



# **Volunteer Handbook**

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## Section 1: About St. Francis Center

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St. Francis Center (SFC) is a refuge for men and women who are homeless in the metro Denver area, offering a safe and inviting place to stay during the day when other shelters are unavailable. At the day shelter, SFC provides basic shelter and numerous supportive services that enable people to meet their basic needs for daily survival and to transition out of homelessness. On an average day, over 700 different guests visit St. Francis Center's day shelter, and on a busy day, over 900 may pass through our doors.

The Employment Program primarily serves individuals transitioning out of the criminal justice system, helping with resume writing, cover letter writing, and interview skills, housing and transportation, and connections with meaningful, full-time employment opportunities. Annually, the Employment Program assists approximately 400 guests in finding employment.

The Housing Program provides permanent housing and case management for participants who are ready to move to a more structured environment. SFC case managers help ensure a successful outcome by providing assistance with setting goals, obtaining financial benefits, stabilizing physical, mental health and substance abuse concerns, and by encouraging participants to develop their life skills by pursuing opportunities for enrichment through continuing education, recreational activities, volunteerism and meaningful work.

SFC's Outreach Program serves people who are experiencing homelessness and congregating in visible areas in Downtown Denver. The primary focus of the Outreach team is to build relationships with those living on the streets, with the goals of honoring one's humanity, increasing one's resiliency and capacity to value and believe in oneself, stabilizing medical, mental health, and living situations, and establishing opportunities for substance treatment and employment.

SFC staff and volunteers refer to those we serve as "guests" because of our strong commitment to hospitality, welcoming everyone who comes and treating each person with dignity and respect.

More than anything else, St. Francis Center offers hope when it is most needed.

### Mission Statement:

The mission of St. Francis Center is to offer refuge and peace for our community members who experience homelessness, helping them meet their basic needs and transition out of homelessness.

St. Francis Center is a not-for-profit organization with its roots in the Episcopal Church. The focus of SFC has always been to offer a place of refuge for people who are homeless and to provide services with dignity and respect. We continue the tradition today, welcoming all who come whatever their religious or political affiliation.

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## Section 2: Location & Contact Information

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### Main Office & Day Center:

2323 Curtis Street  
Denver, Colorado 80205

### Hours of Operation:

Sunday - Saturday, 7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.\*

*\*Closed at 2 p.m. on Wednesdays for staff meetings*

(Please note, hours have been temporarily shortened since the COVID-19 outbreak).

SFC is closed only two days a year, one day in the Spring and one day in Fall, for staff retreats. We are open for regular services on all holidays.

### Employment Office:

1400 Williams Sr.  
Denver, CO 80218

### Cornerstone Apartments:

1001 Park Ave. West  
Denver, CO 80205

### St. Francis Apartments at Cathedral Square:

1450 N Washington St.  
Denver, CO 80203

### Director of Volunteers and Community Engagement:

Ellie Benjamin (she/her/hers)

[ellie@sfcdenver.org](mailto:ellie@sfcdenver.org)

Office: 303.244.0761

Cell: 575.202.1419

### Additional Staff Members:

Tom Luehrs, Executive Director: 303.244.0766

Andrew Spinks, Development Director: 303.244.0745

Joel Cassady, Director of Day Services: 303.244.0764

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## Section 3: Volunteer Code of Ethics

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### Relationship with Guests:

- We welcome each person with dignity and respect, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, veteran or marital status, political or religious belief.
- Personal friendships with guests are inappropriate, as they may give the appearance of preferential treatment. Remember: “friendly, not friends.”
- Do not share any personal contact information with guests, including, but not limited to, phone number, home or work address, email address, or social media accounts.
- For the safety of the volunteer and the guest, volunteers may not offer, provide or accept transportation to/from guests.
- Do not offer gifts of any kind, including monetary, to guests. If a guest shares with you a specific need, please refer her/him to a staff person.
- Do not accept personal gifts from guests. If you feel comfortable, politely let the guest know that as a volunteer, you are unable to accept the gift. You may always ask a staff member for assistance with a conversation if desired.
- Do not share any personal information about guests with anyone outside of SFC, or with anyone inside the organization who does not need to know. Confidentiality is essential to maintaining trust between SFC and guests.
- SFC maintains a zero tolerance policy for verbal or physical abuse of any kind, including sexually inappropriate language, between any individuals at SFC. Report any such incident **immediately** to a staff member.

### Trauma Informed Care:

St. Francis Center is committed to creating an environment rooted in trauma-informed practices, a way of operating that:

- Recognizes trauma is common and that any client/customer/student (or staff person) may have experienced it
- Develops a “trauma-informed lens” so that staff can recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma and understand how troubling and unhealthy behaviors (e.g., substance misuse, aggressive outbursts, blaming, disappearing, etc.) may be used to cope with trauma
- Empowers staff to provide appropriate supports to individuals impacted by trauma in a way that helps them to move past (or at least better manage) survival coping behaviors
- Creates organizational processes that promote:
  - Safe and secure environments
  - Trauma-informed competence
  - Healing, hopeful, and trusting relationships
  - Cultural competence
  - Voice, choice, and self-advocacy
  - Self-care

### Relationship with St. Francis Center:

- Donations and other resources at SFC are to be used only for their intended purposes. Supplies and donations may not be taken for your personal use. If you are in need of services from St. Francis Center, please speak with the Director of Volunteers, or any staff member with whom you feel comfortable.
- Report any injury you sustain while performing duties at St. Francis Center immediately to the Director of Volunteers.
- Report any loss of or damage to personal property immediately to the Director of Volunteers.

### Relationship with the General Public:

- Persons from the media will be allowed in the building only with approval of the Executive Director or Development Director. Any request for information or interviews by the media or others should be referred to the Executive Director or Development Director.
- St. Francis Center maintains an apolitical status. There will be no distribution or display of political materials. Please refrain from political discussions with other volunteers, staff, and guests.
- Requests by persons seeking to hire guests should be directed to the employment office.

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## Section 4: Volunteer Involvement at SFC

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St. Francis Center is a seven days a week, year-round operation and we could not exist without the support of our volunteers. We offer a hospitable, safe and accepting environment to more than 260 different volunteers who work with us annually. There are many ways for volunteers to serve and SFC is able to accommodate a variety of schedules and circumstances. Volunteers play an integral role in helping meet the needs of nearly every department. Annually, volunteers dedicate over 19,000 hours of service, equivalent to more than 9 full-time staff positions.

Individual volunteers must be 18 years of age or older in order to volunteer in positions with direct contact with guests. Children under 18 years of age are welcome to volunteer with a legal guardian, although the child will not serve in areas with direct guest interaction.

In addition to regularly-scheduled volunteers, SFC also accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student intern projects, corporate volunteer programs and other referrals as available.

### Role of the Director of Volunteers:

The Director of Volunteers works to fulfill the mission of St. Francis Center by providing volunteers with expertise, leadership and commitment to the organization. The Director recruits, orients, places, supports, values and recognizes volunteers.

The Director of Volunteers is dedicated to involving volunteers throughout the organization, providing volunteers with the resources they need to be successful and to training the staff of SFC in best practices of volunteer management. SFC's goal is to do everything possible to ensure volunteers have a meaningful experience.

### Volunteer Application Process:

Volunteers are placed into assignments based on their interests, skills, and the needs of SFC. Interests and skills are assessed through the completion of a volunteer application, background screening and personal interview. To ensure the best possible match between the interests and skills of potential volunteers and the needs of SFC, all volunteers must follow the application process:

- *Volunteer Application:* All prospective volunteers must complete a volunteer application, including a background check consent form.
- *Tour and interview:* All prospective volunteers must schedule a tour of SFC and an interview with the Director of Volunteers before being considered for service. The Director of Volunteers will make every effort to accommodate prospective volunteers' schedules for the tour and interview, including early mornings, evenings and weekends.
- *Volunteer Training:* SFC's volunteers are given sufficient training to equip them with the tools necessary to perform the functions of their assignments. Many volunteer positions offer on-site training with the position supervisor. However, some positions require completion of training prior to active participation in the position.

## Volunteer Background Screening:

All prospective volunteers must submit to a criminal record and National Sex Offender (NSO) check prior to acceptance into the program. A volunteer whose background check indicates no criminal record and is not registered with NSO will be considered for placement. Any volunteer applying for an opportunity with SFC who has been convicted of a felony will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities:

### What can volunteers expect from St. Francis Center?

- To feel their skills are needed and wanted at SFC and that any special skills they possess will be considered in their placement
- To be given an opportunity for a variety of experiences
- To be heard and kept informed by the Director of Volunteers
- To be valued as a person who can make unique contributions
- To volunteer in a safe environment, and have inherent risks explained prior to volunteering
- To be given adequate information and training to carry out assignments
- To have volunteer time used wisely
- To be given sound guidance, direction and feedback from staff
- To be appropriately recognized for their efforts
- To be able to freely discuss problems, ask questions or make suggestions
- To be able to contact the Director of Volunteers in cases where differences between volunteers and staff cannot be settled amicably
- To be notified in advance of changes of volunteer assignments
- To be given the opportunity to offer input into decisions that affect their jobs

### What can SFC expect from volunteers?

- To be on time and ready to serve at the start of each shift, and, whenever possible, provide advance notice of any absences
- To perform their duties to the best of their abilities
- To accept guidance and direction from staff and the Director of Volunteers
- To ask questions and seek additional information when clarification is needed
- To remain loyal and supportive of St. Francis Center
- To project a friendly and welcoming attitude to SFC guests, fellow volunteers and staff members
- To discuss satisfactions, dissatisfactions and suggestions for changing volunteer assignments with the Director of Volunteers
- To be alert, sober and drug-free while volunteering
- To notify the Director of Volunteers if they choose to terminate their volunteer position

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## Section 5: Volunteer Policies

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A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or the expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of his or her volunteer duties, performs a task at the direction of St. Francis Center. A volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled by St. Francis Center prior to performance of the task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers will not be considered employees of the organization.

### Dress Code

- SFC badges should be worn during your volunteer shift.
- Please wear clothing that is neat, clean and without wrinkles or holes. Excessively tight clothing is not appropriate.
- Appropriate shirt options include: sweatshirts, turtlenecks, sweaters, collared shirts, shirts with zippers or buttons, and T-shirts. Tank tops, muscle shirts, low-cut and bare midriff tops are not appropriate.
- Long pants, skirts, cropped/Capri pants, and shorts are all appropriate bottom options. Recommended length for skirts and shorts is knee-length. Short-shorts are not appropriate.
- Wording or logos on shirts must not detract from professional standards (e.g. University of Denver is okay but Coors beer is not).
- Closed-toe shoes, tennis shoes, and sandals are appropriate footwear options, but shower shoes and flip flops are not (including those that are decorated).
- Please refrain from wearing hats while inside St. Francis Center.

### Equal Opportunity:

The Volunteer Program at St. Francis Center offers many diverse opportunities for volunteers, and we welcome and encourage participation from all sectors of the community. St. Francis Center offers opportunities to the community without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual preference or disability. There are many ways for volunteers to serve and SFC will make every effort to accommodate a variety of schedules, circumstances and abilities.

### Service at the Discretion of the Organization:

St. Francis Center accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the organization.

### Harassment and Discrimination:

In compliance with applicable laws, St. Francis Center strives to provide a working environment free from harassment of its volunteers based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, veteran or marital status.

SFC strongly opposes sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual conduct. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment/volunteer service
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment/volunteer service
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Inappropriate sexual conduct that could lead to a claim of sexual harassment is expressly prohibited by this policy. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, sexually implicit or explicit communications whether in:

1. Written form, such as cartoons, posters, calendars, notes, letters, e-mail
2. Verbal form, such as comments, jokes, foul or obscene language of a sexual nature, gossiping or questions about another's sex life, or repeated unwanted requests for dates
3. Physical gestures and other nonverbal behavior, such as unwelcome touching, grabbing, fondling, kissing, massaging, and brushing up against another's body

Harassment is a serious misconduct and if a volunteer is found to have harassed or discriminated against any volunteer, guest or employee, that person will be subject to dismissal. Likewise, filing a false or bad-faith complaint is prohibited and will be subject to dismissal.

If you believe that you have been subjected to harassment or have observed harassment of another volunteer or employee, you should promptly report the incident to the Director of Volunteers.

### Confidentiality:

Information relating to the activities of St. Francis Center or its affiliates is confidential and protected from improper use or disclosure under state and federal law. We value and respect your confidentiality as a volunteer. We will never disclose, sell or distribute any of your information. Volunteers who disclose any confidential information regarding guests, co-volunteers or employees of St. Francis Center are subject to dismissal.

All St. Francis Center guests are a legally protected group according to HIPAA standards. As such, all volunteers must adhere to HIPAA regulations regarding confidentiality, keeping guests and former guests information, including names, personal information, or other program information confidential.

### Photography and Media Release:

On occasion, St. Francis Center may capture a photo of its services, which at times includes the volunteer. These photos may be used for marketing and promotional materials.

### Grievances:

If a volunteer has any problems or concerns related to their volunteer position or to other SFC employees or volunteers, they should speak with the Director of Volunteers. St. Francis Center will make every attempt to address the concern. If you are not comfortable speaking with the Director of Volunteers you may bring your concerns to the Deputy Executive Director or Executive Director.

## Incident Reporting:

Any incident in which a volunteer is harmed or injured in any way should be immediately reported to the Director of Volunteers. A form should be completed including all of the incident information.

Any volunteer who is injured, however slightly, must report the injury immediately to the Director of Volunteers. If the injured party is unable to report the injury, any employee or volunteer who witnesses the injury or sudden illness of that person should immediately notify the Director of Volunteers. If she is unavailable, any member of the St. Francis Center Admin team may be notified.

In the case of an accident requiring medical attention, the volunteer's own insurance will be considered primary. The volunteer is responsible for any charges incurred for medical expenses.

## Alcohol and Drug Use:

St. Francis Center is a drug free workplace. We have zero tolerance for intoxication of any sort on the job. Any volunteer who reports for an assignment under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be asked to leave immediately and will be subject to dismissal.

## Personal Beliefs:

Volunteers should never promote their religious, political, or other beliefs to SFC guests, staff or fellow volunteers. Always be respectful of other's beliefs, especially when they differ from your own.

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# Section 6: Volunteer Procedures

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## Reporting an Absence:

### Unplanned Absence Protocol

We understand that circumstances beyond your control arise, and at times will conflict with your volunteer commitment. Please give as much advanced-notice of your unexpected absence as possible, by calling one of these numbers:

- If you can call before 7:00 a.m. the day of your shift, please leave a voicemail on the **Volunteer Hotline:** (303)297-3607.
- If you call after 7:00 a.m. the day of your shift, speak with a staff member by calling the **SFC Main Phone:** (303)297-1576 ext. 736.

As an alternative to calling, you can also send an email to let us know of your unexpected absence. Please email one of the following, based on the day of your volunteer shift:

Sunday Volunteers	<a href="mailto:sunday@sfcdenver.org">sunday@sfcdenver.org</a>
Monday Volunteers	<a href="mailto:monday@sfcdenver.org">monday@sfcdenver.org</a>
Tuesday Volunteers	<a href="mailto:tuesday@sfcdenver.org">tuesday@sfcdenver.org</a>
Wednesday Volunteers	<a href="mailto:wednesday@sfcdenver.org">wednesday@sfcdenver.org</a>
Thursday Volunteers	<a href="mailto:thursday@sfcdenver.org">thursday@sfcdenver.org</a>
Friday Volunteers	<a href="mailto:friday@sfcdenver.org">friday@sfcdenver.org</a>
Saturday Volunteers	<a href="mailto:saturday@sfcdenver.org">saturday@sfcdenver.org</a>

### **Planned Absence Protocol**

Please inform the Director of Volunteers of any planned absences, such as vacations or planned medical procedures.

### **Tracking Volunteer Time:**

It is the expectation that volunteers will accurately report their contribution of volunteer time.

Accurate tracking of volunteer hours is important for many reasons, especially:

- Annual reports of volunteer hours become part of St. Francis Center's history.
- A quantified amount of time secures ongoing support for the volunteer program and assists with the acquisition of funding to support our programs and operations.

Volunteer hours are tracked through a sign-up sheet in the staff/volunteer breakroom at the Center. If your volunteer assignment is in a different location, your direct supervisor will make arrangements with you for the procedure for tracking your hours.

### **Emergency Situation:**

In the case of an emergency, check in with your supervisor and follow her/his instructions.

### **Resignation:**

Volunteers who intend to resign from their assignment are requested to provide advance notice of their departure to the Director of Volunteers.

### **Income Taxes:**

If you would like a record of the days you volunteered, you may request a report from the Director of Volunteers. Your mileage can be deducted from your taxes if you file the long form. Contact your CPA or the IRS for details.

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## Section 7: Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgment

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read/been read and understand the policies included in the St. Francis Center Volunteer Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
St. Francis Center Staff Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please sign and return this form to the Director of Volunteers.*