



Volunteer Handbook

Updated March 2015

The information in this document is believed to be accurate at the time of its publication, but The Drake House has no liability for any missing, incomplete or erroneous information it contains. The document is subject to change at any time by The Drake House, in its sole discretion. © 2015 The Drake House, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Welcome to The Drake House volunteer family!

We are very grateful for the abundant generosity we receive daily from the community. Without the support of volunteers, we would not be able to sustain our quality program. Every day homeless families from our own community reach out to us for support. We know that it is the commitment and strength of our professional staff coupled with dedicated volunteers that are making a difference in the lives of mothers who are seeking to learn the skills that will empower them to reestablish stable housing for their families.

We strive to make volunteering a meaningful experience for you. The Volunteer Handbook is a tool for you to use during your time at The Drake House (TDH).

On behalf of TDH board and staff, and most especially from the mothers and children that we serve, we are extremely appreciative that you have chosen The Drake House to donate your time and care.

Welcome,

Lynn

Lynn Canty
Volunteer and Resource Coordinator

Table of Contents

	Page #
Table of Contents.....	3
Program Overview.....	4
Volunteer Guidelines.....	7
Volunteer Policies.....	8
Expectations.....	8
Code of Conduct.....	8
Hours of Operation.....	8
Background Screen.....	8
Confidentiality.....	9
Checking in.....	9
Dress Code.....	9
Absences and tardiness.....	9
Driving agency and personal vehicles.....	9
TDH Child Protection Policy.....	10
Harassment.....	10
Resignation.....	10
Drug Free and Smoke Free Workplace.....	10
Fire Arms and Weapons.....	10
Accidents or Injuries.....	11
Theft.....	11
Grievances.....	11
Refusing a Task.....	11
Recognition.....	11
Volunteer Liability Waiver.....	11

Program Overview

Mission

The Drake House (TDH) is a short-term crisis housing, education and empowerment program for homeless mothers and their children, designed to assist the family in working toward housing self-sufficiency

The target population is single mothers with minor children, from infant to 18 years old, originating from the North Fulton area. TDH is the only agency in the area offering a private, fully-furnished apartment with personalized programming. Typically we serve approximately 50 families with 100 children per year.

Four key components of the program are:

Housing

The Drake House program provides families with a rent-free, fully-furnished private one or two bedroom apartment in which to live for three to six months.

Empowerment Program

Mothers work with their Family Manager to develop a personalized empowerment plan. Family Managers and mothers work together to determine the family's needs, and pro-bono services such as physical and mental health care, dental, and vision care. A Career Coach meets weekly with all unemployed or underemployed residents. TDH provides assistance with resume development, interviewing skills, clothing, and job leads.

Life Skills Workshops

Mothers attend weekly workshops that provide instruction in areas such as personal finances, boundary setting, health and wellness, organizational skills, nutrition and meal planning, and parenting. Tutors assist elementary aged children with school work, and middle and high school students participate in teen life skills programs. Community partners and volunteers provide dinner for the weekly workshop.

Mentoring Support

The agency uses a broad-based team of volunteers, including family mentors. Moms and school-aged children are matched with a screened and trained mentor who encourages them during their stay. Mentors provide support, friendship, and assistance with family needs.

These key components are supplemented by a host of services that include a laundry facility, food pantry, lending library, and MARTA passes.

History

In 2004, Leadership North Fulton business and community leaders researched possible community service initiatives, and one need kept rising to the top: temporary residential housing for homeless mothers with children. The group's extensive research led them to establish a nonprofit organization to fill this gap in services. The Drake House, named in honor of Mary Drake, founder of North Fulton Community Charities, opened its doors to homeless mothers in 2006, after two years of cultivating both business and faith-based community support and locating and renovating family housing.

Community Need

Single mothers with children continue to be the fastest growing population of homeless in the country. Before TDH was established, no emergency housing facilities existed in the North Fulton community. A key component of our program is that it allows male children over 12 to remain with their families. Traditionally, women's emergency shelters require teenage male sons to reside in a men's shelter, separating them from their mother and siblings. TDH ensures that families stay together, and the children remain in their original schools without disruption to their education.

In 2014, we provided 14,091 bed nights, meeting the needs of the families in our community who experienced homelessness and ensuring these families would remain in the community where they were previously living, worshipping, working or attending school.

Program Objectives

TDH program fortifies mothers and children and prepares them to be contributing members of the community. Since we opened our doors, over 330 female-headed families have entered the program, including more than 600 children. Our key program objectives include:

- 1. Empowering homeless mothers to take charge of their lives and return the family to housing self-sufficiency.**

90% of TDH program participants have completed and implemented a goal achievement plan. 78% of our graduates transition to stable housing.

- 2. Assisting homeless mothers in achieving financial stability.**

While in residence, mothers establish budgeting skills to prevent future financial crisis, and build a savings account to fund expenses upon moving into new homes.

- 3. Assisting homeless mothers in finding employment or improving underemployment situations.**

Our Career Coach provides job skill development and employment assistance to all of the women at TDH. On average, only 45% of mothers are employed upon entry to our program, and 76% are employed when they complete the program. Our families experience an average increase in monthly income of 57% as a result of our programs.

Funding

TDH consists of 16 fully furnished one and two bedroom apartments and The Drake Family and Learning Center. The Center houses staff and volunteer offices, classrooms in which families participate in educational programs, a laundry facility, a computer lab, lending library and food pantry. Operating costs include utilities, salaries, insurance and maintenance costs that ensure safe and hygienic operation of the facilities. Monthly expenses average \$1,900 per family. The families do not pay any rent or fees for services.

Non-profits such as TDH cannot function efficiently without operational funding from civic, corporate, and faith-based organizations, foundation grants, and individual giving. Without adequate financial support, staff limitations impede client management and facility maintenance is delayed. In addition to soliciting for funds, TDH sponsors two major fundraising events a year: The Drake Walk and Miss Mary's Ice Cream Crankin'. TDH is also a designated United Way agency.

Evaluation

TDH monitors organizational effectiveness on a regular basis through internal and board assessment. The Board of Directors meets ten times a year and provides oversight to TDH operations in achieving its mission. During these monthly meetings, all financial statements are reviewed and a monthly activity report is given by the Executive Director. TDH strives to be a good steward of all donations and funding, with 79% spent directly on programs supporting the families.

The key indicator of success in achieving our mission is the number of families who move on to stabilized housing upon leaving TDH. Currently, two out of three families achieve this goal. In addition to these internal measures, external evaluations have been completed. TDH has successfully completed the Fulton County Health and Human Services Non-profit Basic Standards program. TDH has also achieved accreditation from the Georgia Alliance to End Homelessness (GAEH) for Quality Enhancement Standards. For this accreditation, GAEH facilitated a process of organizational self-assessment, site visits, reviews by peers, and information gathered during client surveys and focus groups.

TDH has been sought out by other organizations as a model of best practices in serving the homeless.

Volunteer Guidelines

1. All volunteers must complete an on-line Volunteer Application found on The Drake House website. This application contains general contact information, contact information for two references, interest survey and an electronic signature that the Child Protection Policy has been read and agreed to.
2. All volunteers are required to undergo a background check.
3. All volunteers are required to attend an orientation session.
4. Volunteer age requirements: All volunteers must be at least 13 years of age. Volunteers between 13-15 years old must be accompanied by an adult. Volunteers 16-18 years (still in high school) may not be assigned a position with direct contact with residents.
5. Any former TDH resident desiring to volunteer must wait a year from their graduation date to begin serving.
6. Volunteers will be placed when a slot for their particular interest becomes available. We do our best to place all volunteers quickly.
7. Volunteers will be given a link to *VolunteerSpot* to sign up on line for their scheduled hours.
8. Volunteers will receive communication from TDH through emails and electronic newsletters. TDH also supports use of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram; however use of photos must be approved by the Volunteer Coordinator. *Under no circumstances are volunteers permitted to take or use photos of the residents.*
9. Several volunteer positions require additional training. Volunteers assigned to those positions must attend the training sessions in addition to orientation.

Volunteer Policies

Volunteer Expectations

The Volunteer Program at TDH is critical to our success and our ability to serve the many homeless families who are accepted into our program. We expect our volunteer staff to serve as ambassadors, to serve our community with compassion and respect and with professionalism, just like a paid person would behave for any business, but particularly for TDH. When you determine your time commitment, please understand that we will expect you to honor your commitment. In turn, we will respect your contribution of time to TDH in order to make your experience as enjoyable and as rewarding as possible! TDH is a dynamic, energetic and devoted place to volunteer.

Code of Conduct

1. Demonstrate integrity, honesty and ethical behavior.
2. Conduct all dealings with the public, residents, staff, and volunteers in a manner that presents a courteous, professional and service-oriented image.
3. Treat the public, residents, staff, and volunteers fairly and equitably, without regard to race, sex, age, religion, national origin, disability, or any other factor unrelated to the impartial conduct of the business of TDH.
4. Comply with all applicable laws and regulations as well as TDH rules and volunteer requirements throughout your volunteer activities with TDH.

Hours:

The Drake House: Monday 9am to 8pm (Weekly Life Skills classes)

Tuesday through Friday 9am to 5pm

The Drake Closets: Tuesday through Friday 10am to 5pm, and Saturday 10am to 4pm

Volunteers on weekends through special arrangements

Background Screen

Anyone wanting to volunteer with TDH is required to submit to a Multi-State Criminal Search and Sex Offender background screen. TDH, Roswell Police or Alpharetta Police require a copy of a photo ID and a signed consent for release of information be obtained from a volunteer before a background check can be completed.

The Volunteer & Resource Coordinator and the TDH staff have full discretion, subject to applicable laws, on whether information learned from a prospective volunteer's background check will not allow him or her to volunteer with the TDH.

Confidentiality Statement and Personal Gain

TDH requires all employees and volunteers to maintain the confidentiality of staff, volunteer, donor and residents' information. As dictated by law, this information is privileged and is not to be shared or discussed with anyone other than authorized TDH personnel. TDH expects all volunteers to continue this confidence even after leaving their TDH volunteer position. Violation of confidentiality with respect to TDH information may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of TDH volunteer status.

Without limiting the previous paragraph, volunteers may not use the TDH data base or contact information for their personal gain or any non-TDH purpose. Volunteers may not solicit staff, volunteers, residents or customers for personal gain or any marketing purposes.

Checking In

When you arrive at TDH to volunteer, please sign in and put on your volunteer badge. It is important that you are identified as a volunteer while in the building and on the grounds. The sign-in sheet helps us maintain an accurate record of volunteer hours.

Dress Code

TDH continuously receives visitors at its facilities. Our staff and volunteer's appearance is an important factor in others' impressions of our organization. Volunteers should dress appropriately for their particular position. This may include business casual attire, or casual attire (Please no athletic clothes). Clothing should not display any offensive wording or images. Please be conservative with use of fragrances or perfumes.

Absences and Tardiness

Volunteers are **essential** to the operation of TDH. There may be emergency circumstances when you will be unable to come in or you may be late. If this is the case, please contact the Volunteer & Resource Coordinator or the Closet Manager as soon as possible. Repeated un-notified absences will be cause for reconsideration of volunteer status and may require us to replace the volunteer in order to maintain our level of service. Please notify the Volunteer & Resource Coordinator to arrange absences for extended periods.

Driving Agency Vehicles or Using Personal Vehicles

Volunteers who operate a TDH vehicle or voluntarily use their personal vehicle for authorized TDH business must present and maintain possession of a valid Georgia driver's license and current automobile insurance. In addition, the driver is completely responsible for any accidents, traffic fines, or violations incurred. If using TDH van, a photo copy of your driver's license is required for insurance purposes.

TDH does not expect, or encourage volunteers to transport families. In the event that a volunteer chooses to transport any adult resident or children of residents of TDH, the volunteer accepts all risks and liability related to such transportation activities.

TDH Child Protection Policy

An important goal of TDH is for all residents, staff, and volunteers to have a safe and fulfilling experience while at TDH. We are required by law to report any instances of abuse or neglect to the Georgia Department of Children and Family Services. As a condition to their acceptance as a TDH volunteer, each volunteer is required to sign the TDH Child Protection Policy to acknowledge that the volunteer has received, read and agrees to comply with the Policy. The complete Policy can be found on-line, is part of the Volunteer Application, and is posted in The Drake Center bathrooms and playroom.

Harassment

TDH intends to provide a volunteer environment that is pleasant, healthy, comfortable, and free from intimidation, hostility, or other offenses which might interfere with volunteer performance. Harassment of any sort, verbal, physical, visual, or sexual, will not be tolerated. Harassment is contrary to the policy of TDH. Any volunteer, who becomes aware of an incident of harassment, whether by witnessing the incident or being told of it, must report it immediately to the Volunteer & Resource Coordinator or any staff person. Violations will result in termination of volunteer status.

Resignation

If it becomes necessary for you to resign from volunteering at TDH, please notify the Volunteer & Resource Coordinator as soon as possible. Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures of TDH may be asked to resign.

Drug Free-Smoke Free Work Place

TDH is committed to maintaining a drug-free, alcohol-free workplace. TDH prohibits and does not tolerate the sale, possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs or the misuse of controlled substances at any time during the workday or anywhere within TDH facilities, on TDH premises or in TDH vehicles. A volunteer reporting for work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or using any such substance during working hours will have his/her volunteer position terminated and will be required to leave immediately. Under these circumstances, assistance may be provided to ensure the volunteer arrives home safely. Any employee or volunteer who is using over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs or controlled substances that may have adverse side effects should inform the Volunteer & Resource Coordinator and their duties may be reassigned for safety measures.

Smoking is only allowed outside and 25 feet from the entrances of TDH facilities.

Firearms and Other Weapons

The possession of any type of firearm, handgun, knife or other weapon of any kind by employees, volunteers or any other person is prohibited on TDH facilities.

Accidents or Injuries

Any accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the Volunteer & Resource Coordinator. An Injury Accident Form must be completed.

Theft

Should you observe or suspect an act of theft, do not confront the person. Report the incident to a staff member immediately.

Grievances

It is the desire of the TDH staff to have all grievances resolved privately between the TDH staff and volunteer. It is our hope that the volunteer would allow the staff time to rectify the situation or explain fully the justification for the situation. The Executive Director is available for grievances to be reported and will host a personal meeting by request.

Refusing a Job or Task

TDH wants all volunteers to feel comfortable during their volunteer time. The Volunteer & Resource Coordinator and the volunteer will work together to create assigned tasks. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable with performing an assigned task, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator and a new task will be assigned.

Recognition

TDH is very proud of our volunteer staff. Our volunteers are the heart of our program. We therefore, want to recognize our volunteers for their years of faithful and dedicated service. TDH hosts a special Volunteer Recognition Dinner each year where we, along with our graduate families, acknowledge and thank our volunteers. The Drake House staff also participates in Volunteer Appreciation Week.

Volunteer Liability Waiver

In consideration of the opportunity to do volunteer work with The Drake House, Inc. (the "organization") and other things of value, I agree to the following:

As part of my work for the Organization, a nonprofit corporation, I hereby accept sole responsibility for any injury that I may incur during the time in which I am working as a volunteer for the Organization. I further hereby release the Organization, its officers and directors, employees, volunteers, and agents from any and all claims nor causes of action arising from any accident or injury I may suffer during my time as a volunteer. I hereby attest that my attendance at the Organization's events and other involvement with the Organization is voluntary, that I am participating at my own risk and that I have read the forgoing terms and conditions of this release.

I hereby confirm, represent and warrant that I have never been convicted of or charged with, and am not subject to possible pending charges of a violent crime, child abuse or neglect, child pornography, child abduction, kidnapping, rape or any sexual offense, nor have I been ordered by a court to receive psychiatric or psychological treatment in connection with any such alleged conduct. I will disclose all convictions and all charges, whether civil, criminal, or traffic, against me at this time.

I acknowledge that the Organization requires criminal background checks. I hereby authorize the Organization or its authorized agents to conduct the following background checks as deemed necessary by the Organization: to search and review any criminal history and/or traffic charge records, including any records of complaints, arrests, trials, and/or convictions, concerning myself and to check my department of Motor Vehicle records and my personal and/or professional references.

I agree to have my picture taken and give the Organization permission to use my likeness in any of their print, video, or social media material. I hereby assign to the organization all rights, title, and interest in all pictures, video and audio recordings that the Organization makes, or that I make for the organization, while I am volunteering.

I recognize the right of the Organization to terminate (without notification as to the reason for termination) the services of any volunteer at any time.

An electronic agreement to this waiver is submitted when I accept the terms and conditions on the Volunteer Application.

Changes to this Handbook

TDH reserves the right to modify this handbook and any information it contains in its sole discretion. When TDH modifies the handbook, the updated version will be posted on the TDH website and TDH will endeavor to notify current volunteers of the update, but TDH is not obligated to do so. It is ultimately the volunteer's responsibility to be aware of all current TDH policies and guidelines for volunteers.