



Volunteer Handbook

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Haven for Hope of Bexar County

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Dear Volunteer,

On behalf of the Haven for Hope staff and Board of Directors, we would like to thank you for becoming a part of our team. Volunteers are very important to us and to the people we serve. We quite literally would not be able to operate without you!

You will find that becoming a Haven for Hope volunteer is both a challenging and rewarding experience. With whatever volunteer role you choose, you will undoubtedly have the opportunity to touch many lives.

We are excited to have you on our team and hopeful about what we will accomplish together as we work toward our vision of ending homelessness through transformation.

Together we are giving hope.

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Haven for Hope Introduction

MISSION STATEMENT

To offer a place of hope, love and new beginnings by providing, delivering or coordinating impactful care for people experiencing homelessness in our community.

VISTION STATEMENT

Empowering individuals and families experiencing homelessness to transform their lives.

Haven for Hope Core Values

UNLIMITED COMPASSION

We show respect, kindness and patience in how we speak, see and serve

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

We model our mission by putting others first

HOPE FOR ALL

We welcome all regardless of circumstance

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

We seek the very best in our work and relationships

OUTCOME DRIVEN

We are data-driven and seek results

Volunteer Services Introduction

We can find meaning and reward by serving some higher purpose than ourselves, a shining purpose, the illumination of a thousand points of light....We all have something to give. – *President George H.W. Bush*

Definitions

“A volunteer is a person who can see what others cannot see; who can feel what most do not feel. Often, such gifted persons do not think of themselves as volunteers, but as citizens – citizens in the fullest sense: partners in civilization.” – *President George H.W. Bush*

Regular Volunteer

Regular volunteers have made a commitment of time on a regular or somewhat regular schedule to support Haven for Hope (Haven) in an ongoing and sustainable manner. Regular volunteers are required to go through the full volunteer screening process.

One-Time or Occasional Volunteers

One-time or occasional volunteers may attend group service projects or volunteer at Haven for a single day of service. As such, they are not required to go through the entire screening process necessary for regular volunteers.

Staff Liaison

Each regular volunteer and volunteer groups will be assigned a staff “liaison” – a Haven or Partner Agency staff member – depending on responsibilities and job placement. This liaison will become the primary point of contact for scheduling, further training, and ongoing service activities in the assigned job duty area.

Volunteer Term

Volunteer applications are valid for two years. After two years, a new background check and training session will be required. In addition, volunteers can serve no longer than **4 hours** per day.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are a valuable resource to Haven and its clients. We are committed to providing volunteers with meaningful assignments, effective guidance, the opportunity for full involvement and participation, and recognition for their contributions. Volunteers will receive one-on-one training by staff liaisons and additional formal training by various departments. In return, volunteers agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to adhere to the policies and practices of Haven for Hope.

Purpose of Volunteer Policies

This document is not a contract or legal document. It is intended to highlight the policies and procedures of Haven. Haven reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policies. Changes to or exceptions from these policies may only be granted by the Development team and must be obtained in advance and in writing. Areas not specifically covered by these policies shall be determined by Volunteer Services.

Privacy and Confidentiality

We take the privacy of our clients at Haven very seriously. Additionally, Haven is subject to HIPPA and legally bound to protect the identity and stories of the people we serve. The Volunteer Agreement provided to each volunteer for signature upon applying lists the terms required to ensure privacy.

Photos, Videos, and Audio Recordings

Volunteers and visitors to our campus are prohibited from photographing, videotaping, or audiotaping any client of Haven without direct written permission from Volunteer Services.

Responding to a Request for Client Information

If you are asked to release information about our clients or to confirm if a client is residing on our campus, an appropriate, non-committal response should be given, such as:

- “I’m sorry. I do not know the answer to your questions. Please speak with a Haven for Hope employee.”
- “I’m sorry. I can neither confirm nor deny whether that person lives here.”

Professionalism and Ethics

Boundaries

One key way to create safety is to maintain healthy boundaries. Therefore, volunteers are to refrain from:

- interacting for personal reasons or socializing with clients when off duty;
- engaging in, or attempting to engage in, romantic or sexual relationships with clients;
- conduct that demeans or embarrasses clients;
- inappropriate physical contact with clients;
- taking clients into their personal homes;
- providing transportation to clients, except per the guidelines in the Safety section of this handbook;

- giving clients personal information, including, but not limited to, personal phone numbers, email addresses, physical home addresses, or connecting through social media sites;
- giving clients personal information about any volunteers or staff with whom you may be working;
- engaging in transactions with clients, including, but not limited to, borrowing, lending, giving or receiving money or anything of value, or buying and selling or acting as a client's agent in any of the above;
- providing childcare for clients;
- giving or loaning of cell phones to clients (even for brief calls);
- accepting favors, gifts, or personal service from clients; and
- showing favoritism between clients or doing favors for clients without specific written authorization from a member of the Volunteer Services team.

Volunteers should always:

- practice active listening and empathy; refrain from making decisions for clients; refer clients to staff members for questions and assistance; and
- report any inappropriate behavior or anything that causes you to feel uncomfortable to your staff liaison or to the Volunteer Services team **immediately**.

Offsite Conduct

On occasion, volunteers will be asked to represent the agency at events and projects offsite. While representing the agency at these events, volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner, reflective of the Haven Core Values, and to adhere to Haven policies.

Donations

All donations (monetary and in-kind donations) are to be used for the benefit of Haven and its clients. Volunteers are not authorized to use these donations for personal benefit or to distribute them to clients without specific authorization from the appropriate staff liaison. Volunteers are not authorized to handle cash donations except with explicit approval from Volunteer Services.

Haven for Hope Property

Desks, storage areas, work areas, lockers, file cabinets, computer systems, office phones, copiers, and Haven vehicles are Haven for Hope's property and must be regarded and maintained according to this policy. Handle all equipment with care, ensuring its safe and proper operation and storage.

Safety

Haven is strongly committed to the health and safety of its volunteers, employees, and clients and is responsible for creating and implementing safety plans and procedures to minimize workplace injuries. Volunteers share the responsibility for alerting Haven staff to hazards to health and safety and are responsible for carrying out all safety procedures conscientiously. Volunteers must comply with all safety and health requirements by management, federal, state, and local law. Any volunteer who creates, maintains, or allows a hazard to health or safety may be subject to corrective action, up to and including dismissal from the volunteer program.

Reporting Incidents

An incident refers to any event or situation where someone could or did suffer injury. All incidents must be immediately reported to your staff liaison and to Volunteer Services. This reporting policy is important for the safety and wellbeing of everyone. Incident Report Forms are available at the Volunteer Center.

General Health

If you have any health concerns that might be aggravated by or that would adversely affect your volunteer assignment in any way, then please speak with a member of the Volunteer Services team. We will work with you to adjust your volunteer assignment or determine that you are not able to volunteer until the condition is resolved. Volunteers who have an infectious illness or disease will not be permitted to work for the duration of their communicability.

Working with Children

Volunteers are to observe the following guidelines when working with children:

- volunteers should not discipline children; disciplinary matters should be reported to the staff member on duty;
- volunteers should never be alone with a child; this is for the protection of all parties;
- volunteers should not change diapers or assist children in the restroom; if such assistance is required, volunteers should notify a staff member or the child's parent or guardian;
- volunteers should never touch or hug a child in a way that might be misinterpreted; please remember that many of our children have come from abusive backgrounds; it is best to let each individual child initiate contact; volunteers may also ask permission to touch a hand or give a pat on the back, empowering children to say yes or NO!
 - High fives and fist bumps are strongly encouraged as a method of contact that is emotionally safe for our children.
 - Children should never sit on the lap of a volunteer.
 - Only "side hugs" are permitted.

Age Requirements for Volunteers

Courtyard Volunteers

Minors are not permitted in the Courtyard under any circumstances. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Individual Volunteers

Volunteers must be **18 years old** to volunteer without an adult chaperone. Volunteer placement is subject to Haven policies and, at the discretion of the Volunteer Services staff. Possible placements include the Donation Center, administrative duties, the kennel, landscaping, the Children and Youth Learning Centers, the Activity Center, and custodial support.

Volunteer Groups

Haven's goal is to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all volunteers and a meaningful project for Haven staff and clients. We strive to build a spirit of volunteerism in our community and within families.

Our minimum age guideline for volunteer groups is **10 years old**. We ask parents, teachers, and group leaders to exercise judgement when determining whether to bring children along for a volunteer project. Possible volunteer group projects include donation sorting, landscaping, enrichment events such as family movie nights, and other projects as determined by Volunteer Services.

Recommended ratios for groups with children are:

- for groups with children ages 10 to 12, adult: child ratio is 1:5; and
- for groups with children ages 13 to 17, adult: child ratio is 1:10.

Transporting Clients

Volunteers are permitted to transport clients in their personal vehicles only under certain circumstances and with proper approvals.

- Staff must specifically ask volunteers to transport clients, and only for the purpose of providing Haven or Partner services, such as job or housing searches, or getting to health appointments.
- Volunteers transporting clients must be specifically approved by Volunteer Services.
 - Volunteers must be active volunteers, per the Volunteer Term requirements.
 - Volunteers must submit a copy of their driver's license and proof of insurance.
 - Volunteers must sign an agreement regarding vehicle use.

- Volunteers are not permitted to transport clients until they have received specific written approval from Volunteer Services.

Train Safety

Please follow the rules when a train is passing or stops on the tracks and blocks the crossing:

- Do not cross the tracks when the crossing arm is down, whether you see a train coming or not.
- Never race a train to cross the tracks.
- Wait and stand a distance of 15 feet from the tracks or behind the marked red line until the crossing arm is fully disengaged.
- Only and always cross the tracks at the designated railroad crossing or pedestrian crossing.

Dress Code

Volunteers are asked to dress appropriately for the weather and type of work being performed. Out of respect for our clients we ask that clothing be safe, modest, and inoffensive:

- No spaghetti straps, see-through, low cut, or crop tops.
- No shorts or skirts shorter than mid-thigh.
- No pants below the waist.
- No clothing with offensive language or displays of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
- No open-toed shoes in the Donation Center, warehouse, for landscaping projects, or any other activity involving heavy or dangerous objects.

Weapons and Firearms

For the safety of everyone on our campus, no one is allowed to bring any weapons or firearms, concealed or otherwise, onto our property.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Under no circumstances is a volunteer to report for duty under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If a volunteer is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal substance, then he or she will be asked to cease volunteer activity and provided a taxi cab home. Depending on the severity of the incident, a volunteer may be subject to corrective action, up to and including immediate dismissal from the volunteer program.

Smoking Policy

Smoking will only be permitted during breaks in designated outdoor areas.

Safety by Department

Various departments at Haven may have additional safety policies. Volunteers are required to adhere to all applicable safety policies.

Emergencies

Volunteers must follow the directions of Haven's overhead paging system, regarding critical incidents and emergency alerts. Volunteers may also utilize the security phones located across campus on the yellow posts with blue lights. Our Life Safety Officers are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They are armed, CPR and first aid certified, and trained to respond rapidly to emergencies. Their response time on our campus is quicker than calling 911. However, if the situation requires it, our dispatchers can also call 911 to engage San Antonio first responders.

Volunteer Badges

Permanent Volunteer Badge

Volunteers, whether serving individually or as part of a group, who visit Haven for Hope more than 4 times in a 12-month period are required to:

- submit a Volunteer Application for review and approval, per Volunteer Services Department Policies and Procedures, for more information visit; www.havenforhope.org/volunteer;
- submit to a background check;
 - the focus of this check is to identify and prohibit from volunteering those that are registered sex offenders, violent offenders, and others with such history as is deemed inappropriate for service at Haven for Hope;
 - this background check is performed online via a third party; volunteers' private information, such as their Social Security Number, are not shared with Haven for Hope, so as to ensure safety and security;
 - minors are not required to submit to a background check;
- obtain a permanent ID badge, which will be displayed on their person in open view at all times while on campus.

Family and Friends

Volunteers may not bring family or friends who are not active volunteers on campus while volunteering without specific authorization from Volunteer Services. If friends and family are permitted, then they are subject to campus security policies for visitors.

Volunteer Groups

All members of a volunteer group must stay in their designated area with their group. If members of a group need to move to a different area or exit the campus gates, then they must

be escorted by a Haven or Partner staff member (yellow, green, brown, turquoise, or black badges) or badged regular volunteer.

Personal Belongings

There is no storage area to accommodate personal belongings. Volunteers should never leave personal belongings in an unsecured area of the Haven campus. If an item is lost, the volunteer may check the Lost and Found at the Security Building (building #2) where items will be held for 90 days. After 90 days, unclaimed items will be donated to Haven's Donation Center. Found items may be turned into the Volunteer Center or the Security Building.

General

Meals and Outside Food

Volunteers may have meals and snacks in designated break rooms or work areas. Volunteers may NOT purchase or receive meals from the onsite San Antonio Food Bank or St. Vincent de Paul (St. Vinny's) kitchens. Volunteer groups may procure catering services from the San Antonio Food Bank's catering company, Catalyst Catering, or they may bring outside food in for their group. Out of respect for special dietary needs or allergies, please do not share food with clients except when permitted at Haven or Partner agency sanctioned events.

Tours

Haven conducts tours regularly for the benefit of the community and prospective volunteers, and as a way to keep current volunteers updated on changes with the organization. A tour is strongly encouraged for someone seeking to become a regular volunteer with Haven but is not mandatory subsequently. As a Haven volunteer, you serve as an ambassador for the organization, and we welcome you to invite friends, family, and colleagues to take a tour. Tours are specifically designed for adults or to be age appropriate for families with children. Tours last approximately 60 minutes. Anyone may sign up for a campus tour on our website. If you have a group of five or more interested in a tour, then you may also request a private tour via the form on our website.

Volunteer Guidelines

Service at the Discretion of Haven for Hope

Haven for Hope accepts the services of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion and supervision of Haven. Volunteers understand and agree that Haven may, at any time, for whatever reason, decide to end a volunteer's relationship with Haven.

Where applicable, verification of licenses, certification, and other qualification requirements must be completed before an individual can commence volunteering at Haven. Volunteers may, at any time, for whatever reason, decide to cease volunteering for Haven. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to a Volunteer Services team member.

Volunteer References & Verification

We understand some volunteers may seek references or verification of their volunteer work at Haven, for professional, educational, or personal reasons. To streamline this process, all individuals seeking verification of volunteerism should direct their requests to volunteer.services@havenforhope.org. This ensures a centralized and efficient process for handling such requests. Haven for Hope will only provide dates of the individual's volunteer work at Haven.

Volunteering and Social Media

We are advocates for volunteers sharing their experiences on social media because it helps spread awareness about Haven for Hope and often, encourages others to get involved. However, there are key guidelines we would like you to follow when sharing.

- If you would like to use your volunteer status as your listed profession on social media, please be aware that anything you post will reflect on you and Haven for Hope. Refrain from posting negative or derogatory comments that are against the beliefs and core values of Haven for Hope. Use good judgement.
- Be mindful of posting pictures and aware of your background surroundings. Do not take pictures or share any personal information regarding clients. Always keep clients and their privacy a number one priority.
- If you are in doubt about whether to take or post a picture, do not hesitate to ask a member of the Volunteer Services team.

Volunteer Disqualifications

There are certain instances in which prospective volunteers would be disqualified from volunteering.

Certain Criminal Backgrounds

- Registered sex offenders are not permitted, under any circumstances, to become a regular badged volunteer with Haven. Registered sex offenders may never enter the Transformational Campus of Haven, on which children reside.
 - However, registered sex offenders may volunteer in the Courtyard, providing they access the Courtyard through the Courtyard's main entrance off West Martin or through the back doors of St. Vinny's kitchen. The Courtyard is a

designated safe area for registered sex offenders to reside. Any registered sex offender seeking to volunteer must still apply per the normal volunteer process, but will not receive a volunteer badge.

- The application of prospective volunteers who have a felony conviction will be considered and reviewed by the Director of Life Safety and Volunteer Services to determine eligibility. Haven or Partner staff who have knowledge of the prospective volunteer may submit their recommendation in writing to the above directors for consideration. The final decision will be made by the Director of Life Safety.

Court-Appointed Community Service

Haven for Hope does not offer opportunities to fulfill service hour requirements that are court-ordered. However, we recommend contacting the United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County by phone 210-352-7000 or visiting their website which provides a list of agencies that offer community service opportunities: www.volunteersanantonio.org.

Haven for Hope Alumni

Haven for Hope Alumni who have moved off the Haven campus and, are no longer receiving Haven services for **2 years**, are eligible to be considered to be a volunteer. Upon receipt of an application from an alum, the Volunteer Services team will consult with program staff to verify that there are no concerns with said alum volunteering. If there are concerns, then program staff will address them with the alum. If there are no concerns, the alum will be allowed to volunteer just like any other community member and treated accordingly.

Haven or Partner Former Employees Ineligible for Rehire

Former employees of Haven for Hope or Partner Agencies who are ineligible for rehire are ineligible to volunteer with Haven for Hope.

Pre-Existing Relationships

In the interest of maintaining our clients' privacy and allowing them space for life transformation, volunteers who have a pre-existing personal relationship with a client currently residing at Haven are not eligible to volunteer for Haven.

Equal Volunteering Opportunity

Haven for Hope provides equal volunteering opportunities for every person, regardless of age, race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, pregnancy, genetic characteristics, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other category protected by law.

Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment

It is Haven's policy to maintain an environment free of unlawful discrimination and harassment (including but not limited to sexual harassment). Haven strictly forbids discrimination and harassment, including discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, physical or mental disability, genetic disposition or carrier status, marital status, veteran status, or any other category protected under applicable federal, state or local law. This policy applies to all Haven volunteers. Any volunteer found to be engaging in any type of discrimination towards clients, staff, partner staff, or other volunteers will be subject to corrective action, up to and including immediate dismissal from the volunteer program.

Grievances

Volunteers are always encouraged to speak to their staff liaison and/or the Volunteer Manager they report to if they have a problem. If a volunteer has a problem with a staff member or their volunteer supervisor, then they may file a grievance with the Volunteer Services Manager. If a volunteer has a problem with the Volunteer Services Manager, then they may file a grievance with the Chief Development officer, who can be reached at 210-220-2198.

"No Show" Policy

We strive to be good stewards of the gifts entrusted to us, including time and talent. To this end, we rely on our volunteer's valuable service and reliability to continue the work of our mission. A volunteer with a scheduling conflict is asked to communicate the anticipated delay or absence to his/her staff liaison or to a member of the Volunteer Services team as soon as the conflict becomes apparent. Repeated failure to do so may result in corrective action, up to and including immediate dismissal from the volunteer program.

Corrective Actions

Haven for Hope is a transformational center and a place for second chances. We seek to treat all clients, staff, and volunteers in accordance with our Core Values. However, unacceptable behavior which does not lead to immediate dismissal, may be handled in the following manner by the Volunteer Services team:

- verbal discussion – a volunteer will be informed that he or she has violated a policy, which did not seriously threaten the welfare of others or the work of Haven for Hope; this discussion will be noted in the volunteer's file.

Dismissal

Volunteers may be dismissed without warning for just cause. Haven has the right to request that a volunteer leave the campus immediately. If a volunteer has been dismissed from the volunteer program for failure to comply with the above policies, then he or she will be ineligible to return as a volunteer. Should the volunteer wish to return after one year, his or her new

volunteer application will be considered and reviewed by an *ad hoc* Volunteer Services Committee, which may include staff liaisons, to determine eligibility.