



Volunteer Handbook

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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,

Kimberly

Kimberly Jackson
Director of Volunteer Engagement

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..... | 10 |
| Theft..... | 11 |
| Grievances..... | 11 |
| Refusing a Task..... | 11 |
| Recognition..... | 11 |

Program Overview

Our Mission

To provide a lifeline of supportive housing and enrichment programs for homeless mothers and their children in north metro Atlanta.

Our Vision

To be an integral part of the community, facilitating financial security and housing stability.

Program & Services

The Drake House is designed for single mothers with children who are homeless or facing homelessness.

Basic Necessities - Short-term, furnished housing; groceries, personal care necessities; laundry facilities; computer room; and MARTA passes.

Empowerment Plan - Upon intake, mothers meet with our Family Services Coordinator to identify the family's needs and design a customized list of personal and professional goals to attain while at The Drake House. Plans include setting financial goals for self-sufficiency and stable housing, as well as identifying any medical, vision, dental and mental health needs of the family. In addition, we partner with many community-based organizations and pro-bono resources to fill the gap of needed services.

Education - Mothers attend mandatory, weekly workshops focused on improving personal finances, health and well-being, relationship management, parenting skills and nutritional meal planning.

Career Services - Mothers meet weekly with our career coach to provide assistance with resume development, interviewing skills, career attire, career development and job leads. Career seminars are offered throughout the year and led by industry-related professionals. In addition, each apartment is equipped with a desktop computer and internet access for job searching.

Children and Teen Programs - An After School Program is offered every weekday for K-8th graders, as well as full-day care on school, non-holiday breaks. Staff members and volunteers provide tutoring, recreation and a curriculum of enrichment activities. Teens participate in programming twice a week, including volunteer-led tutoring, life skills classes, mentorship and educational workshops.

Advocate - Each family member is paired with a trained, volunteer advocate who provides guidance, mentorship and friendship.

The Drake Village - Provides "next-step" affordable housing available to moms who successfully complete their empowerment plan at The Drake House. Sixteen two-

bedroom apartments are available with an annual lease to moms at a reduced rate. The goals of this program are to further financial behavior change and stabilize families. Mothers work with a budget coach and program coordinator to increase income, savings and credit scores, as well as decrease debt and ensure timely rent payment.

Our History

In 2004, the North Fulton Chamber of Commerce Leadership Program recognized the growing population of homeless single mothers with children in the community. They discovered that the closest shelter was in downtown Atlanta. Of which, any male children over 12 were separated from their family and sent to a men's shelters.

In January 2005, leaders from business, faith-based, civic, and government organizations joined forces to create the Drake House, a new non-profit that would offer emergency housing to these families. The Drake House opened its doors to our first families on June 12, 2006.

As of June 30, 2019, we've provided a total of 161,958 bed nights to homeless families since 2006. Over 470 female-headed families have entered the program, including over 870 children.

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. TDH ensures that families stay together, and the children remain in their original schools without disruption to their education.

The need for our program and services continues to increase. According to the 2015 Census Bureau, single mothers comprise the majority of families with incomes below 200% of the poverty line. Additionally, the North Atlanta metro area has the highest growth of suburban poverty in the nation. In 2018, Fulton County schools documented that 40% of the homeless students in their system attended school in North Fulton County.

Program Outcomes

The Drake House program fortifies mothers and children and prepares them to be contributing members of the community. Our strategic objective includes:

1. Empowering homeless mothers to take charge of their lives and return the family to housing self-sufficiency.
2. The Drake House program participants have completed and implemented a goal achievement plan.
3. Assisting homeless mothers in achieving financial stability by finding employment or improving underemployment situations.

In our last fiscal year, 93% of our families have transitioned to stable housing and the average savings of our families upon leaving the program was \$2,754. Approximately 70% of mothers are employed when coming to The Drake House and 90% are employed when exiting the program. Last year, the average increase in monthly income was 63% (The

living wage required to afford a two-bedroom apartment in our North Fulton community is \$21.27 per hour while our mothers average is \$13.10)

Target Population

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.

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. 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, 85 to 87% 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 and reference check.
3. All volunteers are required to attend an orientation session.
4. Volunteer age requirements: All volunteers must be at least 15 years of age. Volunteers 16-18 years (still in high school) may apply to assist in our After School Program but may not have any other direct contact with residents.
5. Any former 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 *Signup.com* 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 Director of Volunteer Engagement. **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.
5. No photographs of residents or their children may be taken without prior written permission.

Hours:

The Drake House: Monday 9am to 8pm (Weekly Life Skills classes)
Tuesday through Friday 9am to 4pm

The Drake Closets: Tuesday through Friday 10am to 5pm, and Saturday 10am to 3pm
Occasional volunteer opportunities 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 requires a copy of a photo ID and a valid Social Security number with a signed consent for release of information be obtained from a volunteer before a background check can be completed.

The Director of Volunteer Engagement 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 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 may be unable to come in or you may be late. If this is the case, please contact the Director of Volunteer Engagement 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 Director of Volunteer Engagement if there will be 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 Director of Volunteer Engagement 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 volunteer who is using over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs or controlled substances that may have adverse side effects should inform the Director of Volunteer Engagement and their duties may be reassigned for safety measures.

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 Director of Volunteer Engagement. 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 Director of Volunteer Engagement 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 Director of Volunteer Engagement 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.

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 a part of my work for the Organization, I hereby accept sole responsibility for any inquiry 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 notifications 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.