

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



Mission Statement: The Hope Center's mission is to care for homeless and at-risk persons by providing life-sustaining and life-rebuilding services that are comprehensive and address the underlying causes.

Welcome to the family of volunteers at the Hope Center! Our volunteers, who generously give of their time and talents, come alongside us to rebuild lives every day. Your commitment to volunteering at the Hope Center will have a positive impact on our community and on the lives of those we serve. **Thank you!**

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Overview

The Hope Center was created by the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government in 1993, and was incorporated as its own nonprofit shortly thereafter. The formation of the Hope Center was in response to the increasing levels of homelessness in the Central Kentucky region. As the program grew, it sought to address the multiple issues affecting the homeless population, specifically mental illness and substance use disorder. The Hope Center has since expanded programs to include not only the provision of life-sustaining resources like shelter, food, and clothing for those experiencing homelessness, but also to include life-rebuilding resources such as recovery programs for both men and women, mental health diagnosis and treatment, permanent housing, employment assistance, social services, support for veterans, mobile and street outreach, and more. Altogether, on a typical night, approximately 650 men and women receive services across all Hope Center programs.

Volunteer Opportunities

Serve a Meal

The Jacobs Hope Cafeteria serves over 7,000 meals per month to clients housed in our Emergency Shelter, plus the dinner service is open to the public. Our staff prepare and cook the meals, then volunteers come to serve those meals to our clients.

We serve three meals a day, seven days a week. The times for each meal are listed below:

- Breakfast: 6:30-7:30 AM weekdays, and 8 – 9 AM on weekends
- Lunch: 12 – 1 PM daily
- Dinner: 5 – 6 PM daily

Note: We can accommodate a maximum of 4-6 volunteers per meal service.

Share Your Expertise

Are you a personal trainer? Work in banking, food service, or a health service field? Do you have a special skill or some kind of training that may benefit the needs of our clients? Let us know!

Our clients attend life skills classes, which prepare them for successful independent living. We have volunteers who teach a variety of classes, including personal finance, healthy cooking, anger management, meditation, and more!

If you are interested in leading a life skills class, please email us at hopecenter@hopectr.org.

Make HopeMobile Sandwiches

The Hope Center's Mobile Outreach Program, the HopeMobile, is parked at a different downtown location each weekday. We rely on the generosity of our volunteers to prepare the 600+ sack lunches that are distributed to people in need each month.

Sandwiches for the HopeMobile should be high-protein with no condiments, (we have packets of mayo/mustard that we give out with them so they don't get soggy if we need to store them overnight). For example, you can do turkey or ham and cheese, or PB&J (if you do PB&J, let us know when you drop them off so they can be used first before they get soggy). Please place each sandwich in an individual Ziploc bag.

If you would like to prepare full sack lunches, feel free to include fruit cups, granola bars, beef jerky sticks, cookies or individually wrapped snack items or crackers. We also appreciate donations of bottled water alongside sandwiches/sack lunches.

Sandwiches and/or lunches can be dropped off at our Men's Emergency Shelter, 360 W. Loudon, anytime between 8 AM – 8 PM. You do not need to schedule your sandwich making time, just drop off donations when it's convenient for you, and there's no set amount you need to prepare.

Volunteer as a Group

If you have a large group interested in serving at the Hope Center, we offer occasional opportunities across our campus dependent upon day, time, and group size. Projects may include cleaning and sanitizing indoor spaces and mats at the Emergency Shelter, outdoor trash pickup, and basic yard work like raking and mulching.

Volunteer Process

All individuals interested in volunteering with the Hope Center should first review the Volunteer page of the Hope Center website under "Get Involved". Volunteers interested in serving onsite must complete the online volunteer application linked on that page, which is facilitated through an online platform called VolunteerLocal.

Volunteer applications are reviewed daily by a Hope Center staff member. Once approved, an email is sent to the volunteer to notify them that they may begin scheduling Jacobs Hope Cafeteria shifts utilizing the online VolunteerLocal platform. If there are any questions or concerns regarding a volunteer application before it can be approved, a Hope Center staff member will reach out via email.

For Jacobs Hope Cafeteria shifts, a confirmation email will be sent after a volunteer has successfully signed up for a shift. A reminder email is also sent 24 hours before the shift. This email includes important reminders about the shift and what to expect.

If a volunteer is interested in leading a Life Skills class or is serving with a group that has been scheduled with Hope Center staff, they will not need to utilize the VolunteerLocal platform for any scheduling, but all onsite, adult volunteers must have a volunteer application on file as there is a waiver each volunteer must read and sign.

There are occasionally special volunteer opportunities that will be communicated to all volunteers in the VolunteerLocal database through an email with all pertinent information.

Age Requirements

All volunteers must be 12 years of age or older and we do not provide any exceptions. Minors between 12 and 17 years of age must be accompanied by an adult and have a parent/guardian consent form on file. This form can be found on the Volunteer page of the Hope Center website under Get Involved.

Dress Code

All volunteers are asked to wear close-toed shoes. Clients serving meals must have long hair pulled back and wear a hairnet and gloves (which will be provided). Volunteers are also asked to keep all valuables, including purses and bags, locked in their vehicle as a secure storage location is not available onsite.

Dual Relationships

A Dual Relationship is a situation in which a volunteer has a relationship with a client as a result of his or her connection to the Hope Center. Each volunteer has a duty to report any Dual Relationship with a client to the Director of Development.

Unacceptable Dual Relationships are strictly prohibited.

The following are examples of unacceptable Dual Relationships:

- Entering into a romantic or sexual relationship with a client.
- Borrowing or accepting money from a client.
- Providing money or transportation to a client.
- Buying from or selling any item to a client.
- Borrowing from or lending any item to a client.
- Hiring or allowing a client to perform work for the volunteer's personal business, home or family, such as housekeeping, babysitting, yard work, etc., unless the work is arranged through the Hope Center's Employment or Day Labor Program.
- Maintaining friendships on Social Media

The following are examples of Dual Relationships that require a written request to the Director of Development. Approval may or may not be granted.

1. Lending money to a client for an emergency need.
2. Accepting gifts from a client.
3. Social contact with a client that is outside the volunteer's professional responsibilities.

An individual is a client of the Hope Center during the time he or she is receiving services from the Hope Center and for a period of twelve months following the last date of delivery of such services.

Confidentiality Clause

The Hope Center requires that strict confidentiality be maintained with respect to all information obtained by volunteers concerning the organization, as well as the clients and others they serve.

As a volunteer of the Hope Center, you may have access to confidential information, both verbal and written, relating to clients, volunteers or staff, and the organization. Volunteers understand and agree that all such information is to be treated confidentially and discussed only within the boundaries of the volunteer position at the Hope Center, and not shared via social media or any other communications tool.

Volunteers agree not to discuss these same matters after they have left any volunteer position at the Hope Center. In addition, breach of this agreement shall constitute grounds for and may result in termination of volunteer status within the Hope Center.

To respect Hope Center clients' privacy, volunteers will refrain from the use of any picture recording devices including cameras, cell phones, and video cameras while at the Hope Center. Any photography or videography of clients is strictly prohibited.

Workplace Harassment

Hope Center, Inc.'s policy is to provide a work environment that is free from harassment. Therefore, harassment based on age, race, gender, color, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, covered veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, and other characteristics protected under state, federal, or local law will not be tolerated. Such conduct is prohibited in any form at the workplace, at work-related functions, or outside of work if it affects the workplace. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, clients, customers, guests, vendors, and persons doing business with Hope Center, Inc.

Sexual harassment, one type of prohibited harassment, warrants special mention: *Unlawful sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual or gender-based conduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Unlawful sexual harassment also includes unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors where submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment, or where submission to or rejection of such conduct is made the basis of employment decisions affecting an individual (quid pro quo harassment).*

Examples of conduct prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual flirtation, advances, or propositions;
- Physical conduct such as unwelcome touching, hugging, or blocking someone's path in an inappropriate or sexual way;
- Verbal comments related to an individual's age, race, gender, color, religion, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation;
- Explicit or degrading verbal comments about another individual or his/her appearance;
- The display of sexually suggestive pictures or objects in any workplace location including transmission or display via computer;
- Any sexually offensive or abusive physical conduct;
- The taking of or the refusal to take any personnel action based on an employee's submission to or rejection of sexual overtures; and
- Displaying cartoons or telling jokes which relate to an individual's age, race, gender, color, religion, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.

If you believe that you are being subjected to workplace harassment, you should:

1. Tell the harasser that his or her actions are not welcome and they must stop, if you feel comfortable enough to do so.
2. Report the incident immediately to your supervisor, or to your supervisor's supervisor, or to human resources.
3. Report any additional incidents or retaliation that may occur to one of the above resources.

It is the responsibility of every employee/volunteer to immediately report any violation or suspected violation of this policy. Any reported incident will be investigated immediately and thoroughly. Complaints and actions taken to resolve complaints will be handled as confidentially as possible. Retaliation of any kind or discriminating against an employee or volunteer who resists or rejects unlawful behavior, reports a suspected incident of harassment or who cooperates in an investigation is prohibited. An employee/volunteer who violates this policy or retaliates against an employee/volunteer in any way will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

PREA: Prison Rape Elimination Act

Understanding the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) for Volunteers

The Kentucky Department of Corrections (DOC) mandates zero tolerance toward all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Many Hope Center Clients are court-ordered into our Recovery Programs. As a volunteer, you may have staff supervised interaction with our Department of Corrections clients. All adult volunteers who volunteer with DOC clients are required to read and acknowledge that they understand the following information, which is done through signing the Volunteer Local waiver associated with the Hope Center volunteer application. When signing the waiver they are also agreeing that as a volunteer, they will not have any sexual or romantic contact with Hope Center clients, as they may fall under the federal PREA laws.

What is PREA?

The Prison Rape Elimination Act of September 4, 2003 (Public Law 108-79) was enacted by Congress to address the problem of sexual abuse, sexual assault, and sexual harassment in all US penal facilities. PREA supports the elimination, reduction and prevention of sexual assault/rape within our prisons, community corrections centers and local jails. PREA applies to Offender-on-Offender and Staff-on-Offender sexual misconduct. Any resident or inmate of a KDOC facility or its contractors is considered to be at disadvantage, and is not legally capable of consent to any sexual activity.

What is Sexual Abuse?

Sexual abuse is defined as any type of undesired behavior of a sexual nature. This includes any unsolicited attempted sexual contact, any voyeurism, or coercion to engage in any sexual act. When sexual contact is accomplished or solicited through fear, threat of bodily harm or implied threat, it is considered to be sexual abuse.

What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual Assault is defined as any undesired contact of a sexual nature. It is against Kentucky state law for any staff member, contractor or volunteer to engage in any type of behavior or act of a sexual nature with an offender or resident. This includes any sexual contact or intercourse of any kind.

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual Harassment is defined as undesired verbal statements or comments of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is prohibited by offenders, staff members, volunteers, contractors, official visitors or agency representatives, and includes any demeaning reference to gender or derogatory comments about body or clothing: profane or obscene language or gestures.

What To Do If You Have Been Sexually Abused?

If you have been abused, get to a safe place. Any victim of sexual abuse is encouraged to report any necessary event as soon as possible. It is important to know that victims do not have to identify their assailant. But, all staff and authorities are required to report any criminal activity to Law Enforcement.

The Department of Corrections provides multiple ways to report sexual abuse or sexual harassment: Written report to any staff member, Verbal report to any staff member, Call the confidential PREA Hotline (855-700-7732)

If you have been the victim of sexual abuse, DO NOT: Shower, brush your teeth, use the restroom, change your clothes, eat, drink or smoke. Doing any of the above prior to reporting the abuse may destroy important evidence.

How Can Individuals Avoid Incidents of Sexual Abuse?

Stay away from isolated areas such as closets, stairwells, and isolated/unoccupied restrooms.

Stay within the eyesight of facility staff member whenever possible.

Be aware of your body language.

Avoid conversations involving sexual topics, family relationships, sexual experiences, financial status.

Conclusion

The Hope Center values our volunteers and we want to make the most of your volunteer experience with us. The Hope Center accepts the service of all approved volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the Hope Center. The Hope Center reserves the right to refuse a volunteer placement. Volunteers agree that the organization may, at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the Hope Center or to make changes in the nature of the volunteer's assignment.

For any questions or concerns, please contact the Development office at (859) 721-0144 or hopecenter@hopectr.org.