



# ***VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK***

**VISIT STAR OF HOPE'S WEBSITE**  
**[www.sohmission.org](http://www.sohmission.org)**

**Effective October 2018**  
**Replaces any previously published Volunteer Handbook**



Dear Volunteer:

On behalf of the Star of Hope Mission staff and Board of Trustees, we would like to thank you for becoming a part of our ministry team. Volunteers are very important to us, and together we are privileged that the Lord has chosen us to serve Him and the many men, women, and children who reside in our facilities each day.

You will find that becoming a Star of Hope Volunteer is both a challenging and rewarding experience as you encourage those who are less fortunate. Whether you decide to tutor our GED students, mentor our teens or assist at the Client Services Desk, you will undoubtedly have the opportunity to touch many lives.

We trust that you will truly consider your volunteer effort as a work unto God (Colossians 3:23) and pray that the Lord will give you the strength, grace, patience, and perseverance to be His servant through Star of Hope.

Recently, one of our volunteers who has served in this ministry for over twenty years said to us, "God could have chosen anyone in this city to this ministry. He could have chosen someone with more talent or resources. But, **He has chosen me!** And, for that I am grateful."

Indeed, God has chosen each of us to make a difference in the lives of those who knock on our doors seeking food, clothing, shelter, and a touch of His love.

Welcome to the exciting ministry of volunteering.

Together Giving Hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hank".

Hank Rush  
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth".

Elizabeth Hatler  
Manager of Volunteer Services

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# Star of Hope Mission Statement

Star of Hope is a Christ-centered community dedicated to meeting the needs of homeless men, women and their children. Positive life changes are encouraged through structured programs which focus on spiritual growth, education, employment, life management and recovery from substance abuse.

## Star of Hope Core Values

Excellence

Integrity

Life Change

*We as Americans can all be leaders in our community if we get involved with a program of powerful impact like Star of Hope. People in need can and do change their lives if we make a place for them in our city. Barbara & I are committed to Star of Hope because Star of Hope is committed to changing lives. Today, we need more room for this great work to go on. And we need you to become involved with people who deserve your help.*

**President George Bush**

# History of Star of Hope

## A Houston Tradition for More Than 110 Years



Many people know of the Star of Hope Mission, but few know of its origin. Most of us were not alive at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it was a time of great beginnings!

Reverend Dennis Robert Pevoto came to Houston in 1900 & spent six years assisting in the growth of Baptist churches. In 1906, Evangelist Mordecai Ham & the former homeless alcoholic Richard Dowling introduced Dr. Pevoto to the needs of the homeless.

In early 1907 on a ship bound for Richmond, VA, Dr. Pevoto was awakened from a very special dream by the turbulent waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The dream was a detailed vision of the creation of the Star of Hope Mission. The dream specified a plan which led to the completion of the mission with name, chapel, dormitory, lunch counter, rest & reading room, & employment bureau. Later that day, Dr. Pevoto shared the vision with his two traveling companions from Houston, & the trio began working on the plan.

Through the help of a caring community, churches, & business leaders, the Star of Hope Mission opened on July 1, 1907 in a two-story building at 714 Franklin Street. Since that time, Star of Hope Mission has worked to lead men (& later women) to recognize the need for Christ in their daily lives. By furnishing food, clothing, & beds to destitute individuals, their minds are freed from worry about their basic needs & can be focused on creating a more constructive life.

Most of those needing help were men. They came, dressed in worn out suits & floppy hats. Most were bearded & dusty. They ate their meals after the sermon, standing elbow to elbow at long plank tables. And they encountered the life-changing provision & power of God.

Today, more than 110 years later, God is still touching the lives of Houston's homeless, but the scene is strikingly different. Today, families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population & Star of Hope now cares for more than 1,000 homeless men, women & children each day.

## Description of Services

The homeless men, women & children who come to the doors of Star of Hope are from a variety of situations. Majority come from either physically or emotionally abusive relationships. Many are addicted to drugs or alcohol. To make matters worse, they have nowhere to go and no one to turn to in their time of greatest need.

At our Men's Development Center in downtown Houston, a sign at the entrance states, "If you do not have a friend in the world, you will find one here." Founded in 1907 as a Christian, non-profit mission, the focus of Star of Hope from the beginning has been to reach out with the love of Jesus Christ to those who have nowhere else to turn. Star of Hope precedes all other agencies in Houston and is still the largest agency of its kind.

Star of Hope moved into the Doris & Carloss Morris Men's Development Center in June 2000 from our previous location on LaBranch. The Men's Development Center provides refuge for transient men; a 6-month spiritual recovery program for men committed to their recovery and making a life change; & a year-long transitional living program after successful completion of the spiritual recovery program. The goal of the Men's Development Center is to help clients achieve success in the areas of substance abuse recovery, literacy, education, life management skills, career development, & ultimately, a responsible, independent life-style.

In the mid-1980's the faces of the homeless began to change & could no longer be stereotyped as a male, alcoholic problem. Today, families comprise the fastest growing segment among the homeless population.

Star of Hope responded to the needs of homeless women & families by opening a Women & Family Emergency Shelter in January 1986. However, it was realized during the 1980's that emergency shelter was not enough help for many homeless persons. They kept coming back after leaving the shelter, unable to maintain an independent life-style. Star of Hope met this need by opening a Transitional Living Center. The Transitional Living Center provided long-term solutions of structure, accountability, & opportunity to learn basic living skills in a comprehensive & demanding one-year program.

Today, Star of Hope Mission is in a new stage of great beginnings. The Star of Hope's Cornerstone Community transformational campus, located on Reed Road at the intersection of Highway 288, now consolidates our clients & staff from the Women & Family Emergency Shelter & the Transitional Living Center. The new Women & Family Development Center is home to 180 homeless, single women & more than 105 homeless families where they will progress towards independent living through our basic recovery services & our longer-term programs. In addition, mental, physical & spiritual health services are offered with on-site permanent supportive housing & convenient public transportation, all in a walkable campus environment.

Star of Hope's **Vision 2020** calls for us to broaden our efforts to help our clients achieve successful, independent living by improving job & life skills. To that end, we are praising God for the new **Workforce Development** initiative that will positively impact the lives of our clients & further our partnership with our community. This program, under the leadership of Star of Hope's (former) Chief Financial Officer Troy Gaddie, is

designed to increase employment opportunities for all Star of Hope clients. Troy noted, "This program is vital to helping the men & women in our care move past subsistence level jobs toward middle-skilled jobs that will help them provide for themselves & their families long term."

Star of Hope's Extended Services Department was formed in 2008 when we began a cutting-edge New Horizons program. At that time, New Horizons provided a permanent housing solution, along with supportive services, for graduates of Star of Hope's transitional housing programs. What began as a three-year program has recently been modified to provide 18-months of support including rental subsidy, childcare subsidy & case management with the subsidies decreasing every six months.

In 2011, the Extended Services department grew with the development of additional services into the community with the New Haven program. New Haven provides permanent supportive housing to chronically homeless men & women.

The Jump Start program (formerly Follow-up), Adopt-A-Family/Glad Tidings Christmas program, & the Love in Action Outreach Van were added to the wide range of services provided by this department. Since then, even more services have extended into the community through the STAR Outreach (Serving Those At Risk), Anchored Alumni, & a staff member at the Houston Recovery Center.

The Extended Services department also organizes outreach events in the communities where it serves (typically low-income areas) which include: back-to-school events, events with community partners, & so much more.

The goal of Star of Hope is to assist homeless men, women & their children to achieve happy, productive, independent living through healing, change & positive growth in all areas of their lives. Each Star of Hope's facility addresses the problems unique to a particular segment of the homeless population.

Star of Hope is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, a United Way agency, & a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA).

# Star of Hope Mission Board of Trustees

## **Chairman of the Board**

Reid E. Smith

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Fred L. Williams, Jr.

## **Secretary**

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P. Mathew Verghese

## **Chairman, Advisory Board**

Joseph C. Sleeth, Jr.

## **Chairman Emeritus (In Memoriam)**

Carloss Morris

## **President & CEO**

Hank Rush



# Volunteer Standards & Guidelines

In an effort to make your service here as fruitful & enjoyable as possible, we have developed *Volunteer Standards & Guidelines*. These are designed to answer many of your questions about the practices & policies of Star of Hope such as what you can expect from Star of Hope & what Star of Hope expects from you. While volunteering at Star of Hope, we ask that you carefully observe these standards & guidelines.

## REVISIONS

Star of Hope reserves the right to amend, revise or delete any policy or procedure referred to in these Volunteer Standards & Guidelines at any time without notice. Changes may be communicated to volunteers in meetings, counseling sessions, by memo or incorporated into revised manuals. If you have any questions about *Volunteers Standards & Guidelines*, please ask your supervisor or Manager of Volunteer Services.

## EQUAL VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY

Star of Hope provides equal volunteering opportunities for every person regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, genetics or any other protected classification as established by law. Where appropriate, Star of Hope will select volunteers with particular religious beliefs that support our mission statement. All matters relating to volunteering are based upon ability to perform the job, as well as dependability & reliability once a volunteer is placed.

## THE VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP

The placement of a volunteer shall not be considered as creating a contractual relationship between the volunteer and Star of Hope. **Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the volunteer and President/CEO, volunteer placement shall be “at will”, so that either party may terminate the volunteer relationship at any time for any or no reason. All volunteers enter into this relationship willingly & understand they will receive NO compensation for the hours volunteered.**

Star of Hope has the right to & may verify work history, education, licenses, registrations, certifications, & degrees that are represented on the volunteer applicant's application, resume or in interviews, including criminal background information. False or misleading statements are grounds for termination of the volunteer placement at any time.

Clients/residents/guests of Star of Hope will not be considered for volunteer placement until two years after the successful conclusion of their client/resident/guest status. This includes clients/residents/guests served by the Extended Services Department.

## **YOUR COMMITMENT**

Volunteers contribute to the overall mission of Star of Hope by providing another layer of compassion, caring, talent & skill to our team. We offer many different types of volunteer opportunities:

- High Impact Volunteers – These volunteers are faithful long-term partners who become valued team members. High Impact Volunteers work no less than once each week & are expected to diligently honor this commitment. Failure to honor the commitment may result in reassignment or termination.
- One-Time & Special Project Volunteers – These volunteers assist in areas that require very little training, such as in the kitchen, Donation & Distribution Center, or Christmas Workshop, & only volunteer for a short amount of time or to obtain a specified number of volunteer hours.
- Professional Volunteers – Members of our local professional community who volunteer their expertise, experience & service to our mission. Examples of professional volunteers include: doctors & nurses, accountants, certified financial planners, teachers, attorneys & electricians.
- Virtual Volunteers – Volunteer in a virtual environment as a member of Team for Hope or Prayer Partners.
- Volunteer groups – Regardless of size, volunteer groups are an organized collection of people who have a designated leader. Star of Hope offers High Impact placements, one-time projects & special event projects for group volunteer service. However, all projects are not suitable for all groups.
- Internships – Star of Hope is delighted when we can partner with outstanding academic institutions & top-notch students to provide internships. Internships are individually tailored to meet the specific educational needs of the student. Interns must pass a criminal history background check, as well as attend orientation conducted by the HR department.
- Court-mandated or Disciplinary Community Service – Star of Hope does not work with any type of court-mandated or disciplinary community service.

Star of Hope expects all volunteers to work their assigned schedule. All volunteers are expected to be consistent & faithful in fulfilling the agreed upon commitment. If you cannot make a scheduled time, please contact your staff supervisor or the Volunteer Services Department with as much notice as possible.

Volunteers are expected to be punctual for their assigned times. Please let your supervisor know if you will be late.

If a volunteer is unable to meet his/her commitment to Star of Hope, it may be necessary to replace that volunteer. The volunteer may take a leave of absence & return where needed by Star of Hope. We cannot guarantee that your "spot" will remain open until your return.

### **AGE REQUIREMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS**

- The minimum age for an individual volunteer without a chaperone is 18.

### **AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTEER GROUPS (2 or more volunteers)**

- All volunteer group members must be in high school or older. To volunteer on a one-time basis in childcare, all volunteers must be age 16 or older.
- All high school students must be accompanied by 1 sponsor for every 10 students during the entire volunteer experience.
- Younger children may not volunteer – even if accompanied by a parent or sponsor. The only onsite exception is for the Snacks & Goodnight project, which was developed for volunteers of all ages.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH OUR CHILDREN'S PROGRAM ON AN ONGOING BASIS**

- Any volunteer who, either individually or with a group, works with our children's program on an ongoing basis must meet the requirements for State licensed childcare. *Ongoing* is defined as a volunteer who works with the children on more than one occasion.
- The minimum age for childcare volunteers is 18.
- Volunteers must have a high school diploma or GED
- Volunteers must pass criminal history background check.

### **PROCEDURE FOR HIGH IMPACT, PROFESSIONAL & VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERS**

- Submit volunteer application. Professional volunteers must submit some type of professional license, license number & expiration date.
- Attend new volunteer orientation.
- Interview with Volunteer Services representative. Occasionally, a volunteer placement may require either the initial interview be with the prospective supervisor or require an additional interview with the prospective supervisor.
- Pass reference & criminal history background check. May also include fingerprinting & background check of driving record.
- Volunteer is scheduled to meet with supervisor and/or begin placement.

### **PROCEDURE FOR ONE-TIME PROJECTS & SPECIAL EVENT VOLUNTEERS**

- It is best to schedule early - usually at least two weeks in advance.

- When calling to schedule a group, it is helpful for the group-leader to have a couple of dates in-mind that will work for the group, the number of volunteers who will participate in the project, and the type of project the group would like to do.
- Groups are scheduled on a first-come basis.
- Once a group is scheduled, a confirmation letter will be sent to the group leader. (If we are able to schedule a group at the last minute, there may be an agreement with the group-leader that he/she will not receive a confirmation letter.) **IF A GROUP HAS NOT RECEIVED A CONFIRMATION LETTER, THE GROUP IS NOT ON OUR SCHEDULE.**
- It is expected that the group-leader will discuss our general guidelines prior to the group's arrival. Group-leaders must also have each group-member register online via the link provided in the confirmation letter. If volunteers are scheduled for the kitchen, a link will also be provided for a brief kitchen orientation video.
- Time permitting, a brief orientation & tour will be given upon the group's arrival.

### **SIGNING-IN & OUT**

Volunteers must **always** sign-in at the front reception desk & sign-out before leaving. This information is important so that we may recognize outstanding volunteer service & provide statistical data required for grant proposals & agencies such as United Way. Where electronic sign-in/out is available, volunteers will use their e-mail address to access their records.

### **INTERACTIONS WITH CLIENTS/RESIDENTS, STAFF MEMBERS & OTHER VOLUNTEERS**

Be wise! We want volunteers to get to know our staff, other volunteers & clients/residents/guests in the programs. However, be aware of being taken advantage of by some clients/residents/guests who may employ manipulative tactics to achieve personal &, in some cases, unprofitable agendas.

Here are a few specifics:

- Do not give rides to any clients/residents/guests.
- Do not give money to any clients/residents/guests.
- Do not leave your belongings unattended. If you must bring valuables with you, be sure to ask your supervisor where to store them. Never leave your purse or other valuables on the front seat of your car – even if the car is locked. Star of Hope does not assume any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any personal property.
- Practice active listening & empathy. Do not make decisions for the clients/residents/guests. Always refer clients/residents/guests to staff members for questions & assistance.

- Report inappropriate behavior or anything that causes you to feel uncomfortable to your staff supervisor or to the Manager of Volunteer Services **immediately**.
- Always remain calm when speaking with clients/residents/guests. Remember that our clients/residents/guests are going through difficult times & their stress level may be high. Never take any negative comment made by a clients/residents/guests personally & never allow yourself to be drawn into an argument.
- Profanity is never acceptable when working with staff, clients/residents/guests or other volunteers.

## **FRATERNIZATION**

This policy is to provide guidelines concerning activities, actions, conduct, involvement & relationships between clients/residents/guests & volunteers. As a Christian human services organization, this is a critical polity & merits strong commitment by every volunteer. In general, activities, actions, conduct, involvement, & relationships in which volunteers are authorized to engage with clients/residents/guests are those which are listed in the volunteer's job description. The welfare of our clients/residents/guests is a primary consideration in the programs of Star of Hope & this objective is basic to all volunteer-staff- client/resident/guest interactions.

For the purpose of this policy, clients/residents/guests include any person residing at or being served by one of our facilities & any person who has resided or received services (including follow-up contacts) within the last two years.

Examples of unauthorized, inappropriate, & unprofessional behavior include:

- Interacting for personal reasons or socializing with clients/residents/guests when a volunteer is off duty.
- Interacting with clients/residents/guests if that interaction is not necessary with respect to your job or authorized by appropriate supervisor.
- Transporting or allowing clients/residents/guests in your personal vehicles.
- Transporting residents in Organization vehicles without proper authorization.
- Engaging in unauthorized transaction with clients/residents/guests including borrowing, lending, giving/receiving money or anything of value, buying & selling or acting as a client's agent in any of the above.
- Employing or giving any inducement designed to obtain any personal service from any clients/residents/guests.
- Accepting any personal favors from clients/residents/guests.

- Showing favoritism between clients/residents/guests or doing a personal favor for a client/resident/guest without appropriate authorization.
- Any romantic or sexual relationships or attempted relationships between a volunteer & client/resident/guest.
- Conduct that demeans or humiliates or embarrasses a client/resident/guest.
- Inappropriate physical contact with a client/resident/guest.

It is inappropriate & unauthorized for volunteers to engage in activities that can be interpreted as socializing with residents/clients/guests. Any violation of this policy constitutes misconduct & may lead to immediate discharge.

### **CLIENT NEGLECT AND ABUSE**

It is the policy of Star of Hope to provide a positive & encouraging environment for our clients/residents in which they feel reasonably safe & where appropriate consideration is given to their privacy, dignity & individual needs. You are required to embody this policy in all client/resident interactions & avoid conduct considered client neglect or abuse. Examples of neglect or abuse include but are not limited to:

- Intentional physical or emotional abuse of a client/resident. Abuse is defined as intentional or reckless action or omission that causes injury or emotional trauma to a client/resident.
- Any sexual relationships or attempted relationships with a client/resident or with anyone who has been a client/resident (including clients/residents on follow-up status) within the last two years.
- Moral or social behavior which could have serious detrimental influence on clients/residents.
- Procuring alcohol, illegal drugs or unauthorized prescription drugs from or for clients/residents or staff members.
- Exploiting a client/resident for personal gain, including borrowing from or loaning money or any other item of value to a client/resident or hiring a client/resident for personal work.

Any violation of this policy constitutes misconduct & may lead to immediate discharge.

### **WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

Volunteers should observe the following guidelines when working with children:

- Volunteers should not discipline the children. Volunteers should report children's disciplinary matters to the Activities Coordinator or staff member on duty.
- Volunteers should never be alone with a child.
- Volunteers should never touch or hug a child in a way that might be misinterpreted. Please remember that many of our children have come from abusive backgrounds. However, you will not know which children have been abused & which have not. It is best to let each individual child initiate contact.

### **HARASSMENT / SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of this Organization to provide a working environment free of harassment. Every form of harassment is expressly prohibited. Allegations of harassment will be investigated &, if warranted, appropriate disciplinary action, including termination, will be taken. Volunteers who believe they have been subjected to harassment should report the incident(s) to their staff supervisor, program director, Manager of Volunteer Services, Vice President of Operations or Human Resources Department.

Harassment can include "jokes", comments, insults, ridicule, discrimination, unprofessional behavior or other personally offensive or unwelcome behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; unreasonably interferes with a volunteer's work performance; & is not deemed in the best interest of Star of Hope.

Sexual harassment is defined as personally offensive or unwelcome sexual suggestions, language, physical advances, requests for sexual favors & other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

If you believe you have experienced or observed an incident of harassment of any kind you are expected to report the incident immediately. Since harassment incidents may represent embarrassing or difficult to discuss circumstances, you should select the reporting option above with which you are most comfortable. Each charge of harassment will be investigated with consideration given to confidentiality. Results of the investigation will be communicated to those who have a legitimate need to know & appropriate action will be taken as required.

### **WEAPON-FREE WORKPLACE**

To ensure that Star of Hope maintains a workplace safe & free of violence, the Mission prohibits the possession or use of dangerous weapons on Mission property. A license to carry the weapon on Mission property does not supersede Mission policy. Any volunteer in violation of this policy will be subject to prompt disciplinary action, up to & including immediate termination. All Mission workers are subject to this provision, including contract & temporary workers, customers, vendors, volunteers & visitors on

Mission property. Star of Hope also prohibits the carrying of a weapon or concealed handgun on your person or property while rendering any services or attending any event or function or conducting any business on the Mission's behalf unless authorized by applicable law. Volunteers who hold a license a license to carry a concealed handgun are allowed to transport or store that handgun in a locked, privately owned vehicle in a parking lot, parking garage or other parking area that is provided by Star of Hope.

"Dangerous weapons" include, but are not limited to, firearms, explosives, knives & other weapons that might be considered dangerous or that could cause harm. Volunteers are responsible for making sure that any item possessed by the volunteer is not prohibited by this policy.

### **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY**

Star of Hope is committed to protecting the safety, health & well being of all employees, volunteers & other individuals in our workplace. We recognize that alcohol abuse & drug use pose a significant threat to our goals. We have established a drug-free workplace program that balances our respect for individuals with the need to maintain an alcohol & drug-free environment. Star of Hope encourages volunteers to voluntarily seek help with drug & alcohol problems. In addition, Star of Hope receives funds from several grants that require compliance with this policy. Violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary action up to & including immediate termination. Any individual who conducts business for the Mission, is applying for a position or is conducting business on the Mission's property is covered by our drug-free workplace policy. Our policy includes, but is not limited to, employees, volunteers, interns & applicants.

It is a violation of our drug-free workplace policy to use, posses, sell, trade &/or offer for sale alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants. Prescription & over-the-counter drugs are not prohibited when taken in standard dosage &/or according to a physician's prescription. If the use of a medication could compromise the safety of the volunteer or any other individual in the Mission, the volunteer should not report for his/her shift.

### **ETHICS**

Star of Hope conducts its business fairly, impartially, in an ethical & proper manner, & in compliance with all applicable laws & regulations. Star of Hope is committed to conducting its business with excellence & integrity underlying all relationships, including those with clients, donors, volunteers, customers, suppliers & communities, & among employees. The highest standards of ethical business conduct are required of Star of Hope volunteers in performance of their responsibilities. Volunteers will serve with respect, concern, courtesy & responsiveness in carrying out the organization's mission. Volunteers will not engage in conduct or activity that may raise questions as to the Mission's honesty, impartiality or reputation or otherwise cause embarrassment to the Mission. Volunteers shall, during both volunteering & non-volunteering hours, act in a manner which will inspire public trust in their integrity, impartiality & devotion to the best



interests of the Mission, its clients/residents & customers. Violation of this policy shall result in disciplinary action, up to & including immediate termination.

## **DONATIONS**

All donations (money, food, clothing or any other in-kind donation) are to be used for the benefit of Star of Hope, its clients & residents. Volunteers are not authorized to use these donations for a personal benefit or to distribute them to clients/residents without specific authorization from the appropriate supervisor. Volunteers are not authorized to handle cash donations. Violation of this policy (unauthorized possession, use or distribution of donations) will result in disciplinary action, up to & including immediate termination.

## **DRESS CODE**

Volunteers must dress appropriately for your work, the season & in accordance with program requirements. Generally, business or business casual dress is acceptable for most professional or administrative positions. The following are not acceptable: ripped jeans, short-shorts, mini-skirts, short dresses, tank tops, sleeveless shirts, strap-type tops & tight-fitting, sleeveless or low-cut clothing. Shoes should be appropriate to your work. For your safety, do not wear “flip flop” or similar shoes that do not adequately protect your feet.

- Conservative T-shirts, jeans & athletic shoes are appropriate for most volunteer activities
- Volunteers may wear jeans or walking shorts if working outdoors during warm weather. Walking shorts cannot be more than 2” above the knee. However, long pants must be worn by all volunteers at the Men’s Development Center & in all kitchens.
- Volunteers assisting in the kitchen must wear long pants or skirts below the knee to protect the legs from splatters; a shirt with sleeves; closed-in shoes in both heels & toes; & a hairnet or cap. Volunteers are asked to bring their own baseball caps . **Due to City of Houston Health Department regulations, we will strictly enforce the dress code. Inappropriately dressed volunteers may not be able to participate in the project.** If even one volunteer is not in compliance with the dress code, Star of Hope is in violation of the City ordinances & can be cited.
- As a general rule – dress conservatively.

## **REPORTING INCIDENTS**

An incident refers to any event or situation where someone could suffer injury. All incidents must be immediately reported to your staff supervisor or the Manager of

Volunteer Services. This reporting policy is important for the safety & well being of everyone in order to ensure a continued safe & successful workplace.

## **SAFETY**

It is the policy of the Organization to provide a safe & healthy work environment for all volunteers. Volunteers must comply with all safety & health requirements by management, federal, state & local law.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The Organization does not assume responsibility for the loss, damage or theft of personal belongings, & volunteers are strongly advised not to carry unnecessary amounts of cash or other valuables with them when they come to volunteer.

Please, under no circumstances leave your purse, wallet or other valuables on the seat of your car – even if the car doors are locked.

## **STAR OF HOPE PROPERTY**

Desks, storage areas, work areas, lockers, file cabinets, credenzas, computer systems, office telephones, modems, facsimile machines, copiers, & Star of Hope vehicles are Star of Hope's property & must be regarded & maintained according to this policy. Handle all equipment with care, ensuring its safe & proper operation & storage.

## **INTERNAL & EXTERNAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

The use of Star of Hope's internal & external electronic communication systems, including computers, e-mail access, voice mail, telephone systems, fax machines & all forms of Internet/Intranet access, is for Mission business & for authorized purposes only. Star of Hope owns the rights to all data and files in any computer, network, or other information system used by the Mission. Star of Hope also reserves the right to monitor voice mail, telephone systems, e-mail messages (including person/private/instant messaging systems) & their content, as well as any & all use of the Internet & of computer equipment used to create, view, or access e-mail & Internet content. Volunteers who use any part of the Mission's internal or external electronic communication systems as part of their volunteer placement are responsible for adherence to the complete internal & external electronic communications policy. Violation of the internal & external electronic communications policy can result in disciplinary action, up to & including termination.

## **SMOKING / TOBACCO USE ON STAR OF HOPE PROPERTY OR BUSINESS**

It is the policy of Star of Hope to protect the health & safety of employees, volunteers, clients/residents & visitors. All tobacco products - including smoked & smokeless tobacco & electronic cigarettes - are banned from all Star of Hope locations & vehicles & while representing our mission.

### **INTRODUCTORY PERIOD**

Your first 60 days of volunteering at Star of Hope are considered an introductory period. This introductory period will be a time for getting to know your fellow volunteers, Star of Hope staff, & the tasks involved in your job position, as well as becoming familiar with Star of Hope services. Your supervisor will work closely with you to help you understand the needs & processes of your job.

This introductory period is a tryout time for both you, as a volunteer, & Star of Hope as an agency. During this introductory period, Star of Hope will evaluate your suitability for volunteering & you can evaluate Star of Hope as well.

At the end of the introductory period, Manager of Volunteer Services or designee will discuss your volunteer position with you. At this time you, as a volunteer, & Star of Hope, as an agency, decide whether to continue to work together.

### **ORIENTATION AND TRAINING**

The Volunteer Services Department will give new volunteers an overview of Star of Hope's operations & policies.

New volunteers will receive on-the-job orientation, including explanation of duties, from the program or department manager or designee.

### **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

There is a job description for each volunteer position & a copy of your job description will be provided to you. When your duties & responsibilities are changed, your job description will be updated.

### **RESIGNATION**

While we hope both you & Star of Hope will mutually benefit from your continued volunteering, we realize that it may become necessary for you to leave your volunteer job with Star of Hope. If you anticipate having to resign your volunteer position, you are expected to notify the Manager of Volunteer Services & your supervisor as far in advance as possible. Please make arrangements for an exit interview.

### **GRIVANCES**

An effective, successful operation & satisfied volunteers go hand in hand. Volunteer grievances are of concern to Star of Hope, regardless of whether problems are large or small.

In order to provide for prompt & efficient evaluation of & response to grievances, Star of Hope has established a formal Grievance Procedure of all volunteers. It will always be Star of Hope's policy to give full consideration to every volunteer's opinion. There will be no discrimination against or toward anyone for his or her part in presenting grievances.

Under this policy, a grievance is defined as any event, condition, rule or practice which the volunteer believes violates his or her civil rights, treats him or her unfairly, or causes him or her any degree of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the job. A grievance may also deal with an attitude, a statement or an opinion held by a supervisor or a fellow volunteer.

1. See the Manager of Volunteer Services first. If you feel that any volunteering condition, policy, practice or action by Star of Hope is unjust, you should tell the Manager of Volunteer Services about it & discuss the matter confidentially & in private with him or her. If for some reason the Manager of Volunteer Services fails to offer you the opportunity to discuss the matter, or if the discussion does not lead to a satisfactory conclusion, then proceed to the next step.
2. Grievance Conference. The Manger of Volunteer Service's immediate supervisor, the Senior Vice President of Programs, will review the grievance & ask to meet with you. At this conference, you should feel free to openly discuss your complaint & substantiate your reasons for feeling the way you do. The Senior Vice President of Programs will consider your input & render a decision.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

Whenever people gather together to achieve goals, some rules of conduct are needed to help everyone volunteer together efficiently, effectively & harmoniously. By accepting a volunteer position with Star of Hope, you have a responsibility to Star of Hope, our clients/residents & your fellow volunteers to adhere to certain rules of behavior & conduct. The purpose of these rules is not to restrict your rights but rather to be certain that you understand what conduct is expected & necessary. When each person is aware that he or she can fully depend upon fellow volunteers to follow the rules of conduct, then our organization will be a better place for everyone to volunteer.

## **UNACCEPTABLE ACTIVITIES**

Generally speaking, we expect each person to act in a mature & responsible way at all times. However, to avoid any possible confusion, some of the more obvious unacceptable activities are noted below. This, however, in no way implies that the following list contains all unacceptable activities which may result in disciplinary action up to & including termination of the volunteer placement. Your avoidance of these activities will be to your benefit as well as the benefit of Star of Hope. If you have any questions regarding any of

the unacceptable activities listed, please see the Manager of Volunteer Services for an explanation.

Occurrences of any of the following violations, because of their seriousness, may result in immediate dismissal without warning:

- Willful violation of any agency rule.
- Any deliberate action that is extreme in nature & is obviously detrimental to Star of Hope.
- Inappropriate dress, language or behavior.
- Any type of harassment directed toward another person.
- Client abuse or neglect.
- Negligence or any careless action that endangers the life or safety of another person.
- Being intoxicated or under the influence of controlled substance drugs while volunteering. (The only exception is medication prescribed & taken as directed by a physician which does not impair volunteer performance.)
- Sale or distribution of controlled substance drugs in any quantity while on Star of Hope premises.
- Unauthorized possession of dangerous or illegal firearms, weapons or explosives on Star of Hope premises or while representing Star of Hope.
- Engaging in criminal conduct.
- Acts of violence, making threats of violence toward anyone on Star of Hope premises or while representing Star of Hope.
- Fighting, horse-playing or provoking a fight on Star of Hope premises or while representing Star of Hope.
- Negligent damage of property.
- Insubordination or refusing to obey instructions properly issued by your supervisor.
- Threatening, intimidating or coercing clients, staff or fellow volunteers on or off the premises – at any time, for any purpose.
- Theft of Star of Hope property or the personal property of clients/residents, staff or fellow volunteers, unauthorized possession or removal of any Star of Hope property, including documents, from the premises without prior permission from management.
- Unauthorized use of Star of Hope equipment or property for personal reasons; using Star of Hope equipment for profit.
- Dishonesty, willful falsification or misrepresentation on your volunteer application or other volunteer records, or alteration of Star of Hope records or other Star of Hope documents.
- Breach of confidentiality of personnel information.
- Malicious gossip &/or spreading rumors, engaging in behavior designed to create discord & lack of harmony.
- Interfering with another person's ability to perform their job or willfully restricting another person's output or encouraging others to do the same.
- Immoral conduct or indecency.
- Unwillingness or inability to support & further the mission of Star of Hope &/or the objectives of our programs.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Unacceptable behavior, which does not lead to immediate dismissal, may be dealt with in the following manner:

- Verbal reprimand – A volunteer is informed that he or she has committed an initial act of misconduct that does not seriously threaten the welfare of others or the work of Star of Hope. This reprimand will be documented in writing by the supervisor giving the reprimand.
- Written warning - A written warning is written for misconduct which is considered more serious due to either its nature or because it is misconduct for which the volunteer has been previously reprimanded. Any volunteer receiving a written warning is expect to sign an copy of the warning as an acknowledgment of receipt & a commitment not to repeat the misconduct. Failure to acknowledge receipt of a written warning by signature may be cause for termination of the volunteer placement. The volunteer is encouraged to submit written comments in order to state his or her version & explain any special circumstances.
- Disciplinary suspension – A volunteer may be suspended for up to three months when he or she has violated a policy or committed an act of misconduct or is suspected of doing so. A volunteer on suspension must leave Star of Hope & not return to Star of Hope or contact Star of Hope staff or clients/residents until instructed to do so
- Dismissal – Volunteers may be dismissed without warning for just cause. Star of Hope has the right to request a volunteer to leave immediately.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All volunteers should avoid any circumstances that might in any way be interpreted as a conflict of interest between the volunteer & Star of Hope.

## **GENERAL HEALTH**

If you have any health condition that might be aggravated by or that adversely affects your volunteer assignment in any way, please speak with the Manager of Volunteer Services. We will work with you to adjust your volunteer assignment or determine that you are not able to volunteer until the condition is resolved. Volunteers who have an infectious disease will not be permitted to work for the duration of communicability.

# Volunteer Confidentiality Policy

Respect for our client/resident's privacy & ensuring the confidentiality of information is a program priority. Confidentiality is extremely important since a breach of confidentiality can affect the personal & collective safety of our clients/residents. A large part of the volunteer work you will do on behalf of the program involves access to personal information about clients/residents who live at Star of Hope. Any client/resident information, either recorded or not, which is acquired in connection with any form of volunteer work in or for the program, is considered confidential.

**Confidential information includes information about the client/resident's identity, his/her residence at Star of Hope, what transpired in any group activity, & any information collected for or contained in client records. All such information must be treated confidentially.** In most cases, Federal Confidentiality Regulations prohibit the disclosure of any information to anyone concerning or identifying a current or former program client unless the client/resident or his/her guardian has consented in writing. The determination of whether or not a valid consent form for any client/resident is on file is the responsibility of the staff supervisor. **The decision to release any information may only be made by appropriate staff.**

Revealing the simple fact that an individual lives at Star of Hope may result in putting that person in a dangerous situation. Information that comes to you as part of your volunteer placement is NOT to be disclosed or discussed with other volunteers, family members, friends or anyone else, other than the professional program staff which provides supervision of your program.

## **RESPONDING TO A REQUEST FOR DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:**

If you are asked to release information which is confidential, an appropriate, non-committal response should be given, such as, "I'm sorry. I do not know the answer to your questions. Please see the staff manager on duty."

**WHEN ANSWERING TELEPHONES:** If your volunteer placement requires you to answer the telephone, you may be asked if a certain resident lives at the facility in order to send a message to that person. The appropriate response is, "I'm sorry. I can neither confirm or deny whether that person lives here." Do not offer or agree to take a message - that is an acknowledgement that the person is indeed a client/resident. If the caller insists the person resides at Star of Hope & asks to leave a message, the appropriate response is, "I am a volunteer. Please wait while I call the staff manager on duty."

**PHOTOGRAPHING/VIDEO-TAPING CLIENTS/RESIDENTS:** Volunteers are prohibited from photographing, audio taping or video taping any client or resident of Star of Hope without management consent. This policy includes the use of any type of cellular phone camera, digital camera, video camera, tape recorder, or other form of image or audio recording device without management consent.

# Staff & Program Information

## **Administrative Offices - Hope Center - (Administration-Building)**

**4848 Loop Central Drive, Suite 500, Houston, TX 77081-2356 - 713-748-0700**

President & CEO – Hank Rush

Executive Assistant – Michelle Patino

Senior Vice President of Programs – Betty Nunnally

Vice President of Human Resources & Operations Support – Cathryn Taylor

Vice President Chief Financial Officer – Randy Houston

Controller – Cheryl O'Brien

Vice President of Donor Relations – Jack O'Brien

Vice President of Marketing & Communications – Vivian Winslow

Food Service Manager – Rodney Currie

Manager of Volunteer Services – Elizabeth Hatler - 713-440-5322 - [ehatler@sohmission.org](mailto:ehatler@sohmission.org)

(Last-Names: A-H) - Volunteer Coordinator – Courtney Khorrami - 713-440-5385 - [ckhorrami@sohmission.org](mailto:ckhorrami@sohmission.org)

(Last-Names: I-Q) - Volunteer Coordinator – Michelle Bates - 713-440-5365 - [mbates@sohmission.org](mailto:mbates@sohmission.org)

(Last-Names: R-Z) - Volunteer Liaison – Kellie Bonem - 713-440-5333 - [kbonem@sohmission.org](mailto:kbonem@sohmission.org)

Volunteer-Department – 713-440-5468 - [VolunteerServices@sohmission.org](mailto:VolunteerServices@sohmission.org)

## **Men's Development Center**

**1811 Ruiz, Houston, TX 77002 - 713-226-5400**

Director of MDC – Dr. Dick Druary

Administrative Assistant – Lionese Robinson

Director of Workforce Development – Altonette Terrance

Manager of Program Services II – David Bucklew

Manager Program Support Services – Clifton Louis

Manager of Client Services – Ellis Sullivan

Spiritual Life Coordinator – Nicholas Babineaux

## **Women & Family Development Center at Star of Hope's - Cornerstone Community®**

**2575 Reed Rd., Houston, TX 77051 – 832-369-3315**

Director of WFDC Resident Services – Edward Black

Special Projects Coordinator/Administrative Assistant – Kitty Odom-Jones

Manager of Resident Services – Ellen Kingry

Director of Children & Youth Ministry – Gabriella Kocian

Manager of Early Childhood Ministry – Danielle Martinez

Manager of Children's Ministry – Kasey Shelton

Spiritual Life Coordinator II – Dr. Geneva DeVaughn

Spiritual Life Coordinator II – Dr. Henri Williams

Manager of Youth Ministry – Oluwatosin "Tosin" Akande

Manager of TAYF – Ramona Walton

Director of WFDC Program Services – Michelle Alexander

Administrative Assistant – Rhonda Hutto

Manager of Social Services – Brigitte Stevenson

Manager of Program Services – Patrick Asuquo

Intake & Counseling Coordinator – Rachel Baker



**Women & Family Development Center at Star of Hope's - Cornerstone Community®**

**2575 Reed Rd., Houston, TX 77051 – 832-369-3315**

Vice President Chief Information Officer – Andrew Holmes

Director of Facilities Development - Ike Kimmel

Facilities & Property Management Assistant Manager – LaShonda Gordon

**Extended Services**

Director of Extended Services – Erika Wise - 832-487-1223 - 713-440-5377

Manager of Program Services – (New Haven) – Tamela Olive - 281-906-8339

Manager of Outreach Services – (New Horizons) - Di Tubbs – 713-205-0152

Manager of Program Services - (New Heights) – Edna Coronado - 281-202-5278

**Donation & Distribution Center**

**2320 Lamar, Houston, TX 77003 – 713-226-5411**

Donations & Distribution Center Manager - Floyd Clark

Donations & Distribution Center Coordinator – Kimberly Williams

Donations & Distribution Center Assistant – Phyllis Reilly – 713-226-5411

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**[www.sohmission.org](http://www.sohmission.org)**