



# Emergency Warming Center Volunteer Manual

# Emergency Warming Center Collaboration Marion and Polk Counties

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Overview	3
Nightly Schedule and Timeline	4
Volunteer Job Descriptions	5
Volunteer Expectations	7
Health and Safety Tips	9
Client Warming Center Expectations	12

## Emergency Warming Center Collaboration

Volunteers are the life-blood of our Emergency Warming Center, and we thank you for your interest and commitment. With your help, we are able to make a significant contribution, helping homeless individuals during the coldest times of the year. This manual is provided to help you better understand our goals and values as we support our community's homeless population. Above all else we strive for a safe, calm, and predictable environment for guests and volunteers.

### Overview

**Population Served:** Individuals 18 years and older which include: People with Pets, People with Partners, and People with Possessions.

**Hours of Operation:** 8:00 pm – 6:30 am for guests

**Mission:** To save lives.

**Extreme Weather Guidelines:** In coordination with city and county emergency managers, the Warming Center will be activated when weather events create safety issues for those who are unprotected. Things taken into consideration are temperatures, wind chill, accumulation of ice or snow, or other times when weather factors represent a threat to those who are exposed.

- 27 degrees Fahrenheit or below for at least 3 consecutive evenings.
- Snow of 1” or more which is sticking to the ground in most locations, or
- Other times at when wind chill, ice, flooding or other factors representing a threat to those who are exposed.

**Volunteer/Client Ratio:** Each host location offers its unique challenges. The Fire Marshal sets the “capacity” for each location used. Based on that capacity, we will have no fewer than 10 volunteers for shifts 1 and 3, No fewer than 5 volunteers on shift 2. This ratio provides safety of our guests and our volunteers. It is preferred, but not necessary, that volunteers be trained in CPR and First Aid.

1. Shift One – 7:30 pm to 11:30 pm
2. Shift Two – 11:15 pm – 3:30 am
3. Shift Three – 3:15 am – 7:30 am

## Nightly Schedule and Timeline

**7:15 pm** – Lead Volunteer, Facility Contact and Staff Support Person arrive at host site to set up facility, and prepare for guest arrival.

### **7:30 pm – Shift One Volunteers Arrive**

- Meet their Lead Volunteer
- Review job descriptions, how to's, location of resources, and receive instructions
  - Set up facility – mats, coffee, water, clothing, etc.
- DO NOT LEAVE until released from your shift by Lead Volunteer

**8:00 pm – 10:00 pm** – Guest check-in begins (process described in detail later in the manual)

- Check guests in
- Check in **ALL Guests' belongings**
- Smoking is permitted during 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm (designated smoking spot, 1-5 folks at a time for 10 ish minutes then they must return)
- Warming liquid served – decaf coffee, tea, and bouillon
- Guests may leave at any time throughout the night but if they choose to leave they may NOT return to the Center.
- In the rare case a guest that arrives after 10:00 pm they will need to be checked in and go directly to a space provided for quite time.

**10:00 pm** – Guest should be settled. “Lights out” means time for sleep.

**10:00 pm – 5:30 am** – Quiet time for guests

### **11:15 pm – Shift Two Volunteers Arrive**

- Meet their Lead Volunteer
- Review job descriptions, how to's, location of resources, receive instructions, and review with Shift One's Lead Volunteer any situations to monitor.
- DO NOT LEAVE until released from your shift by Lead Volunteer

### **3:15 am – Shift Three Volunteers Arrive**

- Meet their Lead Volunteer
- Review job descriptions, how to's, location of resources, receive instructions, and review with Shift Two's Lead Volunteer any situations to monitor.
- DO NOT LEAVE until released from your shift by Lead Volunteer

**5:30 am – 6:30 am** – Guests are woken up and are checked out.

- Warming liquids available till 6:30 am
- Guests can leave the blanket issued to them if they will be returning for the next evening.
- Guest must take all their personal belongings
- It is recommended to all Guests to go to UGM for their morning meal.
- Warming Center is cleaned and all supplies are put away, site to be returned to pre-occupancy condition by 7:00 am – 7:30 am

## Volunteer Job Description

**Responsibilities:** It is essential that Volunteers comply with the rules of the Warming Center.

Consistency with implementation is critical for guest expectations and volunteer understanding of operational processes. A volunteer may be asked to discontinue their volunteering if they disregard the rules.

**Description:** Volunteers will work throughout three (3) night shifts reporting to the Lead Volunteer. There are a variety of stations for volunteers to participate. Nightly position assignments will be decided as a group before shifts begin.

**Time Commitment:** Shifts range from 4 to 5 hours.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Prior to Warming Center Activation:

- Attend volunteer orientation
- Sign the Volunteer Confidentiality Policy and Waiver Agreement

2. During Warming Center Activation:

- Sign up for shift via online portal when Warming Center is activated
- Night of shift – Be ready to work at scheduled time. Sign in with Lead Volunteer
- Meet with Lead Volunteer and shift crew and receive overview of Warming Center site, shift activities, incident log issues (if any), and assignments
- Assist with check-in of guests and their belongings
- Assist with check-out of guests and their belongings
- Assist with warming liquid service (8:00 pm to 10:00 pm and 5:30 am – 6:30 am only)
- Hourly monitoring of all restrooms
- Assist with regular cleaning and upkeep of the site
- Monitor sleeping area to ensure that guests are comfortable. If there is a noisy guest, remind them of the quiet hours. Seek support from Lead Volunteer if needed.
- Complete the morning break down and cleaning of site
- Other duties as assigned by Lead Volunteer
- DO NOT LEAVE Warming Center until released by Lead Volunteer

## Volunteer Expectations

**It is important to follow the procedures of the Warming Center for safety and consistency of guest expectations and volunteers.**

If there is a situation that arises on your shift and you need guidance, seek out your Lead Volunteer for support.

If you have a suggestion for the Warming Center, please write it down in night log. DURING YOUR SHIFT is not the time to change the Warming Center implementation.

**Values:** Compassion, Acceptance, Accountability, Teamwork, Respect, Integrity

It is the expectation that our volunteers will embrace and will exhibit these values at all times during their service with our guests.

**Confidentiality:** Please remember that we are bound by the trust people place in us to keep their conversations confidential. **People who violate this trust will not be permitted to continue volunteering.** All discussions that take place within the scope of your involvement with the guests and the Warming Center will remain confidential. NO SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS OR PICTURES regarding Warming Center guests/clients.

The purpose of this policy is:

1. To protect the identity of guests and treat each one with the care and dignity we would want for ourselves.
2. To provide protection and safety for our volunteers.
3. To nurture the commitment of trust among ourselves.
4. To continue the trust and confidence in the Warming Center effort.

**Boundaries:** It is expected that all who participate in the Warming Center will conduct themselves in a friendly and professional manner when interacting with guests. Volunteers should be aware that the perception of favoritism is detrimental to guests and to the community. All guests should be treated equally and with respect by volunteers. It is imperative that all volunteers have clear boundaries when working with the guests. When volunteers interact with guests and other volunteers, it is expected that respect be given and received on all sides. Conversations that become unhealthy should be re-directed.

Volunteers should **NEVER:**

1. Give or loan guests money or personal items
2. Take guests home
3. Provide, or offer to provide transportation
4. Give special gifts
5. Give, receive, or exchange personal phone numbers with a guest
6. Enter a relationship with a guest where money or services are exchanged as a result of a connection with the program.

These gestures may seem like a “nice” thing to do, but please consider that these behaviors pose a serious violation of necessary boundaries and put both volunteers and guests in compromising and sometimes dangerous situations. These situations can escalate and become dangerous for the guests, the volunteers, the staff, the building and the continuation of the Warming Center.

**Questions to Consider in Examining Potential Boundary Issues:**

In each case, boundary issues may pose dilemmas for the volunteer and there may be no clear or obvious answer. In determining how to proceed, consideration of the following questions may be helpful.

- Is this in the guest’s best interest?
- Whose needs are being served?
- Will this have an impact on the service being offered?
- Should I make a note of my concerns or consult with the Shift Leader?
- How would this be viewed by the guest’s family or significant other?
- How would I feel telling a colleague about this?
- Am I treating this guest differently?
- Does this guest mean something ‘special’ to me?
- Am I comfortable in documenting this decision/behavior in the site log?
- Does this violate the volunteer expectations?

If you are concerned about whether or not a behavior is within the boundaries of your role as a volunteer, please your Lead Volunteer.

**Physical Contact:** Physical contact with a guest is prohibited. There are a variety of ways of using touch to communicate nurturing, understanding and support such as a pat on the back or shoulder, a hug or a handshake. Such touch can however, be misinterpreted.

**Discrimination:** Guests should not be discriminated against based on appearance, gender, age, sexual orientation, race or religion.

## Lead Volunteer Job Description

**Description:** Lead Volunteer is the responsible person on each shift that is specifically trained in all areas of the Warming Center activities. Lead Volunteers on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> shift will be aided for 2-3 hours with a Staff Support Person.

**Time Commitment:** Shifts range from 4 to 5 hours.

**Responsibilities:** It is essential that Lead Volunteer comply with the procedures of the Warming Center and guide their volunteers to do the same. Consistency with implementation is critical for guest expectations and volunteer understanding of process.

- At beginning of shift, 30 mins before your team of volunteers begins, arrive at location. Meet with prior Lead Volunteer and review: building rules and other important info (fire extinguisher and first aid kit locations, exits, etc.), read summary of previous shift in the volunteer log, discuss areas of potential concern, talk with Support Staff Person, and prepare to take over operations.
- Meet with volunteer team:
  - Confirm all members have a signed Volunteer Confidentiality Policy & Waiver Agreement, provide an emergency contact, and have volunteers sign in.
  - Review Incident Log with team – if needed
  - Review duties and assign volunteers (based on site volunteer positions)
  - Answer any questions
- Monitor evening activities both for safety and compliance with Warming Center Expectations. If you need assistance with a situation, coordinate with the Staff Support Person.
- Regularly check-in with volunteers.
- Monitor sleeping area to ensure that guests are comfortable and no one is disturbing anyone else. If there is a noisy guest, remind them of the quiet hours. If they refuse to abide by these, use de-escalation training techniques to remove guest from sleeping area.
- Conduct a restroom review every hour. Monitor for cleanliness, stocking items needing to be replaced, and safety.
- If an incident occurs (may or may not involve calling 9-1-1), fill out an incident report: with full details and make reference to the report in the volunteer log for incoming shift.
- At the end of the shift, fill out the volunteer log with BRIEF description of the shift and pass on building and other important info to the incoming Lead Volunteer.



## **HEALTH & SAFETY TIPS**

### **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 guests, nor buy, borrow or accept cigarettes from guests. Guests **are able** to go outside to smoke in designated locations during designated hours of 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm and 5:30 am – 6:30 am. No more than 5 individuals at the smoking location at a time.

Smoking is a stress-reducer and staying in a shelter could cause escalated stress. WE DO NOT PUBLISICE but if a guest asks to go out for a smoke break between the hours of 10:00 pm and 5:30 am, inform them that this is a 5 minute smoke break in the designated area. Remind them that they can't leave the designated area. If they do so, they will not be allowed to return.

### **Drug 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 lots of host sites. If drugs, alcohol or paraphernalia are found immediately contact Lead Volunteer. 911 or police non-emergency number might need to be called.

### **Conflict**

If conflict occurs between one or more guests, encourage guests to separate. Contact Lead Volunteer immediately. 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 un-manageable, becomes violent or threatening, call 911 immediately. You will need to fill out an incident report, note the incident in the volunteer log.

### **Medications:**

All medications must be checked in with guest's belongings. Connect with Lead Volunteer if medication is needed by guest during their stay.

### **Medical Emergencies:**

Physical symptoms to be concerned about include coughing, disorientation, expressed dizziness or appearing to be overly exhausted (lethargic). These could be just from living on the streets. Remember that many signs of mental illness are sometimes similar to intoxication and /or drug abuse. If a guest asks for you to contact 911, please do not hesitate to call and inform the Lead Volunteer.

If any of the following medical emergency conditions are present, call 911 and request an ambulance immediately. Do not transport the guest to the hospital. Notify Lead Volunteer as soon as possible after calling 911.

1. Severe vomiting or blood present in vomit
2. Difficulty breathing
3. Profuse bleeding
4. Injury as a result of criminal assault
5. Complications of pregnancy
6. Drug overdose, suicidal attempt
7. Seizures
8. Intermittent consciousness or any instances of unconsciousness

If 911 is called and the guest conscious, step back and allow them to talk with the medical personnel. If the guest is unable to communicate with medical personnel, you may provide medics with the guest's name and any other pertinent information that the guest may have voluntarily shared. You may provide your observations in terms of behavior and the guest's symptoms. However, safeguard the guest's confidentiality in all other matters.

An incident report will be completed by the Lead Volunteer with your assistance at the time of the incident. The incident will be noted in the volunteer log with a reference to the incident report for further details.

During medical emergencies do not provide treatment except for basic first-aid and CPR. Do not give out over the counter medications, water, laxatives, antacids, aspirin, Tylenol, or any other substance or procedure. These may worsen conditions, mask symptoms, or complicate medical treatment.

### **Assisting People with Disabilities**

When people with disabilities come to the Warming Center, it is important to work with them individually to assess their needs and to determine that best way to meet those needs. This is a very difficult situation to be in but it can be even more difficult, and frustrating, for an individual with a disability. In all cases, work with the client, follow their request if we are able, to determine the solution that best meets their needs.

### **Assisting People Who Are Mobility Impaired**

People who use wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, canes, or any other walking aid may have differing abilities to access and move about in the Center. Even if a facility is accessible, some guests may have additional needs, such as assistance getting onto mats, or accessing warming liquids. Be sensitive to these needs and ask the guest what assistance may be needed.

### **Animals**

- All animals will be provided a crate for sleeping
- For guests with animals, offer a sleeping area away from other guests. People with allergies or a fear of animals should be directed to a space away from the service animal.
- Address with the individual their responsibility for feeding and care of their pet. Discuss (with Lead Volunteer/Staff) designating a dog relief area, and provide disposal containers.

### **Communicable Diseases and Safeguard Procedures:**

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

1. If the individual has head lice, a shower cap will be provided to them, and is expected to be worn throughout the evening
2. Rubber gloves must be worn.
3. Any linen or clothing that contains feces or vomit must be bagged and discarded in the outside trashcan.
4. No personal blankets, sheets, pillows, or any other such similar items will be permitted into the sleeping area. These will be bagged and will remain with guests other belongings.

5. Use surgical gloves when bandaging any injury in which the skin is broken and blood is visible. This includes nosebleeds. If at all possible, have the guest apply the necessary bandages themselves.

### **Emergency Evacuation:**

#### **In the case of fire – Call 911**

Get everyone out of the building as quickly as possible using site evacuation posted routes away from the fire. Check-in logs for guests and volunteers should be taken and roll call will be taken once everyone has safely gathered at the sites safety location outside the building.

**In the case of earthquake –** Instruct all guests and volunteers to Drop, Cover and Hold On. Drop to the ground on all fours, Cover your head and neck with your arms and bend down, Hold On and move toward an exterior wall until the quaking stopped. When quaking has stopped survey location for safety, the Warming Center may need to be evacuated at this time.

#### **Death in the Warming Center:**

The following steps should be taken if death occurs at the Warming Center

1. Call 911 or designate a responsible person to call for you
2. Verify that the person is without a pulse and/or not breathing
3. Follow 911 operator's instructions
4. Call for the Lead Volunteer
5. Lead Volunteer needs to insure that a responsible person is comforting and staying with family members as well as maintaining the Warming Center.
6. Take the necessary time to comfort and provide support to the other residents. Be calm.
7. Document situation on the incident report and make note in volunteer log.

## Warming Center Guest Expectations

We hope that your stay here, as our guests, will be as pleasant as possible. As our guests we expect that you will do your part in keeping our facilities clean by picking-up after yourself.

**IN AND OUT HOURS** – Open at 8:00 pm – 6:30 am. Guests can be checked in 8:00 pm and 10:00 pm. If you choose to leave the shelter after 10:00 pm you will not be admitted back into the Warming Center that night.

**BEVERAGES** – Decaf coffee, tea, and bullion will be provided between 8:00 pm and 10:00 pm and 5:30 am – 6:30 am.

**LENGTH OF STAY** – Stay is on nightly bases.

**SMOKING** – You may not smoke, use matches, or lighters inside the facility, for any reason. Smoking is permitted in designated areas **ONLY** during the hours of 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm.

**PERSONAL BELONGINGS** – All personal belongings will be stored at a designated location. Volunteers are not responsible for lost or stolen property. Any items left will be discarded. Please thoroughly check the sleeping area thoroughly before you leave.

- **NO OUTSIDE FOOD or BEAVERAGES** – All personal food and beverages will be stored with guest's belongings upon check-in.
- **BEDDING** – Personal bedding will be checked in with your belongings

**PETS** – Pets will be provided a crate and will need to remain in the crate for their safety and the safety of guests.

**LEAVING THE FACILITY** – If you choose to leave, you will be checked out of the Warming Center for the evening and not allowed to return.

**ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS, WEAPONS** – Not allowed

**QUIET HOURS** – From 10:00 pm till 5:30 am

**SEXUAL ACTIVITY** – No sexual activity allowed.

## Volunteer Expectations, Confidentiality & Waiver Agreement

Volunteer Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information (Phone and Email): \_\_\_\_\_

**Expectation: It is essential that Volunteers comply with the procedures of the Warming Center.** Consistency with implementation is critical for guest expectations and volunteer understanding of operational processes. A volunteer may be asked to discontinue their volunteering if they disregard the rules of the Warming Center.

We are bound by the trust people place in us to keep their conversations confidential. **Persons who violate this trust will not be permitted to continue volunteering.** The purpose of this policy is:

1. To protect the identity of guests and treat each one with the care and dignity we would want for ourselves.
2. To provide protection and safety for our volunteers.
3. To nurture the commitment of trust among ourselves.
4. To continue the trust and confidence in the Warming Center efforts.

**I Affirm That:** I shall respect the privacy of our guests and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of volunteering. Therefore, I will not disclose guest confidences to anyone except for the following reasons: a) as mandated by law, b) to prevent clear and immediate danger to a person or persons, c) in the course of my work with the Warming Center, with the aim of helping the guest. I shall possess a professional attitude, which upholds confidentiality towards guests, volunteers, and any sensitive situations arising at the Warming Center. This Confidentiality Policy applies during and after my participation with the program.

**I Affirm That:** I am applying to perform certain volunteer services related to the Warming Center **and will follow the rules of the Warming Center.** I acknowledge that my participation is completely voluntary on my part.

In consideration of my being allowed to participate in this volunteer community service event; I, the undersigned, for myself, my heirs, and assigns hereby release and discharge Mid Willamette Valley Community Action Agency, its affiliates, associates, and any participating organizations in the Warming Center for any claims for damages or injury I may incur resulting from my participation in this volunteer community service event. I understand that my indirect or direct participation with the program may involve risk of injury and/or illness.

This is to acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to the Confidentiality Policy & Waiver Agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date