

A fan's experience at a Hope College athletic event is based as much on the quality of customer service that is provided at our facilities as it is on our team's performance. As a member of the DeVos Fieldhouse Event Staff, you play a key role in our fans' impression of the Hope College athletic experience. You are often the only contact many of our fans have with our department and it is important that we work together to create a memorable experience for our guests.

The event management staff at the DeVos Fieldhouse has set several goals that pertain to our events and our Event Staff. First, we aim to ensure that each guest that attends a Hope College event enjoys his/her experience and wants to return. Second, we want to effectively and efficiently handle any special concerns presented by a DeVos Fieldhouse guest. Third, we want to foster a work environment that encourages open and honest communication that will keep our staff involved and well informed. Fourth, we hope to create a positive working relationship that supports staff creativity, initiative and team spirit. Finally, we aim to provide our guests with a staff that is customer oriented, knowledgeable about our events and facilities and both eager and willing to respond to the needs of our guests.

We will do our best to provide you with the information and tools necessary to help us achieve our goals, starting with this employee handbook. We ask that you thoroughly read this handbook as it includes facility-specific information pertinent to our home events. You will only perform your job to the level of the effort that you put into it. Therefore, it is important that you do your part to become knowledgeable about our facilities and game day operations in order to better serve our guests.

We ask that you consider your responsibility to the DeVos Fieldhouse and Hope College as you would any other employer. The Event Staff provides a vital service to our customers so we ask that you make every effort to accommodate your event work schedule. Also, please follow the guidelines provided in this handbook regarding scheduling, change in availability and dress code.

On behalf of the entire Events and Conferences Office at Hope College, we thank you for your efforts to ensure that our guests enjoy their visit to our college and that they will want to return in the near future.

Thank you again for your dedication and effort. GO HOPE!

Anne Bakker  
Ticket Office Manager

Curt Copeland  
Events and Conferences Manager

## **INTRODUCTION**

The DeVos Fieldhouse and Hope College expects all employees to observe common sense rules of honesty, courtesy, safety, attendance and to refrain from any action that reflects negatively on our organization. Standards of conduct are not created to restrict any employee's rights, but to maintain the high standards of the DeVos Fieldhouse and Hope College.

## **ATTENDANCE**

In order to provide our guests with the finest and most consistent service possible, it is important to hire employees who are able to work the vast majority of events. If you are unable to work an event for which you are scheduled, you should notify your supervisor at least 24 hours prior to the start of your shift. A failure to report to work without contact will constitute misconduct and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, which may include dismissal from the event staff.

## **BREAKS**

Breaks will be given to DeVos Fieldhouse workers at the designation of the supervisor in charge. Your supervisor will advise you when you may take a break. In most cases, breaks will be limited to 15 minutes. Breaks must be taken in the areas designated by your supervisors. All supervisors are responsible for administering breaks in an impartial manner. DeVos Fieldhouse employees are prohibited from smoking while working an event.

While it may be necessary for you to move about the Fieldhouse during your break or to make a phone call, you may be considered on duty by a guest. Please be polite in assisting all guests who approach you on your break. We also ask you to expedite your personal business and return to a designated break area as soon as possible. We also request that employees wash their hands prior to returning to work from their break.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

The following general standards of conduct are illustrative and do not encompass the full extent of the professional behavior that is expected of you while working with Hope College

### ***DeVos Fieldhouse Event Staff Members are EXPECTED to:***

- Treat guests as though they are guests in your own home
- Adhere to established uniform and appearance policies
- Be truthful with guests and all other Hope College employees
- Be punctual and in uniform at the scheduled time
- Inspect your assigned work area for safety and cleanliness

- Have a complete working knowledge of the DeVos Fieldhouse and its operations
- Know the polices and procedures in this handbook
- Adhere to established payroll policies
- Know the DeVos Fieldhouse Emergency Evacuation Plan
- Report all incidents and injuries that occur on arena property
- Assist fellow employees whose physical well-being is in danger
- Maintain safety habits and standards
- Make your best effort to resolve all guest concerns and complaints
- Ensure that all seating areas are maintained as non-smoking
- Properly direct guests outside to the designated smoking areas
- Report the use of alcohol or drugs by guests and employees
- Advise your supervisor when you are using medication which may affect your ability to work safely
- Inspect your assigned work area post event for lost items and turn over anything found to your supervisor noting the specific location of the item
- Follow instructions from your supervisor
- Perform any duties assigned by management to ensure the facility operates efficiently throughout events

***DeVos Fieldhouse Event Staff Members are PROHIBITED from:***

- Being absent or tardy without proper notification
- Soliciting autographs from any celebrities while at the DeVos Fieldhouse, while in uniform, or while working
- Engaging in personal conversation with any celebrities while in uniform or while working
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Carrying weapons
- Using or carrying AM/FM radios, televisions, cell phones, or walkmans while working unless approved by supervisor
- Using an ID or uniform for admittance to the arena when not scheduled to work
- Falsifying Hope College records or documents
- Disobeying a reasonable rule, regulation or instruction from a supervisor
- Willfully violating established safety rules
- Destroying, vandalizing, or removing Hope College property
- Associating or doing any business with any ticket re-sellers or scalpers
- Using the DeVos Fieldhouse property for personal business or benefit
- Moving to the front of a line when purchasing from a concession stand
- Smoking, eating, drinking or using a cell phone while on duty or in public view
- Accepting money or other gratuities to allow guests to sit in seats for which they do not hold tickets
- Accepting or asking for any unused tickets from our guests for any reason
- Sitting in any guest area seat when the doors have opened
- Leaving your assigned area without a specific purpose toward our guests

- Leaving work without authorization
- Giving statements to any member of the media
- Discussing personal business or work related issues in front of guests
- Inciting the crowd
- Bunching or grouping together with other personnel while working
- Willfully allowing others to enter the arena without tickets
- Escorting family or friends into the arena
- Entering restricted areas without the proper credentials or authorization
- Soliciting free food, ice, or beverages from any vendor or concessionaire
- Re-selling complimentary tickets or merchandise
- Swearing at or threatening guests or other employees
- Engaging in fighting or shoving with guests or employees
- Using excessive physical force during a crowd control situation
- Sleeping or malingering on the job
- Reading or studying while on duty - unless approved by a supervisor
- Distributing unauthorized literature or printed material
- Taking breaks in unauthorized areas
- Duplicating keys without prior authorization
- Photographing players or celebrities for personal use or sale

### **CORRECTIVE ACTION**

Under certain circumstances, The DeVos Fieldhouse will be required to address problems that are associated with an employee's performance, attendance or violation of company regulations. The goal of corrective action is to assist an employee to achieve an acceptable level of performance, attendance or conduct. When a problem develops, the Supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss the situation and to obtain information that will help determine the appropriate action to take.

The DeVos Fieldhouse may use a progressive course of corrective action for problems involving an employee's work performance, attendance or tardiness records. The progressive steps are:

- A verbal discussion about the issue with corresponding documentation for the employee's personnel files, including counseling and coaching from the Supervisor with specific recommendations for improving the situation.
- A written warning that outlines the problem, a plan for improvement and an explanation of the disciplinary consequences if improvement does not occur.
- Termination.

It is the employee's responsibility to be sure that he/she understands what needs to be done to improve performance, and it is the Supervisor's responsibility to set high quality performance standards. Failure by the employee to respond to a plan for corrective action may result in further actions up to and including termination of employment.

In most cases, disciplinary action will occur in progressive steps as outlined above so that termination only occurs after efforts have been made to correct the problem. However, violations of some college regulations are so serious that immediate termination may be appropriate.

### **THE FOUR BASIC NEEDS OF OUR GUESTS**

**1. The Need to be Understood** - Visitors to The DeVos Fieldhouse need to feel that they are communicating effectively. This means that the messages they send should be interpreted correctly. Reassure guests that you understand their concerns and that you will address them.

**2. The Need to Feel Welcome** - Anyone interacting with you who feels like an outsider will probably not return to The DeVos Fieldhouse. People need to feel that you are happy to see them and that their business is important to you. Your greeting and attentiveness to their concerns are vital.

**3. The Need to Feel Important** - Ego and self esteem are powerful human needs. We all like to feel important. Anything that you can do to make a guest feel special is a step in the right direction.

**4. The Need to Feel Comfortable** - Guests need physical comfort such as a place to wait, rest, talk, or do business. They also need psychological comfort where they are assured of being taken care of properly and they have confidence that you will meet their needs.

### **CODE FOR QUALITY GUEST SERVICE**

- Acknowledge the guest immediately.
- Establish eye contact.
- Give a warm greeting.
- Make a positive first impression.
- Address the guest as "sir" or "ma'am" if you do not know their name. . Listen to the guest's whole story without interrupting.
- Never argue with a guest.
- Treat all guests with dignity and respect.
- Do not pre-judge a guest based upon their appearance.
- Eliminate all excuses.
- Do not take things personally.
- Make common sense a habit.
- Show a good sense of humor.
- Be the guest's advocate.
- Little things not only mean a lot, they mean everything.
- Follow-up with guests if possible.
- Make a positive last impression.

## **DIRECTIONS**

Please realize that many of our guests will become disoriented. Always offer directions in a positive manner, paying special attention to your tone, volume, and body language. Even when a guest may be insulting or rude in their approach, do not show exasperation or resort to sarcastic responses.

Our guests do not always know the correct names of locations, and they may not understand our terminology. Show empathy and a willingness to listen. If you notice guests entering an unauthorized area, approach them respectfully and get their attention (i.e., "Excuse me ma'am, may I help you?", "Sir, can I help you find someone?").

Offer explanations and alternative choices whenever possible. Offering alternatives is a helpful and effective way to give directions. Try to include easily spotted landmarks when describing how to find a service in the arena.

## **GREETINGS AND VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Your greeting will immediately make guests feel welcome and increase their anticipation of experiencing a memorable event. Always address a guest by "sir" or "ma'am" if you do not know their name. When all members of the Event Staff greet guests with a smile, a consistent, caring attitude will exist throughout The DeVos Fieldhouse.

Appropriate greetings should also be extended to fellow members of the Event Staff throughout each event. When conversing, be sure to give the same individual attention that you would to a guest. To create a positive atmosphere, greet and address fellow members of the Event Staff by name. It is critical that all members of the Event Staff work together to instill a spirit of cooperation at The DeVos Fieldhouse.

Each interaction should result in creating a positive feeling between you and the guest. Avoid assuming a defensive attitude when answering questions or explaining a situation. Patience and empathy are essential to ensuring courteous communication. Above all, enjoy your job and remember that guests will be drawn to places where they are treated with care and concern.

Please use the following guidelines for effective verbal communication:

- Approach - Be proactive. Look for guests who appear confused or disoriented and offer your assistance before being asked.
- Sincerity - Your mannerisms and style should tell your listener that you care.
- Suitable volume - Your voice should be well modulated; not too loud or too soft.
- Polite phrases- Use appropriate phrases to start the conversation (i.e., "May I help you?", "How are you today?") Avoid using slang and unusually

- casual greetings.
- Remember repeat guests - Show your recognition by using their name or by making a comment that refers to the last time you came in contact with them.
- Positive conclusion - End your conversation on an upbeat note (i.e., "I hope you enjoyed the event," "I look forward to seeing you again," "Thank you for visiting The DeVos Fieldhouse.")

## **GUEST COMPLAINTS**

There will be times that we will not be able to meet everyone's expectations. Your challenge will be in handling that small percentage of people who are not very cooperative with the people around them. In these instances, patience and empathy should be your focus. Handle all guest complaints with delicate concern, using all of the guidelines discussed in this section of the handbook. Above all, put yourself in the guest's place. Convince the guest that you understand and care about their concern. Make sure that guests return to The DeVos Fieldhouse by doing what you can to satisfy those who complain.

### ***Some specific guidelines are as follows:***

- Listen carefully to the complaint. Avoid interrupting a guest.
- Always restate the guest's problem, so that they know you understand their concerns and that you are listening carefully. Restating the problem lets the guest know that you are not about to argue with them.
- Empathize, be supportive and provide helpful information for resolving the guest's concern. However, be very careful not to mislead guests with promises that cannot be kept.
- Disarm the guest by agreeing whenever possible with whatever truth they present. Keep in mind that some part of what they are saying is probably true.
- Acknowledge the guest's feelings of anger, frustration or disappointment.
- Give guests a chance to reconsider any rash statements by saying "Excuse me; I didn't quite catch what you said." They probably will not repeat their statements and may calm down.
- Explain what action will be taken to correct the problem. . Take corrective action yourself, if possible. If you need assistance, find your supervisor immediately. Do not abandon the guest, or tell them to find someone else.
- Attempt to quiet upset guests by using a soft, confident tone. If possible, move the discussion away from other guests to the concourse. An audience may inspire some guests. They may calm down once they are in private. It takes two to argue, and if you refuse to take part, you will control the situation.
- Sometimes stepping out of the ring is the only way to let irate people know they have gone too far. Tell them, "I'm finding it difficult to talk with you right now" or "I can't help you if we aren't able to work together on this situation." "Perhaps you would like someone else to help you."
- Regardless of how small the issue or problem, our objective is to make

- certain that it is resolved in a sincere and efficient manner. We may not think it is a big deal initially, but it may be very important to the guest.
- Thank the guest for bringing the problem to your attention.
  - Following the interaction, relay the pertinent details of the complaint and guest specifics such as name, phone number, seat location, etc. to the Manager on Duty, so follow up can be done with the guest.
  - When a guest presents you with a problem or concern, please use common sense and a practical understanding of Hope College's policies and procedures to provide the answer quickly and with courtesy.

### **THE REASONS GUESTS ARE DIFFICULT**

- They are tired or frustrated.
- They are confused or overwhelmed.
- They are defending their ego or self esteem.
- They have never been in similar situations before.
- They feel ignored since nobody has listened to them.
- They may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- They do not speak or understand the language very well.
- They have been treated poorly in similar situations in the past.

### **SERVICE EXCELLENCE OBJECTIVES**

- To satisfy the needs of every guest so that they will want to keep coming back to The DeVos Fieldhouse.
- To provide immediate attention and resolutions to guests' special needs and problems.
- To create a work environment that encourages and supports Event Staff member initiative, creativity and team spirit.
- To provide consistent, user friendly systems to facilitate outstanding service.
- To have a constant flow of communication to keep our Event Staff members well informed and involved.
- To develop a guest oriented staff that are well trained and empowered to respond to the needs of our guests.
- To develop a reputation for exceptional guest relations.
- To turn negatives into positives.

### **STANDARDS OF GUEST RELATIONS**

At The DeVos Fieldhouse we have "guests" visit us, not "clients", "customers" or "patrons". Always use the term guest, and believe and internalize this approach. We must approach every encounter with a warm, friendly attitude. This includes greeting each guest with a cheerful smile. From the moment of arrival, each guest should feel a spirit of hospitality from our polite and attentive Event staff. Our goal is to help each guest feel safe and have fun while at The DeVos Fieldhouse.

Hope College expects all members of the event staff to practice these standards daily:

- Welcome each guest with a smile and an appropriate verbal greeting. If you know a guest's name, please use it.
- When speaking with guests, use courteous mannerisms and an upbeat and friendly attitude.
- Make eye contact with as many guests as possible.
- Quickly respond to each guest's questions or concerns.
- Be prepared and plan ahead for our guest's needs.
- Be alert to good service opportunities.
- If problems do arise, take personal responsibility to resolve them efficiently and effectively.
- If a guest is angry or frustrated, please do not take any negative comments personally. Listening to a guest with a problem is the first step in solving the issue at hand
- Add a good sense of humor and our guests will be well rewarded.
- Please remember that a careless word or an indifferent attitude can ruin a guest's experience. On the other hand, if you are helpful, enthusiastic and concerned, guests will be impressed with you. We must remember that each of us is a contributing factor to setting a standard of a new level of guest relations. This is our opportunity to establish The DeVos Fieldhouse as a symbol of world-class hospitality.

### **APPEARANCE AND UNIFORM**

All members of The DeVos Fieldhouse Event Staff should strive for an appearance that is natural and attractive. Our appearance is often the first impression that we present to our guests. First impressions are critical because there may be no opportunity for a second impression. Portraying a professional image is consistent with our desire to always exceed our guest's expectations.

Each staff member must adhere to the appearance standards described on the next pages. Always look your best when representing The DeVos Fieldhouse and Hope College. Members of the staff who arrive at work without the proper clothing or without practicing proper hygiene may be sent home with no obligation of payment or employment.

Please understand that it is impossible to develop written standards which will address every possible issue regarding personal appearance. If a member of the staff needs clarification of an appearance or uniform issue, he or she should consult with a supervisor in advance.

## **UNIFORM STANDARDS**

The following list indicates the uniform and personal appearance standards for DeVos Fieldhouse event employees.

- Picture Identification should be worn proudly. Any time you are working your picture identification should be worn on your outermost garment. Identification badges will be issued prior to the first day of employment. Identification badges are the property of Hope College and must be returned at the end of your shift.
- Shoes should be comfortable. We recommend shoes with a rubber sole, as most positions require that you stand or walk for extended periods of time. A slip resistant sole is a valuable safety precaution. High heeled or open toed shoes are not permitted.
- Cellular phones must be left the staff room and may only be used while on break.
- Hands must be washed prior to beginning work, and after each time you eat or go to the restroom.
- Remain in full uniform when in public areas. Members of The DeVos Fieldhouse Event Staff should wait until they enter the event service level to remove or unbutton shirts.

## **RADIO ETIQUETTE**

- Radios will be issued to designated staff.
- Radios are expensive communication devices and should be handled accordingly.
- If the red light on top of the radio is blinking, please wait for it to stop before keying up.
- The radio is to be used for necessary transmissions only.
- All messages must be brief and to the point. Casual conversations about non-work related issues are not acceptable.
- Guests can hear radio transmissions, so it is important to use appropriate language and discretion at all times.
- When transmitting via the radio, always use a calm, clear, regular tone of voice. Response time will be slowed if messages have to be repeated.
- Listen to the radio traffic before attempting any transmission. Please do not "step" on other communications.
- Upon receiving your radio, run a system check.
  - Turn on the unit.
  - Turn to your assigned channel.
  - Attempt a test communication with another member of the DeVos Fieldhouse Team.
  - A series of beeps indicate a low battery.
- The format for initiating a radio call is first to press the button and wait for 1 second then state your name and call the person you are trying to reach. For example: "Sue to Greg" then let off the button and wait for a response.

- You may have to repeat the call.
- Please do not carry the radio by the antenna.
- Absolutely no swearing is permitted when using a radio.

### **ANSWERING QUESTIONS**

Regardless of where you work, you will be asked a variety of questions during an event. Many of the questions you hear will be asked repeatedly. Courtesy and patience are vital in answering all questions.

Learn all you can about your job responsibilities, the layout of The DeVos Fieldhouse, and all other events that are held here. Actively participate in training sessions and pre-event briefings. Read handouts, newsletters and newspaper articles about all events that will be at The DeVos Fieldhouse. Check bulletin boards for other notes of interest. A greater understanding of what your job is all about gives you added confidence in dealing with guests. In turn, guests will react with deeper respect for you and the job you perform. Here are some basic guidelines to follow:

- Acknowledge questions as soon as possible; never make a guest wait for your attention.
- Be **AGGRESSIVELY FRIENDLY**; offer help, and never wait to be asked.
- Know the answers to as many questions as possible. Learn as much as you can about The DeVos Fieldhouse and review the information in this Handbook.
- Be accurate with your responses and very familiar with your assigned area, as well as Hope College guidelines and procedures.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, find out by referring to this handbook, or by asking a fellow member of the DeVos Event Staff. Never tell a guest, "I don't know," or shrug your shoulders when asked a question.
- Please do not delay the guest from watching the event. When appropriate, get the seat location and deliver the answer when it is known.

### **BODY LANGUAGE**

Our posture, gestures, and facial expressions all contribute to creating a welcome feeling when conversing with guests and other members of the DeVos Event Staff. You must have a personal desire to present yourself as one who wishes to help others.

No factor has greater influence on our ability to successfully interact with people than our own approach and attitude. Our feelings are easily telegraphed to others as we quickly pick up the attitudes and feelings other people send to us. We are never able to completely hide how we feel. Guests are quick to see the difference between our caring and not caring about their experience.

- It is important that we enjoy what we are doing and that we project that enjoyment to our guest. Be aware of how your body language is being perceived, and present a positive and enthusiastic image at all times. To help ensure that the non-verbal messages you display conveys a caring attitude, use these simple but effective guidelines:
- Stand erect, and look attentive. Hold your head high and steady. This shows guest that you are interested in helping them and that you are approachable.
- Be patient and willing to listen to any concern. Guests should not feel that they are intruding if they need assistance.
- Maintaining eye-to-eye-contact is the fastest and most effective way of showing interest. This establishes an immediate rapport by showing that you are willing to help. . Control your body movement. Avoid appearing rushed or too casual. . When giving directions, use courteous phrases accompanied by friendly gestures and open hand signals when appropriate.
- Smile! Your attitude is automatically reflected in your facial expressions.

***Some negative body language to avoid includes:***

- Leaning, sitting, or placing your feet on walls, handrails, tables or counter tops. This implies that you are unapproachable or too tired to be bothered.
- Crossing your arms in front of your chest is a blatant "do not disturb" signal and a defensive gesture.
- Placing your hands in your pockets suggests that you are disinterested and have too casual an attitude.
- Engaging in group conversations with other members of the DeVos Event Staff. Guests will feel they are being ignored.
- Watching the event rather than looking for guests who require assistance implies that you care more about your own entertainment.