

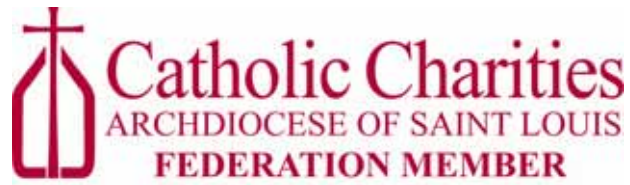


*St. Patrick Center*  
*Building Permanent, Positive Change*

# Volunteer Handbook

Version 2 — April 2010

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**T**hank you for volunteering to help at St. Patrick Center! Our agency is a more efficient, more cheerful place because of people like you who give so freely of their time and talent. We know how valuable that time is, and we pledge to use it wisely. We rely on our volunteers to help St. Patrick Center function and to act as ambassadors for our agency. We hope that through your work, you will gain a better understanding of the plight of the homeless and impoverished in St. Louis and our work on their behalf. We challenge you to spread the word about what you learn by telling others about what you witness here and inspiring them to get involved along with you. To that end, we hope this Volunteer Handbook may give you a clear outline of St. Patrick Center's mission, policies and procedures. If you have any questions or suggestions for our volunteer program, please contact Kim Zamastil, Volunteer Coordinator, at [kzamastil@stpatrickcenter.org](mailto:kzamastil@stpatrickcenter.org) or (314) 802-0681.

### Our Mission

St. Patrick Center provides opportunities for self-sufficiency and dignity to persons who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Individuals achieve permanent, positive changes in their lives through affordable housing, sound mental health, employment and financial stability.

### Our Work

St. Patrick Center is the largest provider of homeless services in Missouri, with 28 programs assisting more than 9,000 persons annually who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. We help individuals and families move from homelessness to independence in a measurable, cost-effective manner.

### Our Spirituality Statement

In solidarity with the traditional social teaching of the Catholic Church, St. Patrick Center embraces the attitude of Jesus as servant to the poor. We espouse a spirituality that places our clients at the center of all decisions.

We will work with our clients in a holistic manner: honoring their dignity and human rights; listening to each individual; providing for emotional, physical and spiritual needs; and creating an environment that encourages all to be the best they can be. Working as servant-leaders, staff and volunteers will manifest an attitude of openness that is inclusive of all faith, beliefs and cultures; humility based on truth; compassion not influenced by sentimentality or stereotype; and love that both champions and profoundly respects the free will of each person.

### Volunteer Program Purpose Statement

Every volunteer at St. Patrick Center helps build permanent, positive change in the lives of homeless and poor individuals by supporting agency staff. The time and talents of volunteers, when matched with our needs, make us more cost-efficient and effective as an agency. Every volunteer task, whether large or small, skilled or unskilled, benefits our clients. Because of the personalized nature of our agency's work, our priority for our clients' dignity and our adherence to privacy laws, most volunteer tasks do not involve direct contact with St. Patrick Center clients.

### Volunteer Nondiscrimination Statement

St. Patrick Center does not discriminate. Consideration of volunteer assignments is made without regard to age, color, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected status. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator if you have any special need, and we will do our best to accommodate them in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### Catholic Charities

St. Patrick Center is a federation member of Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis. Volunteers must adhere to Catholic Charities' volunteer guidelines and policies. The Volunteer Coordinator has a copy of the *Catholic Charities Volunteer Handbook* available for you to read.

## St. Patrick Center History

Almost 150 years ago, the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Biddle Streets was the site of a church that served the needs of poor people. As pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Father Tim Dempsey helped neighborhood residents, immigrants, and emigrants who came from rural areas. Today, St. Patrick Center is providing many of the same services that Fr. Dempsey offered to people who suffered from unemployment, broken homes, neglect, illness, homelessness, and hunger.

Following the baby boom and World War II, the parish built a grade school across from the church on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Closed in the early 1970s, the building continued to house a day care center. During the period of urban renewal in St. Louis, its underprivileged and unemployed population moved out of decaying public housing and into substandard dwellings.

In June of 1982, St. Louis Archbishop John May directed Catholic Charities to establish a presence in the grade school in the city's deteriorating north side neighborhood. The site became a community center, St. Patrick Center, initially established as a place where the archdiocese could offer a host of resources to assist area residents.

Edith Cunnane, a social worker at DePaul Health Hospital, was enlisted by Monsignor Robert Slattery to do a needs assessment. As she did her study, she observed groups of people loitering on the street corners and vacant lots. One winter day, she asked a man why he was outside in two-degree weather. He responded, "Lady, where do you think I'm welcome today?"

That highlighted the need to serve homeless individuals, especially those who had been released from mental institutions without adequate support systems. Edith decided to expand the Center's commitment to serve a previously unrecognized population of homeless people. At the same time, the Missouri Department of Mental Health was attempting to reach out to homeless mentally ill individuals living on the street. The department's counselor met with Edith, and the two agencies agreed to work together. The result was a day-treatment program for homeless mentally ill people. Located in the basement of St. Patrick Center, the program opened as the Shamrock Club in 1983.

Two years later, the Center became a United Way Agency, thus broadening its support from the community. Edith Cunnane's agreement to devote six months to establish St. Patrick Center evolved into a ten-year volunteer commitment. Today, 4,000 volunteers of St. Patrick Center assist its professional staff in assisting more than 9,000 people annually.

*Building Permanent, Positive Change.  
1983-2010*

# Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As a St. Patrick Center volunteer, you have the **RIGHT** to:

- Meet professional staff members and other volunteers and be welcomed from the beginning of service.
- Be treated with the same respect as professional staff members.
- Expect appropriate tasks and be informed of how the task contributes to the organization's work.
- Receive appropriate training, supervision, ongoing direction, and consultation in order to succeed at assigned tasks.
- Receive clear instructions and answers to questions.
- Be personally heard in the event of a suggestion, concern or grievance.
- Decline a particular task.
- Be kept informed of the organization's activities and changes therein.
- Receive recognition for your contribution to our work, informally and formally.
- Be included in celebrations, observances and training opportunities pertinent to your work.
- Request a record of hours served and reference(s) from appropriate professional staff members.

As a St. Patrick Center volunteer, you have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to:

- Promote the work of Catholic Charities and St. Patrick Center and share our missions with others in the community.
- Be a positive role model for those you work with and the clients you serve.
- Notify your St. Patrick Center staff supervisor as soon as possible of a schedule change.
- Arrive for your agreed assignment on time.
- Follow all policies and procedures outlined by SPC staff, whether written or oral, and ask questions when instructions or expectations are unclear.
- Notify SPC staff of inappropriate practices or situations and allow SPC staff to take control in crisis situations.
- Protect the confidentiality of clients and donors and share information about your work only with those who need to know.
- Complete assignments you agree to assume.
- Avoid all inappropriate outside contact and fraternization with clients.

## Serving our Clients

Every volunteer task at St. Patrick Center serves our clients because every task allows the agency to better assist homeless and poor men and women in St. Louis. While not all of our volunteer positions involve *direct* service to clients, many do. This direct contact should be a rewarding experience for all involved, but it may also be difficult at times. Many of our clients struggle with mental illness and substance abuse issues.

**Mental illness** affects a person's cognitive, interpersonal, and emotional capabilities and ability to function in society. Difficulties arise when functions in these areas become extreme. According to a 1999 report by the Surgeon General, approximately five percent of Americans has a serious and persistent mental illness. Mental illness is not synonymous with mental retardation. Individuals with mental illness are often very intelligent, creative, insightful, and spiritual. Some behaviors of mentally ill individuals include the following:

- Cognitive disturbances may take the form of unusual thought processes, such as paranoia or hallucinations.
- Interpersonal problems can be demonstrated by extreme social isolation or withdrawal, or an inability to perceive or set appropriate social boundaries.
- Emotional disturbances can be manifest by an extremely gloomy (depressed/despairing) outlook, or extremely elevated (grandiose) outlook, or extreme anxiety.

**Substance abuse** describes a pattern of substance use leading to significant problems or distress (e.g., problems with health, interpersonal relationships, employment, and/or the law enforcement). Substance abuse, as a disorder, refers to the abuse of illegal substances or the abusive use of legal substances. Substance dependence is used to describe continued use of drugs or alcohol, even when significant problems related to their use have developed. *No clients should be under the influence while at St. Patrick Center. If you see someone who concerns you, please alert any staff member.*

Feel free to approach our clients and start a conversation if you feel comfortable. Most of our clients are very talkative and will be happy to have a new person to speak with. Speak to them as you would anyone else—talk about the weather or ask how their day is going. If you feel uncomfortable around someone or if the person is acting strangely, excuse yourself and allow him/her to be as he/she is. Don't ask too many questions; this may cause the person to withdraw.

In your interactions with clients, be very aware of boundaries. For your own safety, do not disclose your last name, where you live, or other identifying information. Do not share an inappropriate amount of personal information.

*We strongly recommend **not** offering money, transportation (bus tickets/passes, rides, gas money), or material items (cigarettes, clothing, etc) to our clients.* If you feel strongly that you would like to personally help someone, please speak to a staff member about the best way to do so.

# Volunteer Policies

## Short-Term Volunteers

Volunteers who do not plan to serve at St. Patrick on a regular, long-term basis need only have a **Volunteer Interest Form**, signed **Standards of Conduct** agreement and **Emergency Contact Information** on file. If a short-term volunteer decides to volunteer more regularly (thus becoming an “active volunteer”) he/she will be required to complete the additional forms listed below.

## Active Volunteers

Active St. Patrick Center volunteers are defined as those who serve on site at least once per month for three consecutive months or more. Our screening process for active volunteers is more stringent than that for short-term and event volunteers.

## Required Documents

All **active and potentially active** St. Patrick Center volunteers must have the following forms on file:

- **Volunteer Interest Form**, which collects contact information, availability and interests.
- **Standards of Conduct Agreement**, signifying agreement to St. Patrick Center rules and guidelines.
- **Volunteer Emergency Contact Information**, identifying whom to contact should anything happen to a volunteer.
- **Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis Staff/Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement**, which states that the volunteer understands basic HIPAA information and agrees to protect the privacy of our clients.
- **Acknowledgement for Volunteer Screening Purposes**, which states that the volunteer understands that St. Patrick Center has the right to run a background screening to determine the appropriateness of the volunteer’s placement.

Active and potentially active volunteers serving as **Project REACH mentors** must have the following additional form on file:

- **Family Care Safety Registry Worker Registration Form**, which collects the required information for a background check. A copy of the volunteer’s **Social Security card** is required along with this form.

## Youth Volunteers

We value the contributions that youth make to St. Patrick Center. Their energy and enthusiasm are great gifts to our agency. At the same time, we must be cognizant that there are some risks inherent in our work here. We therefore require that all volunteers age 15 and younger be accompanied by an adult, with a ratio of no more than four youth volunteers to one adult.

## Criminal Record and Child Abuse/Neglect Screening

All Catholic Charities volunteers are subject to criminal record and child abuse/neglect screening, no matter where they serve in the Catholic Charities Federation. This screening may be conducted prior to service and in even-numbered years thereafter.

## Working with Minors

Caring for and protecting children is sacred work. The safety of our clients’ children, entrusted to us in the Child Drop-In Center, should not be compromised. To better protect all of the children on our premises, we require that all volunteers adhere to the **Archdiocese of St. Louis Code of Ethical Conduct for Clergy, Employees and Volunteers Working with Minors**. This document can be found in the Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis Volunteer Handbook.

Active volunteers serving in our Child Drop-In Center must have the following additional forms on file:

- **Family Care Safety Registry Worker Registration Form**, which collects the required information for a background check. A copy of the volunteer's **Social Security card** is required along with this form.
- **Archdiocese of St. Louis Commitment to Ethical Conduct for Clergy, Employees and Volunteers Working with Minors**, which indicates acceptance of the Archdiocese's rules and guidelines for working with youth, as outlined in the Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis Volunteer Handbook provided to you.
- **Documentation of Completion of the Protecting God's Children Class Offered by the Archdiocese**. This two and a half hour class is offered at various locations and times throughout the archdiocese.

## Confidentiality

The privacy of our clients is of utmost importance. Any information designated "confidential," which includes any information that could identify a client, should be discussed with no one outside St. Patrick Center and discussed internally only with a direct supervisor or those St. Patrick Center staff members on a "need to know" basis.

All St. Patrick Center staff and volunteers must adhere to the guidelines laid out in the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). All volunteers must agree never to share the identifying information of any of our clients, including names, addresses, employers, relatives, dates of birth, social security numbers, telephone numbers, occupations, diagnoses, and treatment services and procedures prescribed. Volunteers should be careful not to leave this information in clear view when working either with papers and files or on a computer screen. Computer passwords, data files, and building keys should never be shared. All volunteers must sign the Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis Staff/Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement, which states that the volunteer understands basic HIPAA information and agrees to protect the privacy of our clients. More information about HIPAA and confidentiality procedures can be found in the Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis Volunteer Handbook.

## Use of Technology

Because of confidentiality and security concerns, all volunteers must sign an Internet Usage Agreement before using agency computers. Our computers and network should only be used for agency business.

## Fraternization/Outside Contact with Clients

Social interaction between clients and volunteers has the potential for serious ramifications. In order to avoid or limit possible problems, the following procedures must be followed:

- Volunteers shall not engage in social activities with active clients unless activities are sponsored by St. Patrick Center. Active clients are defined as those with open files and/or receiving services from any program of the Center.
- One-on-one, professional, program-related contact with active clients outside the center can be made with prior approval of one's supervisor. Any social activity sponsored by the agency and attended by active clients and staff is to have at least two staff members (paid or volunteer) in attendance at all times during the activity.
- Any client contact deemed to be inappropriate by the agency shall be dealt with by written reprimand and possible suspension or termination, depending on the severity of the nature of the activity.

## Abuse of Agency Property

The assets of St. Patrick Center are valuable. They are meant to assist the needy and further our mission. Volunteers should never take food, clothing or any other agency property without the explicit

permission of a St. Patrick Center supervisor. If a volunteer is in need of the agency's goods or services, he/she can receive help by going through our intake process to be enrolled in one of our programs.

### Prohibited Items and Activities

Firearms, weapons, drugs and alcohol should not be brought onto or distributed on St. Patrick Center property. Furthermore, any volunteer under the influence of alcohol or drugs on agency property will be asked to leave immediately. Smoking is not allowed inside the St. Patrick Center building, but volunteers may smoke outside.

### Anti-Harassment

In reference to Catholic Charities' Policy 101.0, if a volunteer feels they have been subjected to or witnessed unlawful harassment, he/she is strongly encouraged to contact a supervisor or one of the following persons and put the incident in writing.

Victoria Harris, Human Resource Specialist – x3102, (314) 802-0672 or [vharris@stpatrickcenter.org](mailto:vharris@stpatrickcenter.org)  
Greg Vogelweid, Chief Operating Officer – x3101, (314) 802-0671 or [gvogelweid@stpatrickcenter.org](mailto:gvogelweid@stpatrickcenter.org)

Volunteers who initiate or engage in harassing behavior may receive a written warning up to and including termination of their volunteer service. The severity and pattern of behavior will be taken into consideration when determining disciplinary action.

### Tuberculosis Screening

St. Patrick Center feels that tuberculosis is a serious health issue and annual testing is recommended for your protection. Volunteers are strongly encouraged to have annual TB test for their own health and safety.

Tuberculosis testing and treatment are provided by St. Louis ConnectCare on behalf of the City of St. Louis. TB testing and treatment services are free for all uninsured individuals who do not have the ability to pay. Those with insurance coverage or income will be required to provide the information needed to file an insurance claim or to determine how much they must pay. Everyone must present a photo I.D. Proof of income is required to determine what, if any, fees are charged. St. Louis ConnectCare is located at the Smiley Urgent Care Center, 5535 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63112.

### Photo Release

While you are on-site, your picture may be taken for agency promotional materials. If you prefer not to be in photographs, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator.

# Volunteer Procedures

## Signing In and Out

It is important for St. Patrick Center to keep accurate records of the number of volunteer hours logged for the agency as a whole. We want to know not only how many volunteers come in our doors, but also the number of hours they serve. To calculate this, it is very important that all volunteers sign in and out each time they work. If you forget to sign in or out, you can always call or email the Volunteer Coordinator to let her know your hours.

## Volunteer Badges

All volunteers must wear a green St. Patrick Center Volunteer badge while in the building. This allows St. Patrick Center staff to identify you as a volunteer. Badges must be turned in before leaving the building. We also encourage you to wear a paper sticker nametag, which are available at the front desk. For your own protection, please only put your first name on your nametag.

## Cancellation/Notice Procedures

As a volunteer, you are free to serve at St. Patrick Center at your convenience. You have the right to set and change your schedule as necessary. At the same time, planning projects for volunteers requires a time investment from agency staff. To help us make the best use of everyone's time, please try your best to give us 24 hours notice if you must cancel or change a scheduled shift. Of course, if you are sick or have an emergency, simply contact us as soon as you are able. You may either contact the Volunteer Coordinator or your direct supervisor if you work at a regular task. Volunteers who miss two scheduled shifts without informing a supervisor will not be scheduled for another.

## Dress Code

We ask that volunteers dress neatly and appropriately for the task they will be doing. Please do not wear clothing with offensive or suggestive words or images, or depictions of drugs or alcohol. Pants should be worn at the hips, and all volunteers should avoid wearing revealing clothing. Certain volunteer positions may require more professional attire. If you have any questions about what is appropriate, please see the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Personal Property

St. Patrick Center cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items while you are volunteering on-site. The Volunteer Coordinator can show you a safe place to store your personal items while you are volunteering. We encourage you to leave valuables at home.

## Parking

St. Patrick Center volunteers can park in the public parking lot directly across Tucker Blvd. from our front entrance. The cost for parking in this lot is \$1.75. If you are able to pay the fee yourself, we would greatly appreciate your generosity. You may also request a parking token at the front desk when you sign in, and St. Patrick Center will be charged for the fee. Volunteers may only take one token at a time.

On weekends, volunteers may park for free. Volunteers can be granted access to the St. Patrick Center employee parking lot by any employee with a swipe card. Ask a supervisor to help you get access. Additionally, on Sundays, volunteers can park for free at any of the parking meters around our building.

If you receive a parking ticket while volunteering, St. Patrick Center cannot pay the fine.

## Emergency Procedures

If you need any help while working at St. Patrick Center, you can always call one of the following staff members:

1. Kim Zamastil, Volunteer Coordinator – x3203, (314) 802-0681 (desk)
2. Stephanie Rea, Writer/Producer – x3237 or (314) 802-1968 (desk)
3. Kelly Peach, Sr. Dir. of Communications – x3305, (314) 802-0687 (desk) or (314) 581-7126 (cell)
4. Victoria Harris, Human Resource Specialist – x3102 or (314) 802-0672 (desk)
5. Greg Vogelweid, Chief Operating Officer – x3101 or (314) 802-0671 (desk)

It is the responsibility of your staff supervisor to ensure your safe exit from the building in case of an emergency. When there is a fire alarm or other disaster, please look for the person you are assisting at the time of the alarm and follow them to safety. If you are working in an area away from your staff supervisor, that supervisor should come to find you to escort you to safety. As a backup, you may wish to ask your staff supervisor where the closest exit is in case you are not near someone when an alarm sounds.

Upon leaving the building during a fire alarm, everyone should walk toward the courtyard between the St. Patrick Center building and the Post-Dispatch. You should go to the first two benches on the south side of the courtyard (closest to the St. Patrick Center). Kim Zamastil or Stephanie Rea will complete a head count of volunteers once the building has been evacuated. *Please stay at that location until you receive further directions from Kim or Stephanie.*

## Discipline

Certain types of conduct, including but not limited to failure to abide by the policies in this handbook, warrant immediate discipline, including verbal counseling, written warnings, suspension and/or dismissal without prior notice.

## Grievances

We hope that you have a positive experience volunteering at St. Patrick Center, but understand that conflicts do arise. Volunteers with any sort of issue or concern regarding their experience at St. Patrick Center are encouraged to speak to a staff member about the grievance. If you are unsure whom to speak with, the Volunteer Coordinator will be happy to assist you. Concerns about the volunteer program can be directed to the Volunteer Coordinator or to her supervisor, Kelly Peach, Senior Director of Communications, at (314) 802-0687 or [kpeach@stpatrickcenter.org](mailto:kpeach@stpatrickcenter.org).

## Exit Interviews

As a volunteer, you have the right to end your service at St. Patrick Center at any time. The agency also reserves the right to terminate your service at any time. When possible, we would like to schedule exit interviews, with any volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview will cover the reasons the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have to improving the position, and possibilities for involving the volunteer in some other capacity with the agency.

## Insurance/Liability

The following is a summary of business insurance coverages (other than health) that St. Patrick Center has in place:

1. **Worker's Compensation (for job-related accidents requiring medical attention):** The coverage is patterned after that required by the State. Paid employees are covered, but volunteers are not covered. *Volunteers are covered by their own health insurance.*
2. **General Liability:** Volunteers are covered in the same fashion as employees. A significant element of volunteer coverage comes into play with Board members, whom Missouri law shields from personal liability for acts performed for the Center. This law does not cover volunteers who are not Board members.

3. **Automobile Liability and Casualty:** One fundamental of this coverage is that liability is first identified with the vehicle involved. For example, when a volunteer is driving his/her own car on agency business and is involved in an accident, legal action will go against the volunteer and his/her insurance. To the extent that liability is greater than the personal insurance coverage, the Archdiocesan policy will come into play. Should the volunteer be driving an agency vehicle and be involved in an accident, the Archdiocesan policy will be looked to by the injured for satisfaction, even if that person was negligent in the accident. In other words, when driving a personal car on agency business, the private insurance company will be the first to pick up damage and liability, and should be notified if a personal vehicle is being used on a regular basis. *(Note: The Volunteer Coordinator strongly discourages volunteers from driving or using their own vehicles while working at St. Patrick Center.)*

The agency's insurance is administered by Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. and Gallagher Basset is part of the Archdiocesan Protected Self-Insurance Program. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to Greg Vogelweid, Chief Operating Officer at x3101 or (314) 802-0671 or [gvogelweid@stpatrickcenter.org](mailto:gvogelweid@stpatrickcenter.org).

# Volunteer Handbook Acceptance

This volunteer handbook is an important document intended to help you better understand the mission and vision of St. Patrick Center. It should also help you understand your rights and responsibilities as a volunteer.

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of the St. Patrick Center Volunteer Handbook. After signing, please remove this page and return it to the Volunteer Coordinator. It will be retained, along with your other forms, in your volunteer file.

- I understand that my signature below indicates that I have received this copy of the handbook, that I have read it, and that I understand the information herein. I agree to abide by all agency policies and understand that any violation of these policies is grounds for dismissal as a volunteer of St. Patrick Center.
- I understand that the policies, rules and benefits described in this handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of St. Patrick Center at any time.
- I understand that my volunteering is terminable at will, either by myself or St. Patrick Center, regardless of the length of my volunteering.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_