

River City Ministry
Volunteer Orientation Guide
2015

“Opening doors to God by serving the poor”

Volunteer Orientation Guide

Introduction

Welcome and “Thank You” for your interest in volunteering with River City Ministry. We are happy that you have joined our team as we provide healthcare, housing, meals, spiritual development and encouragement to hundreds of people in need. River City is a nonprofit Christian organization dedicated to the improvement of our clients homelessness as well as providing quality medical and dental healthcare improvements.

It is our hope that you will join us in this spirit of partnership and that your work here at River City will be successful and fulfilling. We hope your volunteer experience will be rewarding, enjoyable, and spiritually uplifting. River City relies on volunteers like you to help us in our mission to restore people to an improved level of life.

This Volunteer Orientation Guide will provide you with general policies and practices at River City Ministry. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handout, as it will answer many common questions concerning your volunteer experience. To retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, River City reserves the right to change, add to, or eliminate any policies described in this handout.

Again, “Thank You“ for your willingness to serve if we can be of assistance to you please let us know.

Sincerely,

Paul Wilkerson
Executive Director
River City Ministries

River City Mission Statement

River City Ministry is a faith-based, 501C-3 nonprofit, social services agency committed to serving the homeless and near-homeless in our community, by supplying the direction and resources to achieve recovery and success.

Our Volunteer Philosophy

- Every volunteer at River City is valuable and everyone's time, talents, and efforts are special gifts that are to be appreciated, respected, recognized, and never taken for granted.
- The right role can be found for any person with a desire and heart to serve. Volunteers and staff should be given opportunity's to learn and grow within the organization.
- The work of every volunteer is valued equally. All volunteers are treated with dignity and respect.
- Volunteers are responsible for the quality of their work, their conduct at River City and for meeting their commitment and its mission.
- Volunteers provide our organization with credibility, insight, perspective, diversity, and expertise that enlightens our operations, helps fulfill our mission, and engages the community in our activities.

River City - Volunteer Contributions

Impact Volunteers - These volunteers are faithful long-term partners who become valued team members.

One-Time & Special Project Volunteers - These volunteers assist in areas that require very little training, such as work in the kitchen, pantry, clothing organization and distribution or one day events at River City.

Professional Volunteers - Members of our local professional community who volunteer their expertise, experience and service to our mission. Examples of professional volunteers include: doctors, nurses, dentist, accountsnts, financial planners, teachers, attorneys, social workers, electricians etc.

Volunteer Groups - Regardless of size, volunteer groups are an organized collection of people who have a designated leader. River City offers one - time projects and special events projects to group volunteer service.

Internships - River City is delighted when we can partner with churches or outstanding academic institutions and top-notch students to provide internships. Internships are individually tailored to meet the specific educational needs of the student. Interns must pass a background check, and are required to read the volunteer handout before beginning an internship with River City Ministry.

All Volunteers are expected to work their assigned schedule set forth in the Volunteer Scheduler Pro that you will be ask to download to your smartphone and or home computer. If you cannot make a scheduled time, you are ask to submit a SWAP REQUEST on the VSP or Volunteer Scheduler Pro application you will or already have received. Also you can contact the department supervisor and let them know of your absence. Please make every effort to be punctual and on time.

Volunteer Requirements and Additional Information

Age Requirement for Individual Volunteers

The minimum age for an individual volunteer without a chaperone is 18.

Age Requirements for Volunteer Groups (2 or more volunteers)

- To volunteer with a parent or as a member of a chaperoned group, all volunteers must be junior or senior high school students or older. Younger children may volunteer as long as a parent or sponsor is involved.
- High School volunteer groups must be accompanied by 1 sponsor for every 10 students during the entire volunteer experience.

Procedure for Professional and Regular Volunteers

- Submit a volunteer application at the www.rivercityministry.org website under the *Volunteer Tab* at the top of the screen you will see a selection to complete a volunteer application and submit it to us. Professional medical or dental volunteers will need to submit a professional license, license number and expiration date to the Volunteer Coordinator so the information can be added to the database.
- All Volunteers should read the Volunteer Handout and sign the Volunteer Acknowledgement Form returning it to the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Interview with the volunteer coordinator or a prospective supervisor of a particular department so expectations can be discussed before a volunteer begins their role at RCM.
- Pass a reference and or criminal background check.

Procedure for One-Time Projects & Special Event Volunteers

- It is best to schedule early - usually at least two/three weeks in advance. When calling to schedule a group, it is helpful for the group leader to have a couple of dates in mind that will work for the group, the number of volunteers who will participate in the project, and the type of project the group would like to do.
- Time permitting, a brief orientation and tour will be given upon the group's arrival.

Interactions with Clients, Staff Members & Other Volunteers

Be wise! We want volunteers to get to know our staff, other volunteers and residents in the programs. However, be aware of being taken advantage of by clients that come to RCM by employ or manipulative tactics to achieve personal and, in some cases, profitable agendas.

- **Do not** give rides or transport any clients in your personal vehicles.
- **Do not** give money to any client.
- Do not leave your belongings unattended. If you must bring valuables with you, be sure to ask your supervisor where to store them. Never leave your purse or other valuables on the front seat of your car - even if the car is locked. River City Ministry does not assume any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any personal property.
- Practice active listening and empathy. Do not make decisions for the clients that come to our River City facility. Always refer clients to staff members for questions and assistance. For example: Social Workers, Medical personnel, dental personnel, spiritual development counselors or mentors.
- Report inappropriate behavior or anything that causes you to feel uncomfortable to your staff supervisor or to the director of River City Ministries **immediately**.
- Always remain calm when speaking to clients. Remember that our clients are going through difficult times and their stress levels may be high. Never take any negative comment made by a client personally and never allow yourself to be drawn into an argument.

Harrassment / Sexual Harrassment

It is our policy of this organization to provide a working/volunteer environment free of harrassment. Every form of harrassment is expressly prohibited. Allegations of harrassment will be investigated and, if warranted, appropriate disciplinary action, including termination, will be taken. Please report any incident(s) to the supervisor, program director, or director at RCM.

Weapon - Free Workplace

To enusre that River City Ministry maintains a workplace safe and free of violence, River City prohibits the possession or use of dangerous weapons on our property unless authorized by applicable law.

Ethics

River City Ministry conducts its business fairly, impartially, in an ethical and proper manner, and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. River City is committed to conducting its business with excellence and integrity underlying all relationships, including those with clients, donors, volunteers, customers, suppliers and communities, and among employees. The highest standards of ethical business conduct are required of River City Ministry's volunteers in performance of their responsibilities.

Donations

All donations (money, food, clothing or any other in-kind donation) are to be used for the benefit of River City Ministries and its clients.

Dress Code

Volunteers must dress appropriately for your work, the season and in accordance with program requirements. Generally, business or business casual dress is acceptable for most professional or administrative positions. The following are not acceptable: ripped jeans, short-shorts, mini-skirts, short dresses, tank tops, strap-type tops and tight-fitting, sleeveless or low cut clothing. Shoes should be appropriate to your work.

Safety

It is our policy at River City to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all volunteers. Volunteers must comply with all safety and health requirements by management, federal, state or local law.

Volunteer Acknowledgement

I am in receipt of the River City Ministry Volunteer Handout and Policy Information and understand I should consult with the Volunteer Coordinator or any Supervisor if I have any questions about the policies or procedures contained therein.

I understand that from time to time there may be revisions to the Volunteer Handout and Policy information. Such revisions will require the prior approval of the Executive Director and or Board and will be communicated to volunteers.

I have entered into my volunteer relationship with River City Ministry voluntarily and acknowledge there is no specified length of volunteering. Accordingly, with River City or I can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this manual is neither a contract of employment or volunteering, nor a legal document. Although some or all of the policies and procedures may have been explained to me verbally, I understand that it is my responsibility to fully read and comply with the policies contained in this handout and any revisions made to it.

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Volunteer's Name (print)