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st. paul lutheran church
host manual

2009–2010



winter
hospitality
overflow

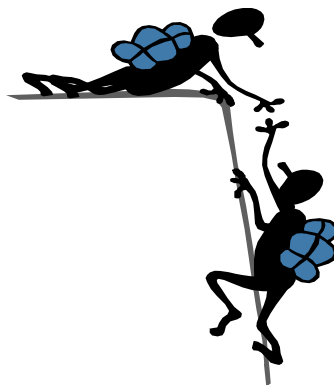
Homelessness does not have just one face, but many. There are many reasons why people become homeless, and many people who are affected by it. Homelessness can affect someone you know, even those who are closest to you.

Values

✓ Compassion ✓ Acceptance ✓ Accountability
✓ Dedication ✓ Teamwork ✓ Respect ✓ Integrity

“Through our daily work we strive to meet these standards. It is important that these values be expressed to our guests, and our co-workers.”

While we are all here to do a “job,” we must keep in mind that we set the example for our guests and their children to live by. By maintaining a positive and professional attitude, we can help set the tone for which our clients will participate, observe and teach their children.



Some volunteers' preconceptions and expectations about homeless people change after volunteering in the shelter. They discover that there are as many reasons why people become homeless, as there are people who are homeless. Sometimes volunteers encounter behaviors on the part of our shelter guests that are upsetting. While the vast majority of our guests are appreciative and polite, please notify the Share case manager immediately of behaviors, which demean or injure anyone. As well, please understand that the stress of living without a home develops skills in our guests that many of us may under use, and erodes skills you may take for granted.

For example, in her own home a single mother may patiently teach and discipline her child. In the shelter that same mom might be inattentive to all but the most extreme behaviors her child exhibits; and when she does discipline her child, she may over do it. Concurrently, however, she may be developing street smarts and learning creative ways to problem solve and protect her family. Some of our guests' behaviors are a function of their circumstances: their loss of autonomy, fear of the unknown, poor diet, and chronic fatigue are just a few obstacles. Circumstances may not excuse behavior but they may enlighten our responses to behavior we see. You may see a change in that mother simply by asking, "Can I help?"

Our guests face a multitude of difficulties. Unemployment, lack of education and skills, illiteracy, family violence, alcohol and drug use/abuse, mental illness, and physical disabilities can all contribute to a person becoming homeless. With so much to deal with, our guests' attention and judgment may not be at its best. Remember, you are not responsible for our guests' behavior.

The faith based community and the supporters of the Winter Overflow Housing have focused on families, single female adults and couples without children for a couple of reasons. Families in need of shelter and safe housing have quickly out-grown the current space provided through the local family shelters, single female adult space in our community is very limited at best, and there has been an increase of need in this area. In our past experience of operating winter shelters/housing, we have noted that there too was a need for couples without children. This is one family type that receives minimal services through housing or shelters in our community.

Families are one of the fastest growing homeless populations in our community. Since January of this year alone, Share has served approximately 1,450 men, women and children. Over 350 of these were children. It is important to know and understand that as a community we do the best that we can to serve as many people as possible. In the month of August there were 91 new clients that entered into the family shelters, 35 of which were children. Due to an every growing need, and a continued lack of shelter space, at least 59 people are turned away each night.

The latest research estimates the average age of homeless person in the United States to be 9 years old. Furthermore, the availability of affordable housing in Vancouver and Portland, has been

ranked as inferior to traditionally upscale communities such as Orange County and Santa Barbara, California. In Vancouver, the waiting list for Public Housing is over 5 years.

Volunteers in our community are the life-blood of our shelter operation, and we thank you for your interest and commitment. This manual is provided to help you better understand our goals and values as we work with our community's homeless individuals and families. Above all else we strive for a safe, calm and predictable shelter environment for guests and volunteers alike. While a minimum of rules is most desirable, experience has shown us that some routine increases guest morale and decreases volunteer anxiety. Please familiarize yourself with the contents of this packet and feel free to ask any questions you may have.

We are all proud of our accomplishments and look forward to our continued growth. Thank you for your participation and, again welcome.

Procedures

Health in Shelter

Remember that many signs of mental illness are similar to intoxication and/or drug abuse. Physical symptoms to be concerned about include coughing, disoriented, expressed dizziness, appearing to be overly exhausted (lethargic). These could be just from living on the streets, but they could be underlying symptoms of disease that needs treatment by a medical facility. If clients ask for you to contact 911 after the Share staff have left, please do not hesitate to call.

Individuals with Physical/Mental Disabilities

Clients with documented physical and/or mental health disabilities are not to be discriminated against. They may have several restrictions placed on them by their doctor. All staff and volunteers need to be sensitive and understanding about our client/s restrictions and needs.

Medical Emergencies

If any of the following medical emergency conditions are present do not volunteer to transfer the victim to the hospital. Call 911 and request an ambulance.

- Severe vomiting or blood present in vomit
- Difficulty breathing
- Profuse bleeding
- Dizziness
- Suspected broken bones
- Injury as a result of criminal assault
- Complications of pregnancy
- Drug overdose or suicidal ideation or attempt
- Seizures
- Intermittent consciousness, any instances of unconsciousness

If an ambulance is called, and the client is unable to communicate with medical personnel, you may provide medics with the resident's name, age, gender, medical history, medications, and emergency contact number, if one has been provided. You may provide your observations in terms of behavior, concerns and of the client's symptoms. However, safeguard your resident's confidentiality in all other matters.

An incident report will need to be completed, and left for the Share staff. The incident should be noted in the volunteer log.

In medical emergencies, do not provide treatment except for basic first-aid, and CPR. This precludes over the counter medications, water, laxatives, antacids, aspirin, Tylenol, or any other substance or procedure, which may hinder conditions, mask symptoms, or complicate medical treatment.

Death in Shelter

The following steps should be taken if death occurs in shelter.

- Call 911 or designate a responsible person to call for you.
- Verify that the person is without a pulse and/or not breathing.
- Contact Pastor Chris.
- Ask other guests to leave the room.
- Insure that you or a responsible person is comforting others in the facility.
- The emergency medical technician or fireman who responds will contact the coroner.
- Take the necessary time to comfort and provide support to the other residents.
- Document this in the volunteer log.

Medications

Clients will be responsible for their own medications.

Communicable Diseases and Safeguard Procedures

Safety Procedures

Communicable disease guidelines in the shelter setting cover the handling of urine, feces, vomit, and blood. The following precautions are suggested to safeguard against many communicable diseases:

- When handling urine-soaked bed linen, use rubber surgical gloves that have been provided.
- Any linen or clothing, which contains feces or vomit, must be rinsed in the restroom sink. The sink will then need to be cleaned out with bleach water in order to avoid spreading germs. Rubber or surgical gloves must be worn.
- All used linen must be washed before offering to a new resident. No blankets, sheets, pillows, or any other such similar items may be returned to linen storage or offered to another resident without first being washed.
- Use surgical gloves when bandaging any injury whether the skin is broken and blood is visible. This includes nosebleeds. If at all possible, have the client, (or parent, if the injured party is a minor), apply the necessary bandages themselves.

Communicable Diseases

Any communicable disease will be disclosed at the time of intake, and the client will be given proper instructions on precautionary methods.

If the individual has head lice, a shower cap will be provided to them by staff at time of their intake, and is expected to be worn throughout the evening.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside any of host sites. As a matter of professional ethics, staff and volunteers will not sell, loan or give cigarettes to residents, nor buy, borrow or accept cigarettes from residents. The church will ban smoking on the property if the premises is not clean from butts and ashes, so it is very important that we help the guests respect the church's wishes.

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

Drugs, alcohol and/or paraphernalia, are not allowed on any of the host site properties. This is to include the outside perimeter, as well as the parking lot.

Sexual Activity

Due to the environment in which our clients will be residing, sexual activity will not be allowed. This is to include the outside perimeter, as well as the parking lot of any host site. Females who come to the church site will be politely asked to leave as we do not serve women at the St. Paul site.

Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion

Discrimination practices and/or inappropriate behavior by staff and/or volunteers include but are not limited to:

- Showing favoritism towards guests.
- Treating others differently due to sexual orientation.
- Treating others differently due to religious beliefs and preferences.
- Staff and/or volunteers should not discuss their own sexual orientation or beliefs with clients.
- Treating others differently due to age, race or gender.

Transportation of Clients

Staff and volunteers are not to transport clients for any reason.

Conflict

If conflict occurs between one or more guests, mediation and conflict resolution is always available, as long as the situation permits this option to be offered. If the guests cannot become respectful of each other one or all guests involved will be asked to leave.

If the situation continues to escalate, is unmanageable, becomes violent or threatening, 911 is to be called. You will need to fill out an incident report, document in the volunteer log and provide the information to the Church Staff in the morning.

Boundaries

It is imperative all volunteers and staff have strong boundaries when working with the guests. When guests interact with volunteers and staff it is expected that respect be given and received on all sides. Conversations initiated by the staff and volunteers should be appropriate healthy topics, never of a sexual nature. Conversations that guests initiate that become unhealthy should be redirected. Guests should never be given money, taken home with staff or volunteers, given rides, or given special gifts that are not provided to all other guests. The reason for this is that guests may begin to feel obligated to go along with someone who has been nice to them, even if they do not really want to. Guests can come to expect special favors and gifts from staff or volunteers that are beyond their means to give. These situations can escalate and become dangerous for the guests, the volunteers, the staff, the building and the continuation of the program. Please remember this is for your safety and the safety of our guests.

Emergency Evacuation

In the case of fire

Get everyone out of the building as quickly as possible using the most logical route away from the fire. Do not stay in the courtyard, but move to the streets or covered area (east of the church).

In the case of earthquake

Move people out of the building as quickly as possible. Do not go to the courtyard or to the covered area to the east, but move to the streets.

In all cases, use common sense, move with determined speed and make sure all people are accounted for as you move from place to place.

Winter Hospitality Overflow at St. Paul

Population Served: Homeless single men.

Shelter Capacity: 24 people maximum

Hours of Operation: 6:30pm – 7:00am

Months of Operation: November 1 – March 31

Type and Number of Hosts (per day): Two part-time SHARE staff persons, and no less than 2 volunteers on site at all times

Type of Bedding: Mats

Meals Provided:

- Hot meal program at Share House for breakfast, lunch and supper.
- Cold breakfast provided at St. Paul as an option for guests, as well as evening snacks.
- Evening meals provided on Saturday and Sunday evenings at 6:30 PM

Day Use Facility: None

Eligibility Requirements: Single Adult Male

Location: St. Paul Lutheran Church
1309 Franklin St.
Vancouver, WA 98660
360-693-3531

Facility Coordinators: (St. Paul Core Group)

- Pastor Chris Nolte
- Lorraine Anderson
- Thea Weber
- Susan Craswell
- Katherine Garrett
- Geri Hiller

- David Slocum & Judy Enders
- Vicar Tim Weisman
- Connie Hewitt

WHO Faith-Community Coordinator for St. Paul: Paul & Alicia Dumlao

Nightly Schedule/Timeline

5:00 pm
(Sunday
only)

The church coordinator and as many persons as desired arrive at St. Paul for an orientation meeting. A St. Paul Core Group member will help to acquaint volunteers with our facility and answer questions about tasks to be performed, location of goods, logistics and other procedures. This extended orientation is only done on Sunday. On other days, hosts will arrive later. The St. Paul Core Group member will be available each night for a brief centering time from at 5:45 – 6:30 PM.

5:30 pm

- Hosts and staff arrive at host site to set up facility and prepare for guests' arrival.
- Receive orientation from SPLC Core Group leader and PLEASE READ MANUAL FOR MORE INFORMATION
- Complete "Confidentiality Policy" form.
- Please read log for the last couple of days to get familiar with current events.
- Set out snacks. Make decaf coffee.
- Check bathrooms for supplies.
- Set out computer in the FISH distribution room.
- Prepare a few bags with clean linens, blankets and pillows for new guests, as needed (check closet first).
- Start evening rounds for fire safety and observation.
- Get TV ready for viewing.
- Lock gate on Franklin Street side. Guests enter through alley side.

6:30 pm –
9:00 pm

- Allow guests in ONLY at 6:30 PM.
- SHARE Staff will conduct intakes as needed during this time.
- Shower sign-up and schedule will be handled at in-take desk.
- Greet guests as they arrive. Engage in conversation. Offer coffee and snacks as available. NO FOOD is allowed in sleeping areas.
- Ask guests if they need an early “wake up” and mark on bed assignment sheet for future reference.
- Provide personal assistance as needed and appropriate to guests.
- Continue evening rounds, checking hallways, doors, bathrooms and courtyard for fire, safety and security.
- One of the hosts for the evening can serve as a shower monitor, keeping guests to the 15 minute interval.
- Encourage guests who use the shower to use their towel, once he is completed with his shower, to wipe down water on floor and in the area.
- Evening chores by guests will commence around 9:00 PM
- Showers are done for the evening at 9:00 PM.
- Start towel and linen laundry after 9:00 PM

9:30 pm

- Guests should be settled. Help with last minute needs for guests.
 - TV is off at 9:30 pm and snacks are put away.
 - Set out pitchers of ice water and cups on a table in the hallway
 - Lock the door at 9:30 pm. The “zero tolerance” rule is – if a guest leaves the building, the guest may not re-enter. No more in and out of the building for any reason.
 - “Lights out” at 9:45 pm means time for sleep.
 - Take Garbage out. Alley must be free of cars on Monday night.
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10:00 pm
– 5:30 am

- Please set out pitchers of water with ice for guests to use during the night on a table in the hallway. This will assist the guests in providing drinks during the night without entrance to the Hospitality Center.
- Continue nightly rounds for fire, safety and security.
- Assist a guest, as needed, during the night.
- Be sure that the bed assignment sheet is posted on board in hallway.
- Be sure that the fire safety log is completed during the night.
- Correspondence log should have an entry each night to keep up to date info on the WHO environment.
- Clean snack area and set out breakfast foods.
- Straighten bathrooms for neatness and cleanliness.
- Laundry can be done during the night. Towels are the first priority, with sheets and pillow cases second and blankets last.
- No guest laundry at this time.
- Hosts may watch TV during the night at a respectfully low volume.
- Make sure courtyard door is always locked and not propped open.

5:30 am

- Make regular coffee (not decaf) and hot water. Please do not reheat either coffee or hot water from previous evening.
 - Final preparations for breakfast are made.
 - Early risers made need a “wake-up.”
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6:00 am

- Wake up all guests and help with needs that they may have:
Weekday - 6:00 am
Saturday & Sunday - 7:00 am
- Unlock side door for more convenient access for guests.
- Guests will place bedding in bags by themselves and place bags on corresponding chairs at their mats. No personal belongings are allowed to be left in sleeping room during the day, whether in laundry bag or anywhere else, including sleeping bags.

On Monday ONLY:

- Ask the guests to separate laundry:
 - Blankets placed in bags in the hallway
 - Linens placed on floor near laundry room
 - Pillows will remain at the bed site on chair.
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7:00 am

- All guests should exit one hour after the wake-up time.
- Lock exterior and interior doors for security.
- Open windows for aeration, and leave open as you depart.
- Spray chairs and wipe mats clean.
- Clean snack and breakfast areas.
- Vacuum hospitality room, sleeping rooms and hallway.
- Clean and disinfect shower area and bathrooms.
- Unplug and clean any coffee pots.
- Set up coffee and hot water for the next evening welcome shift.
 - Fresh water, coffee measured out and placed in tray – do not turn on.
- Take out garbage.
- Straighten laundry room.
- Place computer cart in Sleeping Room #1.
- Hallway is a fire corridor and exit, and needs to be free of paraphernalia during workdays.
- Set top latch on door to sleeping room #1 and lock door as you leave.
- Close and lock all other doors as well. Do not leave doors open.
- Please set key on counter in kitchen as you leave, locking the door behind you.

The time-frame suggested above is a good schedule, but not the only approach to accomplishing the tasks necessary to managing the daily agenda. Creativity on behalf of the congregation or organization is very much welcomed.

Receive the thanks of grateful partners in this mission.

Policies, Guidelines, and Expectations of Hosts

1. Please sign a confidentiality form.
2. Staff and hosts are expected to stay awake for the duration of their shift unless there is a multiple volunteer staff on site. This is to ensure everyone's safety.
3. Each guest's name is to be placed on the Guest Bed Assignment Sheet. This is a tool to be used in case of an emergency and will indicate who has entered the facility for the evening. DO NOT share this information with anyone outside of staff, hosts and guests.
4. It is mandatory that a fire/safety check be completed, and documented every 30 minutes for the first two hours, and once per hour after that.
5. Site telephones are for use by the hosts, and guests may use the telephone with permission. This is a courtesy to the guests, and they should be reminded to keep conversations short so that all may have the same availability.
6. Transportation of guests, for any reason, is not allowed. It can become very difficult to say no, and to decide who 'gets to go' and who doesn't, as well as a matter of safety.
7. If a guest is seen smoking or lighting matches, lighters, etc. inside the facility, they are to be removed from the property and will not be allowed to return. Smoking will be allowed ONLY in designated areas until 9:30 PM and after 6:00 AM. Guests are not permitted to roll cigarettes or make other preparations inside the building. Please help the condition of the facility by reminding smokers to pick up butts and use ashtrays.
8. Host sites are to be cleaned and bathrooms fully stocked each morning. This should include: vacuuming of facility, sweep/mop bathroom floors, wipe down counters, sinks, and toilets with treated water. Mirrors and doorknobs, shower walls, floors and fixtures should be cleaned as well.
9. If a guest is visibly intoxicated, smells of alcohol, or clearly under the influence an illegal substance, they will not be permitted to stay on property. Normally, this is handled at intake, but could possibly take place at other times. Please record this event in the Log.
10. Incidents of physical and/or emotional abuse should be reported immediately to the SHARE staff person, or quelled by host. Should escalation continue to become unmanageable, call 911.

11. Do not confirm to anyone whether or not a guest is or has entered a host site. Information regarding someone's stay is to given only to Police or other public officials provided they have given you proper identification. They should then be referred to the SHARE staff, if on site.
12. Always use rubber gloves when providing first aid care, handling linens or removing garbage.
13. Do not dispense medications to anyone.
14. Hosts can use the Hospitality Center for watching movies, playing games, reading, etc. as long a noise volume remains at a respectable level. Guests are not allowed to use the couch after lights out and before breakfast. Guests are asked to remain in the hallway or their assigned bed area if they are not using the restroom.
15. Movies will not be allowed if they are classified as a "Horror" type movie or anything dealing with occult themes. Movies with strong sexual content will also not be allowed. Violence and language issues will be handled on a per movie basis. All movies should be chosen with sensitivity to everyone viewing.
Guests are not allowed to bring in DVDs.
16. Hosts can accept the assistance of guests when they offer to help with tasks in the WHO areas, i.e. vacuuming, cleaning their own mats, bathroom cleansing, kitchen clean-up, etc. This provides assistance to the team of volunteers and gives back a sense of participation to our guests.
17. Hosts and guests can have accessibility to the wireless internet available in the building. Passwords, which will be changed each week, are available for the asking. Use of the internet assumes ethical and responsible behavior at all times.

Expectations of Host Faith Communities or Organizations

- Make arrangements for “key leader” from the congregation or organization, and as many hosts as necessary, to meet the St. Paul coordinators for initial orientation on Sunday at 5:00 pm. This orientation is of great importance for the success of the week, and information should be passed from team to team for greater continuity and communication for the entire week. Hosts are always welcome to come at other Sunday evening trainings if it is not convenient to attend the Sunday evening before the assigned week.
- Bring snacks – Fresh fruit and vegetables, drinks, chips, cookies, etc. are always acceptable. Homemade baked goods are also welcome. Keep in mind that snacks are for all of the guests and hosts to consume.
- Bring coffee – Each group is encouraged to bring one large can of regular and one can of decaf coffee at the beginning of each week. There may be more needed, however. The tea, hot chocolate and cider have been supplied. The regular is used in the morning and the decaf is served in the evening.
- Bring a movie or two (DVD or VHS) for viewing each night. There may be a few other movies available. However, your provision may be a fresh addition to the sequence of movies.
- Complete as many of the above described tasks for the evening as possible or desired.

Please let a St. Paul Task Force member know of any needs in the facility. Please write a message on the board inside the pantry on the wall. We will be glad to provide the assistance.

If a congregation finds it difficult to provide the above materials, please speak with a St. Paul Core Group member and we will work it out. If there are other things you want to do to move the project forward and have suggestions, please call Pastor Nolte, Vicar Tim or Geri Hiller for a conversation. We welcome your input and ideas.

Thank you for your invaluable assistance in rendering care and hospitality to our guests.

St. Paul WHO Task Force Responsibilities

1. Develop and coordinate the use of St. Paul facilities for WHO.
2. Oversees and revises the WHO Manual for the St. Paul site.
3. Opens and prepares facility each evening for WHO project.
4. Offers weekly training and daily orientation to volunteers.
5. Purchase and stocks basic food supplies.

Suggestions for Key Leaders of Congregations and Organizations

- Have a staffing list with phone numbers posted in the pantry so the volunteers know who is coming in next and who to call if no one does.
- Communication regarding inventory of food can be handled through calling a St. Paul Task Force member so that supplies remain consistent, not too much or too little. Please write your needs on the white marker board in the pantry.
- Assigning shift leaders or team captains can make a difference in coordination for the evening and in good communication.
- Key leaders should call the next day's crew members to confirm availability.