



## **VOLUNTEER WORKBOOK**

**"I assure you, when you did it for one of the least of these my brothers and sisters; you were doing it for me."** Matthew 25:40

### **Safe Harbor Church Community**

#### **Host Churches**

Central United Methodist Church  
Faith Reformed Church  
First Congregational Church  
Kensington Community Church  
St. Francis Church  
St. Patrick Church  
The Presbyterian Church  
Traverse Bay United Methodist Church  
Bayview Wesleyan Church  
First Christian Church  
Northern Lakes Community Church  
Grace Episcopal Church  
West Bay Covenant Church  
Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Christ United Methodist Church  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
of Grand Traverse  
Christ the King Church  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

#### **Partner Churches**

Church of the Living God  
New Hope Community Church  
St. Joseph's Parish  
TC Church of Christ  
Journey Church  
West Side Community Church  
First Church of the Nazarene



## **SAFE HARBOR**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Safe Harbor is a faith-based ministry offering love and service to those experiencing homelessness in the Grand Traverse region through emergency shelter, meals, and encouragement to move forward towards permanent housing.

We do this through our Church Network:

- Rotating locations from November - April.
- Providing evening and morning meals.
- Organizing volunteers who make themselves available to talk to, socialize with, and serve our guests.
- Working to improve our organization and base of support.

### **HISTORY:**

In 2003, the TC Nazarene Church opened their doors and began offering an emergency shelter on the coldest nights of the winter to our homeless population. That first year, they housed as many as 26 people per night, and ended up running for 45 straight nights.

The following year, several other churches became involved and the program became a rotating shelter throughout the winter months.

The need is real. Last year, Safe Harbor provided over 6000 bed nights and more than 11,000 meals to more than 180 different homeless men and women. The program runs from the beginning of November through the first week of April.

Safety and consistency are the goals from day to day and church to church to ensure the success of the program and the safety of volunteers and homeless guests that are welcomed at each church site.

So, we appreciate the time you take with the following training material, and thank you again for committing to volunteering at Safe Harbor.



## Safe Harbor Rules

The following rules are for anyone staying as part of the overnight shelter program. Rules are for everyone's safety, comfort and dignity. Any violation of these rules may result in a termination of your participation in the Safe Harbor program. **ALL ITEMS BROUGHT ONTO CHURCH PROPERTY ARE SUBJECT TO BE SEARCHED**

1. Once you have signed in, you are only allowed to leave the building during scheduled smoke breaks. If you leave after signing in you will not be allowed to re-enter for any reason until the next evening.
2. The church will open at 6:00 p.m. every night. Doors are locked at 7:00 p.m., with "Lights Out" at 11:00 p.m. The church will then be secured until 6:00 a.m. the next morning. (Special arrangements will be made for guests working later).
3. Upon entering on their first night, guests will receive **ONE** mat, **ONE** blanket, and **ONE** assigned tote to keep belongings in. Totes can be searched for contraband at any time by staff.
4. **NO SMOKING** at any place inside the building. Supervised 10 min. smoke breaks in a designated area, 6:50 p.m. | 7:50 p.m. | 8:50 p.m. | 9:50 p.m. & 10:50 p.m.
5. **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ANYWHERE ON CHURCH PROPERTY.**
6. **NO DRUGS OR ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES ANYWHERE ON CHURCH PROPERTY.**
7. **ABSOLUTELY NO WEAPONS OF ANY KIND ARE PERMITTED!!!** If you have one; please check it in to a volunteer at sign-in time.
8. **NO ABUSIVE/PROFANE LANGUAGE OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**  
Please remember, you are in a house of God.
9. The church staff and volunteers are in charge of the building. Please direct any questions to them.
10. Men and women are assigned separate sleeping areas by the staff and volunteers.
11. Prior to breakfast each morning, please spray and wipe down your own mattress and take it to the designated storage area.
12. **DO NOT** leave any items that do not fit into your assigned Tub in the church. Be prepared to leave church by 8:00 a.m. each morning unless otherwise indicated per church/facility.

## Boundaries in a Helping Relationship



Setting limits for expectations of behavior is a part of creating and maintaining all relationships in our life. In a “helping relationship”, boundaries are especially important because there is an inherent power imbalance in the encounters, which can affect the overall safety of both the worker and person seeking help.

At Safe Harbor, our **guests and volunteers** are involved in a unique helping relationship that requires us to be aware of boundary setting and vigilance in maintaining consistent boundaries for a safe environment and access to service.

**Boundary Setting is a system of limit setting that seeks to**

- Decrease the risk of guest exploitation
- Decrease guest anxiety about roles and rules
- Maintain the safety of guests and volunteers
- Avoid the appearance of special favor for a particular guest
- Avoid dependence of the guest on a volunteer/program
- Provide framework for maintaining confidentiality

**Volunteers are ultimately responsible for managing boundary issues, individually and collectively.**

**Guest Exploitation** stems from the volunteer’s position of power (being in charge/allowing access) and our ability to exert influence over guests. Use of this power differential allows a volunteer to use a relationship with the guest to meet an emotional, financial, sexual, religious or personal need. Exploitation can be initiated by a guest as a means of “feeling special” or by a volunteer as a means of enjoying “being adored” by the guest.

**Behaviors that prevent exploitation and maintain boundaries**

- Consistent enforcement of the rules for all guests
- Adherence to the policies and procedures of Safe Harbor at all times
- Respect for the confidentiality of guests at all times.
- No socialization with guests outside of functions sponsored by the homeless support programs in the community
- Do not hire guests to perform work
- Do not lend or borrow money from guests
- Do not give a guest your telephone number or let them use your cell phone
- Do not give guests automobile rides Do not accept a personal gift of anything other than a minimal value nor provide one of the same to a guest
- Do not have sexual contact with a guest
- Maintain a courteous, respectful and professional attitude at all times
- Comply with anti-discrimination laws
- Do not possess, use or distribute alcohol, illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia while serving in a volunteer role.

Boundaries can be blurred in overlapping/dual relationships and unique circumstances, so it is important to be open and honest about such situations with yourself, the guest and the Safe Harbor volunteers as your peer support group. Discussions with your team leader about specific situations can be helpful in dealing with individual guests and your feelings or concerns about boundary issues. A concern of yours might be the same as someone else. Ask an experienced volunteer about the boundary exception before you do it.



### **If you have a concern about a boundary exception ask yourself**

- Whose needs are being met?
- Would I hesitate to tell another volunteer about what boundary I crossed?
- Did I set a limit for this exception and communicate it to the guest?
- Would I make this exception for every guest; if no, then why am I doing it in this situation?
- If I tell myself "I'll do this just one time"

Dual or overlapping relationships occur where volunteer and guest contact occurs outside of Safe Harbor (IE you meet someone in passing at the mall) or they come to Safe Harbor and you know them from prior circumstances (IE knew them from work or AA). To protect confidentiality and allow the guest control of the encounter, let them take the lead in the interaction. Allow them to decide if they want to be recognized and acknowledged and to what extent they desire to share information about themselves. This provides for their individual dignity and ability to access Safe Harbor without any attached stigma. **In this relationship you allow the guest to take the lead, but then you are responsible for maintaining boundaries in the relationship as long as they are a guest using services at Safe Harbor.**

It is sometimes difficult to separate the human desire to "help make things better" from the need to maintain boundaries in our relationship with guests at Safe Harbor. The nature of some of our guests' issues of substance abuse and mental illness makes it seem like it would be easier to give in to avoid conflict or hope that an "exception this one time will help them turn things around". The desire to avoid the perception of being the "mean/bad volunteer" is natural at times, but blaming the "rules/organization" helps lessen the sting of saying NO to guests.

Boundaries are meant to provide the supportive structure for volunteers so that a healthy, helpful relationship is extended to all guests that use the services of Safe Harbor. Boundary maintenance by all volunteers encourages support for growth of our services and a reflection of Christian ministry in action.

### **Understanding Behavioral Challenges**

- There are always reasons for an individual's behavior
- Safety, security and dignity for the individual and others are of primary consideration
- Be able to look at a challenging behavior from that individual's point of view
- Support, structure and fairness will help you and the individual interact positively



## **Behavioral Changes that Signal a Problem May Occur**

- Pacing
- Talking Loudly
- Crying
- Self-Injury
- Refusal to Participate
- Any noticeable change in behavior
- Talking Excessively
- Repeating things over and over
- Fidgeting/Self Rocking
- Not talking or communicating

*Intervene early, its always easier to solve a problem before it gets out of hand  
Trust your intuition (gut feeling)*

## **What to do if Agitation is Just Beginning**

- Remain calm and lower the pitch and tone of your voice-be EVEN in your emotional response
- Speak slowly, clearly and concisely-KEEP IT SIMPLE-their processing is limited at this time
- Ask or find out the problem-communicate interest and a desire to understand
- Continue to talk to the person until he/she begins to calm down
- Invite them to sit down WITH you-Do NOT demand or order them to sit
- Show concern about how they are feeling-explore options for problem solving
- Do NOT argue, get angry, be disrespectful, promise what you can't deliver or use bribery
- Do NOT corner the person physically or psychologically

## **Questions to ask yourself or assess in the other volunteer**

- Is my voice low and calm?
- Is my face relaxed?
- Is my body relaxed?
- Am I showing a concern for the person?
- Am I being respectful?
- Am I being polite and matter-of-fact?
- Am I standing or sitting in the right place?
- Can the person escape if they need to?
- Is the other volunteer aware of the situation?

***Control of your emotions, actions, voice, muscle and body language are keys to avoiding a confrontation***

***Talk to yourself to stay calm. Assess your success by monitoring yourself and getting feedback from other volunteers.***

***Take your time***

## **Problem Solving should**

- Focus on the person
- Communicate acceptance
- Change the energy level-slow it down; take a mini break
- Change the expectations-make it simple if possible
- Involve Choices- this involves the individual and gives them some control
- Add Humor if appropriate
- Reduce the demand on the person-wait it out or move to a different location, or ask someone else to help



## SAFE HARBOR DO'S AND PLEASE DON'TS

### PLEASE DO NOT:

- \*...give money to a guest, no matter what the circumstances.
- \*...loan your cell phone to a guest for use, they may use a church phone with supervision (5 min. max please).
- \*...impose on a guest. Look for cues that the guest is receptive to conversation.
- \*...try to solve an argument or fight. Inform the Goodwill Supervisor of any questionable situation.
- \*...escalate a volatile situation. If a guest is belligerent or appears excessively intoxicated, please do not attempt to take care of the situation on your own. Inform the Goodwill Supervisor and we will address the situation.
- \*...allow guests in areas designated as "out of bounds". These areas include the kitchen, volunteer sleeping areas and any other areas posted as "out of bounds".
- \*...offer work or help to any of the guests outside of Safe Harbor without speaking to the Goodwill Supervisor first. They may have information about the guest that would deem this an unsafe situation.
- \*...dispense any prescription medication, guests are required to turn medication in at check-in, it will be held in a lock-box. If the guest needs it, hand them the bottle and allow them to take their prescribed dose.

### PLEASE DO:

- \*...call 911 immediately if a fight has broken out or you feel that you or anyone else may be in danger.
- \*...show love and respect to our guests. Many of them are wading through life's deepest waters!
- \*...engage any guests that seem receptive in meaningful conversation.
- \*...feel free to laugh or cry with the guests. You may be surprised how much you have in common!
- \*...***Pray for Guests Throughout the Year!***



## **Volunteer Host Descriptions**

Serving as a host for Safe Harbor is a very rewarding experience. The job of "Host" to persons experiencing homelessness creating friendships, and a community within the church. All shifts come with training, and first time volunteers are always paired with a seasoned host.

### **Overnight Host - 3 men and 2 women**

9:30 PM- 6:15 AM Overnight hosts assist with the "winding down" of the evening and take turns monitoring the shelter overnight, making an hourly "sweep" of the shelter area. In the morning, hosts prepare the coffee for the Breakfast. **A very comfortable private sleeping area is provided.**

### **Evening Host - 4 people**

5:30PM - 9:30PM Evening Hosts are the voices, ears and hearts of the shelter. You assist the Goodwill staff with the operation of the shelter and help clean up the dinning area. You also might find time to play cards and games, listening to guests and providing companionship to the guests.

### **Breakfast / Clean-Up Host - 4 people**

5:50AM - 8:30AM The breakfast crew manages the cold breakfast that we provide. Key roles include keeping the coffee hot, and assisting guests to get up and ready for departure by 7:45 - 8am. You are also responsible for managing the medicine box for guests. The shift includes sweep of the building to ensure the guests have all departed, and a general dining area clean up.

### **Dinner Host - A Small Group of No Less than 4 people**

5:30PM - 7:30PM Usually conducted by a pre-organized group of people. This shift requires that you prepare a hot meal for as many as 70 guests (typically 55). Soups, Stews, and other "buffet" style meals work best. A leader will conduct meal planning and coordinate with the other night's dinner hosts to not repeat the same offerings two or more days in a row. Once the meal is served, your team will complete a clean up sweep of the area, take trash out, assisted by the evening hosts.



## Safe Harbor Daily Shift Checklist

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Evening Shift 6pm-8:30pm. Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Team Leader volunteers are identified to all Safe Harbor Staff, volunteers and guests at the beginning of the shift and by designation on the name tag.

\_\_\_ Team Leader identifies which volunteers are responsible for clearing each area of the facility if an evacuation of the building is required.

\_\_\_ Review Fire Safety Plan with outside meeting location.

\_\_\_ Smoke detectors are placed and functional in sleeping and common areas.

\_\_\_ Emergency exits are clear of ice, snow or other hazards.

\_\_\_ Guests signing in are reminded to identify emergency exits on each level.

### Dinner Shift 5:30pm - 7:30pm Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Clean up kitchen area

\_\_\_ Refresh Trash cans

\_\_\_ Clean tables and serving area

### Overnight Shift 9:30pm - 6:00am. Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Goodwill and Team Leader Night time briefing

\_\_\_ Confirmation of total number of clients, volunteers remaining on premises when the door is locked. This is confirmed on the sign-in log.

\_\_\_ Review Fire Safety Plan with outside meeting location.

\_\_\_ Emergency exits are confirmed clear of hazards or obstruction.

\_\_\_ New shift volunteers are oriented to emergency exits, extinguishers, and exit plan.

\_\_\_ Identify awake schedule during the hours of 11pm - 6am

\_\_\_ Identify sleeping area of each volunteer in case of needed awakening.

### Breakfast Hosts 5:50am - 8:30am Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Confirmation that the sleeping areas are empty and exits are locked.

\_\_\_ Dining Area Cleaned

\_\_\_ Confirmation that the stove, oven, toasters, coffee/tea makers are off.

\_\_\_ Medical Kit Key is secured on med kit box



## **Dinner Volunteer Responsibilities**

*If you arrive early, and guests are waiting, they are NOT allowed access to the facility before 6:00 pm. PLEASE do NOT violate this rule for many reasons!*

### **Pre-planning**

Talk with other volunteers to plan cooking and menu items for your date AND which of you will help coordinate for your shift.

Confirm that your menu is not a duplicate of another meal that week.

Plan to SERVE and CLEAN UP your meal.

Look to recruit some other volunteers if serving and/or clean up is an issue.

Discuss any questions with the sign up coordinator during the planning process.

Keep meals simple and healthy.

If you want to cook your meal at the church kitchen on the day of service, please make sure that this is prearranged for access.

### **Serving Day**

If you had arranged to cook early at the church kitchen, confirm this with a call to the church office in the morning.

**5:30 pm** Crew should arrive with meal prepared.

Make sure you have signed in, have a name tag and clarify questions with your team leader before the opening of doors to the guests at 6:00 pm.

Decaf coffee only for this shift and the rest of the evening.

**6:00 pm** Guests arrive and are checked-in by staff.

Be ready to begin serving. Guests do NOT serve themselves.

Seconds on meals are after volunteers are served.

**7:30 pm** Food service ends and kitchen clean up begins.

Double check with paid staff/team leader if a plate should be made for a guest that might be working late.

Check with the Team Leader for the shift about leaving any food from the main meal. Unless directed, plan that all food is taken home with volunteers.

Any leftover dessert can be left as "snack" for the evening.

Make sure that any utensils and supplies used from the church kitchen are cleaned, dried and put away.

**Thank you for your time and talent in making this ministry successful.**



## Evening Host

This shift begins at 5:30, unless your coordinator has asked you to come earlier. The shift ends at 10 PM after the overnight staff has arrived.

### 5:30PM

- Team Leader obtains Med Kit Key
- Med Box, Sign In Books, First Aid, Sharps Container are brought to sign in area

### 6:00 PM Door Opens

There should be at least 3 volunteers to help with sign in at the initial 6 pm opening. Paid staff will check bags and assess guest's condition.

**1 Volunteer for sign in book**-make sure names are complete and legible.

**1 Volunteer (team leader) for medication kit drop off**-guest name on Ziploc bag and meds placed and sealed inside. There is no inventory and no sorting. Ziploc bag into the med box.

**1 Volunteer to give and assign a blanket and tote**- answer questions etc. Please see blanket and tote policy.

The shift team leader should be "floating" to assist where needed between kitchen and sign-in areas.

### 7:00PM Mat and Tote Inspection - Two evening hosts (man and woman) shall perform the following:

- Review Tote Log with Goodwill Supervisor and identify unclaimed totes for the evening
- Collect unclaimed Mats and Totes from sleeping areas (must be conducted by a man and woman)
- Inspect Totes to ensure guests belongings fit with the lid attached
- Women's Totes shall be marked with Pink Tape (located in supply tote)

### Remainder of the Evening

Once the main group for sign in has finished, you are encouraged to eat and visit with the guests. Card games, board games, watching movies and conversation with guests is encouraged.

The medication person should be available to paid staff for any "later guests" that arrive.

**If an altercation/confrontation occurs, the SIGN IN process STOPS immediately and the paid staff and team leader deal with it.**

**In such situations, the other sign in volunteers assist as directed and make sure that no guest moves past the sign in area.**

Please remember that the Team Leader and the Paid Staff for the evening are your resource people for questions and concerns. Please do not hesitate to ask them for clarification or refer a guest to them regarding rules, behavior or other issues.

Please relax and enjoy the company of the guests and other volunteers.

Please remember to sign in and make yourself a name tag- FIRST NAME ONLY

Please look to discuss your volunteer experience with your Team Leader if you feel uncomfortable or nervous anytime after you arrive.

**Thank you for your time and talent making this ministry successful.**



## Overnight Volunteer Information

*Incidents that arise should be handled by at least 2 volunteers-with at least one being a female volunteer for a female guest.*

**Food:** Snack is put away by 10:00pm Water is the only thing left out during the night.

**Doors:** Doors are locked at 7:00pm and open only for supervised smoke breaks

**No guests are admitted after 11pm even if brought by the police.** *One exception is if the guest is working late and arrives in appropriate condition.*

**Doors remain locked until 6:00am** If a guest leaves after the doors are locked, they are NOT to be re-admitted until the next evening at 6:00pm

**Medication:** Non-prescription meds can be given out during the night. Water only with meds during the night.

**ONE volunteer** only should be responsible for handing out any and all medication in the morning.

**Sleep/Wake:** Lights out and all guests to bed by 11pm

*Splitting the shift between the volunteers works well for maintaining alertness.*

Volunteers awake after 11 pm need to be quiet during their time awake. Know where the team leader and other volunteers are sleeping. If guests wake before 5 am, encourage them to go back to bed and rest.

**Breakfast / Clean Up Host** *(If you have a morning crew, these may be their duties)*

**5:30AM** Start coffee and begin listening for breakfast crew (typical arrival 5:50AM), overnight team leader will hand-off the medical kit key to breakfast leader.

**6:00AM Doors:** Unlock doors for semi-supervised smoking. Coffee and cold breakfast is put out. ANYONE that did NOT spend the night is NOT allowed in for breakfast or access to their tote.

**7:00 AM** All guests are awake and moving by this time.

Remind all guests that all items, including blankets must be in their totes and that the lid should close completely. Remind guests to wipe/wash down mats and place in storage no later than 7:30 am along with totes. Reminder that items that do not fit in the tote must leave with them.

**7:30 AM** Breakfast items except for coffee and juice are put away.If a hot breakfast crew is present, it is up to them if they want to continue serving until 8am.

**7:45AM** Perform sleeping area sweep, all guests must be preparing to depart, and out of sleeping area. For churches with van transportation, greet the driver and remind them to wait until van is full or all guests have boarded the van.

**8:00 AM** Door is locked to prevent trickle back. Reminder if needed that there is to be no loitering in the area. Make sure that all areas are locked and secure.

**11:00PM** The Goodwill Supervisor will contact Police Dispatch Supervision (231-922-4550) and inform them that the Safe Harbor Program is being hosted at your facility. Be sure to inform the supervisor of your location, your telephone number and specific building or entrance.

**Thank you for your time and talent making this ministry successful.**



## **Breakfast / Clean Up Host**

This shift may not exist if your Overnight team manages the morning. This shift begins at 5:50am, unless your coordinator has asked you to come earlier. The shift ends at 8:30am.

**5:50am** Enter the shelter, you may have to knock loudly to alert the overnight volunteer. The Overnight Team Leader will brief the Breakfast Leader of any incidents or concerns, and hand over the medical kit key. The Team Leader ensures the coffee has been started.

**6:00AM Doors:** Unlock doors for semi-supervised smoking. Coffee and cold breakfast is put out. Only overnight guests should be in the building. No one from outside is allowed to enter in the morning.

**7:00 AM** All guests are awake and moving by this time. Remind all guests that all items, including blankets must be in their totes and that the lid should close completely. Remind guests to wipe/wash down mats and place in storage no later than 7:30 am along with totes. Reminder that items that do not fit in the tote must leave with them.

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## **Friday Night Tote / Blanket Clean up** (Performed by Coordinator)

Coordinators will perform a weekly tote inspection and supplies inventory on Friday Night at 7:00P:

- All guests will be required to be at their mat for inspections
- Coordinator will check totes for:
  - No Food, No electronics, No liquids, and maximum of 3 books
  - Lid snaps securely to tote with no "bulge"
  - Each heavy tote should be weighted to ensure it is under 40 pounds.
  - Ensure each tote has one Safe Harbor issue blanket (Brown)
  - Any items that do not meet the inspection requirement shall leave with the guest on Saturday or be disposed of.
- Coordinator will inventory First Aid / Over the Counter Meds kits (Supply list is found in the kit)
  - Notify [supplies@gtsafeharbor.org](mailto:supplies@gtsafeharbor.org) of any needs
- Coordinator will inventory Clean Blankets and Empty Totes
  - Be sure there are at least 10 extra of each
  - Inspect, empty and disinfect extra totes
  - Notify [supplies@gtsafeharbor.org](mailto:supplies@gtsafeharbor.org) of any needs
- Coordinator will pack up supplies tote for transport
- Thank you for a successful week!

## **Saturday Clean up at Close of Safe Harbor**

- Coordinator arrives at 6:30a
  - Pack Smoke Alarms (if used)
  - Pack Air Purifiers (3 Total)
  - Review Supplies Collection Checklist
- Truck Arrives between 7:00am
  - Help moving crew load the truck
  - Review Move Out Check List
- General Cleaning
  - Have a crew to clean the kitchen and another to work on the other areas.
  - Kitchen should be cleaned and disinfected as per the church kitchen guidelines.
  - Cleaning is per the directions of your church.
  - Re-set all areas as per the directions of your church.
  - Re-supply all toilet paper and paper towels in the restrooms.
  - Make sure all trash and garbage containers are emptied.
  - Make sure all electric is off.
  - Make sure that all entrances and exits are secure before leaving.

*If any guests remain in the areas outside, remind them that they should not be loitering on the church property.*