



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

*Effective 4/1/2010*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Issue:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program:** \_\_\_\_\_



CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT



United Way of Anchorage  
Partner Agency

## **WELCOME**

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for Catholic Social Services (CSS). Your willingness to give your time and energy to a CSS program is not only appreciated, but very much needed! We hope you will experience a sense of accomplishment knowing that your efforts truly make a difference.

This handbook is a reference tool for you to use throughout your volunteer experience. Herein you will find the necessary information about volunteering at CSS, such as your responsibilities as a volunteer and our responsibilities to you. A brief description of each program and volunteer opportunity is included for your review.

**Thank you for your interest in joining the CSS volunteer team!**



## **In Closing**

Catholic Social Services is privileged to have you as a volunteer. The commitment of volunteers allows CSS to effectively serve those in need. It is our desire that you find this volunteer experience rewarding and enjoyable. As you are learning your volunteer duties, please feel free to ask questions. Volunteers often see programs from a different perspective and can add to our quality of service. Thus, please share with us any ideas and suggestions you have. And, most importantly, have fun!



meeting to will be scheduled.

Step 3: Second Warning. If volunteer is unable to meet the outcomes in volunteer improvement plan, the volunteer coordinator and volunteer will meet again to explore the possibility of re-drafting the plan.

Step 4: If performance problems have persisted and improvements have not occurred as required in the second warning, the

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## **Letter from Executive Director**

Dear Volunteers,

Many people ask if CSS provides services to only Catholics. CSS would like to take this opportunity to address and clarify the Catholic Identity of our Agency. Yes, we are a Catholic Agency, but we provide services to anyone, regardless of their religious affiliation.

According to Canon Law (Church Law), the Bishop takes a pledge to serve the poor within his diocese; not just the Catholic poor. While Catholic Social Services (CSS) is separately incorporated, we share the non-profit tax exemption of the Church. We are the Social Arm of the Diocese of Anchorage, and serve to help Archbishop Schwietz carry out that pledge. The Executive Director is responsible to the Archbishop for the mission of CSS and reports to a Board of Trustees, who has fiduciary responsibility and oversight of the Agency.

While some of our employees are Catholic, many are not. We do not require all employees be Catholic, but all are asked to respect and support the mission of the agency, which is founded upon the Catholic Social Teachings. These are not teachings on how to be or become Catholic, but they are principles for Social Justice. They are applicable to and can be followed by any denomination of faith, which cares for its people. As the word "catholic" means universal, we strive for social justice for all and we are inclusive in our service to others.

We receive funding from a variety of sources, some of which is government funding. There are agreements we sign stating that we will not discriminate in providing

- Littering or creating unsanitary conditions
- Causing safety hazards
- Repeated tardiness or absenteeism for your shift
- Unauthorized operation of equipment

### **Volunteer Improvement Plan**

If unsatisfactory performance or violation of volunteer and/or program policies continues, or a more serious issue regarding performance or violation of volunteer and/or program policies occurs, a volunteer improvement plan will be written and signed by the volunteer, volunteer coordinator, and in some cases a program director. This plan will clearly define the necessary and measurable outcomes in order to increase volunteer performance in specific areas.

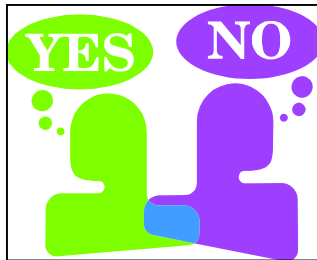
### **Disciplinary Action**

The purpose of this practice is to have an equitable and consistent disciplinary procedure for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace. Any volunteer issues that arise which hinder CSS' ability to meet our mission will be addressed through the following procedure:

**Step 1: Discussion.** Volunteer Coordinator will meet with volunteer to ensure volunteer fully understands responsibilities and boundaries. VC will schedule a follow-up meeting to re-visit discussion and assess improvements. While this is usually the only step necessary to ensure our CSS volunteers fully understand their role, sometimes further action is necessary.

**Step 2: First Warning.** A volunteer will be given a first warning in the form of a volunteer improvement plan that is developed by both the volunteer coordinator and volunteer. This will be signed by the volunteer, Volunteer Coordinator and Program Director (if appropriate) and placed in the volunteer's personnel file. A follow-up

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in any CSS facility.
- Fighting or threatening violence
- Breaking client confidentiality
- Inappropriate conduct towards clients
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-, client-, or customer-owned property
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct



- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information
- Violation of volunteer policies
- Personal use of donations of food or other items intended for clients

service to anyone, nor require participation in any religious activity in order to receive program services. This comes easy for us, for it is our mission to serve anyone regardless of their affiliation. While we are a Catholic Agency, we welcome and respect the dignity for all, inclusive of their faith.

-Susan Bomalaski, Ph.D  
CSS Executive Director



## **ABOUT CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES**

### **Agency Mission**

The key elements of the mission of Catholic Social Services are to:

- Compassionately serve the poor and those in need
- Strengthen individuals and families
- Advocate for social justice

### **Agency History**

Catholic Social Services (CSS) is a private non-profit organization established in Alaska in 1966. Today CSS offers assistance to all members of the community regardless of race, religion, sex, age or financial circumstances. CSS is governed by a local, volunteer Board of Trustees and administered by an Executive Director.

## **Catholic Social Services Programs**

**BROTHER FRANCIS SHELTER/ANCHORAGE**, *since 1982*  
*phone 277-1731* *1021 East 3rd Avenue*

Brother Francis Shelter/Anchorage provides temporary, emergency night shelter for men and women; an evening meal, use of shower and laundry facilities; advocacy and referrals for employment, housing, mental health issues, and treatment options for alcohol and substance abuse. A job program is also available.

**CLARE HOUSE**, *since 1983*

*phone 563-4545* *420 West 54th Avenue*

Clare House provides temporary, emergency 24-hour shelter to women and women with children; case man-

### **Program Evaluation**

Volunteer Feedback is very important to us and is a crucial component in our volunteer program development. Periodically we may ask you to evaluate your volunteer experience and the program in which you are volunteering. Most volunteers will be asked to complete an exit interview upon leaving the program. We ask you to be honest and constructive in your feedback.

### **Volunteer Termination or Dismissal Resignation**

Resignation is defined as a voluntary termination on the part of the volunteer for any reason s/he chooses. Please notify Volunteer Coordinator if you choose to resign. We realize that extraneous circumstances may arise which make it impossible to complete your volunteer assignment. While the Volunteer Coordinator makes every attempt to match you with an appropriate volunteer position, we realize that not every assignment is a good fit for everyone. If you wish to look into other volunteer opportunities please contact the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers who resign will normally be asked to complete an exit interview.

### **Volunteer Conduct**

CSS asks volunteers to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees, clients, volunteers and the overall organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable while volunteering. **The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including volunteer termination:**

unteer. Volunteers providing a service off-site also need to track hours. If you do not receive a tracking form, please request one.

### **Volunteer Drivers**

If you volunteer to transport clients in a program you will be required to provide a copy of your Alaska Driver's License, a driving record, and proof of insurance (form will be made available). No transportation may be provided until all checks are complete. The volunteer's insurance is the primary insurance and Catholic Social Services' serves as the secondary insurance.

### **Volunteer Records**

Volunteer records are maintained by the program and the agency. Information includes dates of service, volunteer task, and any awards nominated for and/ or received. You are entitled access to your volunteer record at any time by submitting a request to the volunteer coordinator. Records are maintained in the volunteer coordinator's office. Only the volunteer coordinator, his or her supervisor, and human resources staff have access to this information.

## **Evaluation**

### **Volunteer Performance Evaluation**

Volunteers that assist on a regular basis may receive a performance evaluation conducted by the program support person and/or the volunteer coordinator. The evaluation will consist of a discussion regarding quality of work, work habits, and areas of growth. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the volunteer's performance and to make suggestions on how to best improve his or her effectiveness for each program.

agement services to help women in their transition from homelessness to independent living. Referrals for housing, employment and other agencies are also available.

### **CONNEXIONS, *since 2010***

*phone 726-2970 12836 Old Glenn Hwy, Eagle River*

A co-op style day habilitation center for young adults with developmental disabilities.

### **PREGNANCY SUPPORT & ADOPTION SERVICES**

*phone 222-7300 CSS Center, 3710 East 20th Avenue*

Adoption Services (since 1967) is a licensed child placement agency serving adoptive parents, birth parents and adoptees through child placement, education, counseling, home studies, post placement services and continued family support.

Pregnancy Support Services (since 1990) helps women with unplanned pregnancies make informed decisions about their children's future by providing counseling, information, and education.

- **BABY BOUTIQUE**

*276-3601*

*3710 East 20th Avenue*

Provides material support of diapers, baby clothing, and miscellaneous items to families in need.

### **REFUGEE ASSISTANCE AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES (RAIS)**

*since 2003 (Delta Junction), since 2004 (Anchorage)*

*phone 222-7300 CSS Center, 3710 East 20th Avenue*

Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services (RAIS) provide a full range of social services for refugees and political asylees. Services may include locating long-

term housing, employment, medical assistance, and other basic needs. Immigration counselors are available to assist clients with naturalization, work permits, and applications for lawful permanent residency.

**ST. FRANCIS HOUSE, since 1960**

phone 222-7300 CSS Center, 3710 East 20th Ave.

St. Francis House provides food to those in need at no cost. Limited financial assistance is available for emergencies to help with rent, utilities, and associated needs.

**SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICES, since 1981**

phone 222-7300 CSS Center, 3710 East 20th Ave

Special Needs Services provides care for individuals who experience developmental disabilities and offer support to their families. Providers take clients on outings and care for them in their homes.

**TEEN HOMES**

Each teen home helps homeless, troubled teenage girls and boys learn to live independently, achieve academic success, maintain positive relationships, and contribute to the community. Both homes provide a therapeutic family environment and case management and Counseling services in cooperation with Denali Family Services.

- **MCAULEY MANOR, since 1985**

phone 270-5772

McAuley Manor serves up to five young women 12-19 years of age.

- **CHARLIE ELDER HOUSE, since 2001**

phone 277-8622

Charlie Elder House serves up to five young men 12-19 years of age.



BP Volunteers at 2009 Day of Caring

such as location of restrooms, refreshments, fire exits, and the expectation of the volunteer task. This is to be conducted by either the Volunteer Coordinator or appropriate program staff member.

**Placement**

To be decided by program (via staff request for volunteers), and volunteer coordinator. Volunteers will be placed in specific volunteer positions which are already in existence.

**Tracking Your Time**

Volunteer hours are a valuable resource to Catholic Social Services. Please sign in each time you arrive to vol-

**Illness**

Please do not come to volunteer if you are ill. However, please call as soon as possible so we can fill your position on that day.

**Length of Service**

Volunteer time commitments vary depending on the program in which they are involved. While there is no agency-wide time commitment required of CSS volunteers, individual programs may require adherence to certain time commitments. If a volunteer makes a commitment and needs to be released from that commitment, the program or the volunteer coordinator will work with you.

**Non Discrimination Policy**

CSS engages in fair employment practices in accordance with municipal, state, and federal law. It is the policy of this agency that there will be no discrimination or harassment in its programs, activities or employment based on race, color, marital or parental status, religion, nation of origin, age, mental or physical disability, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy or veterans status. Catholic Social Service makes every effort to assure that any special need of the volunteer is met within reasonable limitations. Questions or concerns related to affirmative action, non discrimination, or equal opportunity should be directed to the volunteer coordinator.

**Orientation**

Each program volunteer opportunity or special event will have an orientation before volunteer service begins. The orientation will cover safety and personal care needs



*Providing Help  
Creating Hope*



**Catholic Social Services Center  
3710 East 20th Avenue**

*Programs located at the Center:  
Pregnancy Support & Adoption Services, Refugee Assistance &  
Immigration Services (RAIS), St. Francis House and Special  
Needs Services*

# **ABOUT VOLUNTEERING FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES**

## **Volunteer Procedures**

**In order to be accepted as a CSS volunteer, the following steps must be followed:**

1. Volunteer selects program/opportunity of interest. (Current list found on CSS website)
2. Volunteer fills out and submits application packet.
3. Volunteer Coordinator performs or submits necessary background check
4. Volunteer Coordinator contacts volunteer to schedule meeting/orientation
5. Volunteer attends orientation (if required)
6. Volunteer tries out opportunity
7. If Volunteer accepts placement, he/she signs length of commitment form (varies among programs)
8. Volunteer Coordinator maintains regular contact via volunteer newsletter and program updates.
9. Volunteer Coordinator contacts volunteer at the end of time commitment
10. Volunteer decides whether or not to continue
11. If Volunteer chooses to terminate service, volunteer is asked to fill out exit evaluation and file is closed.

## **Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities**

**As a volunteer for Catholic Social Services I accept responsibility to:**

- To support the mission of Catholic Social Services' programs
- To be punctual, reliable, and to notify volunteer coordinator if you are unable to make your commitment
- To immediately establish appropriate boundaries when working with clients. To speak with support staff if unclear what this means.
- To maintain confidentiality of client's names, circumstance, and information at all times

ees may perform community work service within CSS, but may only do so in a program other than the one in which they are fulfilling their contract. Non-CSS employees may complete their community work service (after passing a background check) within programs which the volunteer coordinator deems appropriate.

### **Confidentiality**

One of the most important aspects of volunteering is the confidentiality of clients, staff, donors, and fellow volunteers. Careful attention to an individual's right to privacy is required by Catholic Social Services.

### **Employee and/or Family Member Volunteers**

Salaried employees desiring to work a special event or provide a service to a program are welcome to do so. Hourly employees may participate only if working and authorized to be there by their supervisor. Any employee who volunteers must fill out the Employ Volunteer Consent form. Family members of employees are welcome to volunteer but must meet age and supervisory requirements.

### **Evaluations**

Volunteers may be asked to provide an evaluation of the program for which they are volunteering. The purpose of a program evaluation is to gain input on how CSS can improve the programs and services it offers clients and volunteers. The Volunteer Coordinator may also provide an evaluation of volunteer. Some programs have exit interviews, to be conducted upon completion of time commitment or project.

## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES**

### **General Volunteer Policies**

#### **Absenteeism**

Please inform the program support person or volunteer coordinator of an absence 24-hours in advance. In case of illness or emergency, please notify the program or volunteer coordinator as soon as possible.

#### **Age Limitation**

Families are welcome and encouraged to volunteer at family oriented events. Younger persons on occasion may volunteer if accompanied by an adult; in most programs volunteers may need to be 18. Volunteer duties assigned to youth will take into account laws and regulations on child labor. Parents or guardians must sign a waiver for any children volunteering without adult supervision.

#### **Background Checks**

Most volunteers are required to undergo a criminal background check.

#### **Client Volunteers**

Clients are invited and encouraged to volunteer at fund-raising and special events for that program or the agency. Clients are never required to volunteer in order to be served.

#### **Community Work Service**

Regular CSS employees cannot complete community work service hours within the agency. Contract employ-

- To discuss suggestions, concerns, satisfaction with immediate support staff or volunteer coordinator
- To be sober, alert, and drug-free while volunteering
- To sign in/out each time you volunteer, or track hours regularly when off-premises.



A volunteer bags potatoes for the Thanksgiving Blessing Project

### **People volunteer for many different reasons in many different capacities. Our volunteer programs offers:**

- An opportunity to affect change in the lives of those most vulnerable.
- An opportunity to examine a career in human services
- An opportunity to utilize existing skills or learn new ones
- An opportunity to fulfill a requirement mandated by school or a public service agency

### **Volunteers have the following rights:**

- To be recognized for their efforts
- To be given guidance and direction by staff, support person, or volunteer coordinator
- To have a clear understanding of the volunteer job duties, time commitment, responsibilities and staff support structure
- To work in a clean, safe environment
- To be kept informed of program/agency changes by staff
- To be given orientation, training, support, supervision and evaluation
- To be trusted and respected by staff
- To have volunteer time used wisely
- To receive prompt return of phone calls



Volunteers paint Clare House for the 2007 Day of Caring

### **Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities**

The agency volunteer coordinator is a liaison between the agency program staff and volunteers. This should be a volunteer's first point of contact. The volunteer coordinator helps volunteers identify an appropriate volunteer activity based on his or her schedule, interest, and/or skill set.

Once a volunteer application has been received, the volunteer coordinator will:

1. Submit necessary background check materials
2. Schedule volunteer orientation
3. Schedule volunteer for opportunity
4. Check in with volunteer regularly
5. Maintain current volunteer records