



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

ASSISTANCE • SHELTER • HOPE

SERVE a MEAL

Volunteer Welcome Packet

Welcome to St. Vincent de Paul!

Thank you for volunteering with us. We are so grateful to have you join the team. In these pages you will find all the information you need to know to volunteer here at St. Vincent de Paul. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out. I can be reached at volunteerinfo@stvincentdayton.org or 937-222-5555x103.

Thank you,



Maria Francis
Manager of Volunteers

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2020 BY THE NUMBERS

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Dayton is the most essential part of our community's safety net for the homeless and impoverished: we stand between them and almost unimaginable consequences. Our mission is to, with Christian purpose, accompany those in need - one person at a time - by focusing on shelter, food, and clothing.

393



Daily average number of guests at SVdP Shelters

159



Residents served in SVdP Supportive Housing

\$1,602,667



Financial assistance and in-kind goods and services provided through neighborhood ministries

10,958



Individuals served by neighborhood volunteers through home visits

3,461



Guests served in SVdP Shelters

709



Volunteers in neighborhood ministry

SERVE Lunch or Dinner: Brief Position Description

We are so grateful to you for volunteering with us here at St. Vincent de Paul Shelters. Here is a brief overview of SERVING a meal at a shelter. Questions? Contact Maria at 937.222.5555x103

Requirements

- **Age:** We ask that all volunteers are age 14 and older. Volunteers ages 14-17 must be accompanied by a parent or adult 18 or older.
- **Group Size:** We ask that groups bring no more than 6 people in the kitchen per volunteer shift.
- **Sign In:** This is so important! We need to know everyone who works a shift including group members! Please sign in and out in Volunteer Sign-in Book at your location (ask staff for help if needed).
- **Safety Requirements:** All volunteers must follow kitchen requirements including wearing safe, closed-toe shoes (no flip-flops, etc.), wearing aprons (provided) and gloves (provided). Please wear pants in the kitchen and comfortable modest tops.
- **Running Late:** If you are unable to volunteer or if you are running late, please call or text: **937-530-0880** (Manager of Volunteers).

Volunteer Responsibilities

- Check in with the foodservice staff person.
- Stock the food on the counter for service to the guests.
- Check supply of water or other provided beverage. Refill as needed.
- Prepare or fill any needed condiments such as ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, salad dressings.
- Check to make sure tables in dining room are clean.
- Stock trays, bowls, coffee cups, napkins and plastic flatware as needed.
- Serve meal from serving line counter.
- Wash all trays, bowls, cups, pans and cooking utensils.
- Wipe off serving counters, and work islands in the kitchen.
- Put away excess service items from the meal (trays, bowls, cups, etc.)
- Clean tables in the dining room.
- Sweep kitchen and dining areas if needed.

Commonly Asked Questions

Dear Volunteer!

We are so grateful for your generosity of hearts towards our guests and neighbors! Here are some *commonly asked questions* that I want to take a moment to address.

- 1. I've never worked with the homeless population before. What should I talk to the guests about?** First, get in the habit of asking guests their name and saying hello to them when you can. Hearing one's name is a friendly, grounding reminder of one's dignity. Second, remember **HOPE: Hobbies, Occupation, People** (Families, Friends) and **Experiences** (travel, what guests like to do for fun, etc.). You can ask guests questions just running through the acronym: **HOPE**.

"What are your hobbies? Oh, you like knitting? Tell me more about that. Did you learn it from a family member? Did you ever make anything for anyone? Did you make anything for friends or family?"

- 2. Someone said something or I witnessed a behavior in a shelter I am not sure how to respond or it has made me uncomfortable.** In working with shelter guests, please know that a homeless person you encounter may be experiencing the hardest day of their lives. Homelessness can be sudden, and therefore traumatic for many people, similar to a family member suddenly passing away or a loved one seriously injured in the hospital. It is often shocking, scary, and exhausting. For others, homelessness is a chronic condition due to persistent severe mental illness and / or addictions to mood altering drugs.

You might witness any of the following behaviors in a homeless shelter:

1. *You may hear profanity.*
2. *You may see someone talking strangely to themselves or others due to mental illness.*
3. *You may see someone raise their voice in anger.*
4. *You may see someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs. **

**We address substance-induced behavioral problems immediately.*

What do you do if you witness this behavior? The best thing you can do is give a guest space. If the behavior seems concerning to you, report it to a staff member. *What does it mean to give a guest space?* Very respectfully and quietly walk away.

- 3. Sometimes, there is a lull in the work, and I am and unsure of what to do.** By being available at a moment's notice you are serving the guests. It is OK to experience a lull. You can also look for special projects such as tidying up an area behind the front desk or a closet or the kitchen (depending on where you are serving). Just check with your supervisor.



Our Mission & Values

Vision

The **vision** of St. Vincent de Paul – District Council of Dayton is to improve the lives of people in need in the Miami Valley.

Mission

Our **mission** is to, with Christian purpose, accompany those in need one person at a time by focusing on shelter, food, and clothing.

Core Values

We hold the beliefs of unconditional service, hospitality, stewardship, and gratitude to be our core values.

Mission Breakdown

What do we mean by Christian purpose?

We are all about the Christian experience, namely what God teaches humanity and exemplified for us in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an International Association of the Faithful of the Catholic Church, recognized by the Vatican.

Our mission is about the mystery of suffering. We believe that as suffering deepens, *love* deepens – when we focus on God being there with us in the suffering.

Compassion literally means “with suffering,” and it is the suffering of others that draws us to accompany and serve them.

We further believe that God gave us **free will** to love and serve Him, so we should make choices based on what we **ought** to do instead of what we **want** to do. When we do what we **want** to do, we focus on selfish desires like power, honor, and pleasure. But when we do what we **ought** to do, we draw closer to God and further our Christian experience.

The Trauma of Homelessness

Homelessness can be sudden, and therefore traumatic for many people, similar to a family member suddenly passing away or a loved one seriously injured in the hospital. It is often shocking, scary, and exhausting. For others, homelessness is a chronic condition due to persistent severe mental illness and / or addictions to mood altering drugs. As a result, many of our shelter guests experience the following:

- Anxiety, sadness, or anger
- Trouble concentrating and thinking clearly
- Obsessive thoughts about the event(s), or flashbacks
- Excessive worry, anxiety, fear
- Feeling angry, resentful, or irritable
- Having nightmares or difficulty sleeping
- Isolation and withdrawal (Ficcadenti)

To accompany a guest means to:

Not ask “what is wrong with this individual?” when a guest comes to our shelters but to consider what may have happened to this individual.

The Five Principles of Trauma Informed Care

Safety: Ensure Physical and Emotional Safety: We do this by creating common areas that are welcoming, and that respect privacy. We want to ensure this especially at the front desk or whenever serving a guest. Always be sure to say hello to a guest by name, warmly and kindly and uphold a guest’s privacy with the utmost value at your volunteer station.

Choices: Guest has choice and control Guests are provided clear and appropriate message about their rights and responsibilities. Much of this is communicated via the shelter and case managers. However, your role as a volunteer is important too. Allow guests to make choices, when possible, even just small ones. Examples include allowing guests to say no to a side dish when serving them a meal or let

them select one of two options of shampoo as a dorm assistant instead of just handing them one.

Collaboration: Making decisions with the guest and sharing the power. Again, this value is key when guests work with the shelter and case managers. You can provide guests with the opportunity to plan and evaluate decisions. Such as:

At the front desk: *“I do not have mail for you right now. When would you like to come back and check for mail?”*

When serving a meal: *“We are not giving out seconds until everyone is finished going through the line. Would you like to come back then?”*

Instead of saying no, come back later, you invite the guest into the decision-making process and accompany them to a final decision. It may require more conversation, but it possibly eliminates re-traumatization and that sense of loss of control.

Trustworthiness: Task clarity, consistency, and interpersonal boundaries. Always maintain professional boundaries with guests, as later defined in the handbook. Follow through on the tasks listed in your job description so that the guests can learn to rely on you as a source of consistency. Always remember, professionalism can still be warm and kind.

Empowerment: Prioritizing empowerment and skill building. We want to provide an atmosphere that allows guests to feel validated and affirmed at the shelter.

If the guest comes to you at the front desk looking for a message from their case manager and there is none, encourage them to call their case manager and reach out.

If you are serving a meal and a guest asks for salt, that is a good thing. A guest is asking for something in an unfamiliar place. So even if you need to turn them away, let them know what their choices are such as other available condiments. It seems small but it is important. You are helping them to build small skills.

Sources:

International Associations of the Faithful

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/laity/documents/rc_pc_laity_doc_20051114_associazioni_en.html

Ficcandenti, Kathy. "Trauma Informed Care for Housing." *Https://Catholiccharities-Kcsj.Org*, CC-KCSJ, 27 Oct. 2020, catholiccharities-kcsj.org/trauma-informed-care-for-housing.

"What Is Trauma-Informed Care?" *University at Buffalo School of Social Work - University at Buffalo*, 1 May 2020, socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-is-trauma-informed-care.html.



St. Vincent de Paul
ASSISTANCE • SHELTER • HOPE

Society of St. Vincent de Paul
District Council of Dayton
120 West Apple Street • Dayton, Ohio 45402
937-222-5555x103

Code of Ethics for Volunteers

[Revised January 1, 2018]

1. I will be conscious of the fact that everything I do, directly or indirectly, reflects upon the St. Vincent de Paul organization as a whole.
2. I will hold myself to the highest standard of conduct reflective of my position as a volunteer and the work that I do, always striving to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.
3. I will recognize the worth, dignity and uniqueness of all persons, and will at all times treat staff members, volunteers, clients, customers, and residents with the highest respect, regardless of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, mental or physical disability, military status, status as a veteran or any types of discrimination based on personal characteristics, conditions or status.
4. I will at all times clearly distinguish between statements made by me as a private individual and statements representing St. Vincent de Paul and/or statements that could be mistakenly interpreted as representing St. Vincent de Paul
5. I will at all times conduct myself in a professional manner while volunteering, in public places, at times when customers, clients and/or supporters of the St. Vincent de Paul organization are present, as well as remaining in full compliance with the St. Vincent de Paul volunteer manual.
6. I will at no time aid or abet a client and/or anyone else in any form of illegal activity, or participate in any illegal activity that would directly or indirectly reflect adversely on the agency's integrity or expose the organization to any negative publicity.
7. I will never knowingly contribute to enabling a client's irresponsible behavior, or put my own safety or the safety of others at risk and I will immediately report this behavior to management.
8. I will at all times avoid relationships or commitments that conflict or may conflict with the interests of the St. Vincent de Paul organization and my position while on and off property.

9. I will avoid any romantic attachments and/or sexual relationships with staff members whether directly or indirectly, and with clients, customers, and/or residents, whether they are temporary or long-term participants in an agency program or activity.
10. I understand that, as a St. Vincent de Paul volunteer, I am not permitted to invite clients or residents into my home for any reason, nor am I permitted to spend the night in a client's or resident's quarters. This also extends to staff members.
11. I will actively work to expand choices and opportunities for all people, with special regard for disadvantaged or oppressed groups of people.
12. I will avoid even the appearance of exploitation of professional relationships for personal gain. This includes providing service to or receiving services from guests outside of normal work duties whether for pay or not.
13. I will at no time accept gifts (monetary or otherwise) from customers, clients, residents, or staff without prior approval from senior management whether occurring on or off St. Vincent de Paul property.
14. I will not purchase or sell any merchandise or service to clients, customers, residents, or staff, nor will I engage in their hire for personal projects without prior approval from management.
15. I will at no time engage in activities that could be interpreted as being designed to proselytize or convert a customer, client, resident, volunteer, or staff member to a particular religious belief or church.
16. I will actively work to prevent practices that are inhumane or discriminatory against any person or group of persons and report these instances to shelter management immediately.
17. I will respect the privacy of staff members, customers, clients, volunteers, and residents and hold in strict confidence all information obtained in the course of providing professional services, to include:
 - Disclosure of confidential information regarding any facet of the program or its participants without prior approval from senior management;
 - Acknowledging to anyone outside the agency that an individual is a participant, client, customer resident or recipient of any agency program or services without a release of information or prior approval from senior management;
 - Discussing or revealing any confidential information regarding employees or volunteers of the St. Vincent de Paul organization; and



- Making statements to the media and/or posting confidential or negative statements about the St. Vincent de Paul organization, clients, residents, staff members or volunteers on social media.
 - I will not take photos or video recordings of clients, residents, staff or other volunteers at any time, without written permission from the Administrative Offices of St. Vincent de Paul.
18. I will at no time use profanity, vulgarity, obscenities, or discriminatory slurs against or involving customers, clients, residents, staff or volunteers.
 19. I will not be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol while volunteering or acting as a representative, actual or perceived, of the St. Vincent de Paul organization.
 20. I will actively work to provide customers, clients, and residents with accurate information regarding programs and services available within the agency and the community.
 21. I will at no time transport a client or resident for any reason.