIPAA is the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. It contains a privacy rule to which all hospitals must adhere.

The Privacy Rule sets national standards to protect health-related information, enforced by the federal government. The Privacy Rule regulates communication of protected health information (PHI). PHI is any health-related information that can be directly linked to a specific person. All ways of communicating are included, whether by written, oral or electronic means.

There are strict penalties for facilities and individuals who violate the Privacy Rule. For example, the penalty for knowingly misusing patient information could be as high as $250,000 in fines and up to 10 years in prison.

Protecting the Patients

The patients we care for have placed their trust in our staff members. It is our legal and ethical obligation to protect their health information to our best ability.

But, it's not always easy to determine exactly how to protect this information. The patient's concerned friends and family members form a constant stream of visitors. Patients and their relatives often express concern about other patients. How do you know what information to share, and what to keep private? A few guidelines, along with your good judgment, can help you to protect the privacy of each patient.

First Rule to Remember: You are not to discuss what you see or hear during your shadowing experience with anyone. This is trusted, private information. In addition, cell phones are NOT ALLOWED in any patient areas. You CANNOT have your cellphones out, or take pictures in any patient care area. If you have your cell phone out, you will be asked to leave immediately.

Refer all questions about patients to a staff person. Never give out any patient information yourself. Also, never give information to reporters, lawyers, or others from outside the facility. Be careful about unknowingly giving out health information. If a visitor asks for Mr. Parker, and you reply, "He's in X-ray for his broken hip", you may have violated Mr. Parker's privacy. Refer the visitor to a staff person for further information.

As always, use care in discussing a patient's health information in the facility. Don't hold discussions in the hallways, elevators, cafeteria or other public places in the building. HIPAA requires that reasonable care be used to keep conversations as private as possible. For example, when discussing a patient at the nurse's station, speak in a low voice and stand apart from visitors who may be nearby.

If you're not sure whether you should provide information in a given situation, DON'T and ask for help. Your good judgment and awareness of this important issue helps to protect you, the patients, and the facility.

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Standard Precautions

Whether or not you work directly with patients, you need to protect yourself from exposure to pathogens (disease-causing germs). Knowing how infections are spread will help you prevent them.

Standard Precautions have been developed to minimize the risk of disease transmission for those whose activities may bring them into contact with potential infections. This is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Definitions:
Standard Precautions: The routine and consistent use of appropriate barrier protection to prevent transmission of microorganisms resulting from contact with blood and body substances, and as part of the practice of general hygiene. The most important practice is to treat ALL blood and body fluid as if it was infectious.

"IF IT'S WET AND NOT YOURS, DON'T TOUCH IT,
AND DON'T LET IT TOUCH YOU!"

Exposure Control: Since you may not always know whose blood is carrying infectious germs, treat all blood/body fluids as potentially infectious. Appropriate personal protective equipment will be worn as needed: mask, eye protection, gloves, gown, etc., when there is a likelihood of coming in contact with wet body substances. If you have a question as to what protective equipment is needed, always ask a staff member.

Standard Precautions include:

- Gloves, gowns, mask, and googles.
- Handwashing or alcohol hand rub – wash hands or use alcohol hand rub between contact with each patient and before coming in or leaving the department. Always wash your hands using soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or the time it takes to sing the alphabet song) before eating, after using the restroom, when hands are visibly soiled and anytime you feel you may have come in contact with infectious items/fluids.
- All specimens are to be in sealed plastic bags and clearly labeled.
- Observe warning or precautions on patient doors or in rooms.
- Do not clean possible infectious spills; contact housekeeping to do so, but stay with spill to prevent further contact by anyone else.

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Handwashing

Handwashing is a simple thing and it's the best way to prevent infection and illness. Clean hands prevent infections. Keeping hands clean prevents illness at home, at school, and at work. Hand hygiene practices are key prevention tools in healthcare settings.

In healthcare settings, handwashing can prevent potentially fatal infections from spreading from patient to patient and from patient to healthcare worker and vice-versa. The basic rule in the hospital is to cleanse hands before and after each patient contact by either washing hands or using an alcohol-based hand rub.

How to wash hands using soap and water:

- Wash your hands using soap and warm, running water. Wet hands prior to applying soap.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces. Pay attention to the back of hands, wrists, between the fingers and under the fingernails.
- Continue rubbing hands for at least 20 seconds.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry hands using a paper towel. Use the paper towel to turn off the faucet to prevent recontaminating hands.

Always use the soap and water method of hand hygiene:

- After using the restroom
- Before eating
- If hands are visibly soiled

Another hand hygiene alternative is an alcohol-based hand rub to clean hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin, are fast acting and easy to use.

When using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Apply product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of hands, fingers, and wrists until hands are dry.

Hands should be cleansed after:

- Any patient contact
- After coughing, sneezing or using the restroom
- Before eating or touching any food
- After handling any soiled equipment or utensils
- After doing anything that would contaminate the hands