



Volunteer Handbook

Policy and Procedures



***“Breaking the Cycle of Urban Despair,
One Life at a Time”***

Dear Friend,

On behalf of City Gospel Mission, we would like to welcome you and thank you for partnering with us as we seek to end the cycle of urban despair ONE life at a time in our city! Whether you will be helping behind the scenes, working on the “frontlines” with a man or a woman who is dealing with homelessness or a serious addiction, or sitting down to a meal with one of our guests, you will help make a difference in Cincinnati.

This handbook is a part of your orientation to our ministry. In it you will find information about City Gospel Mission, our mission and vision, volunteer policy, as well as your rights and responsibilities as a City Gospel Mission volunteer. Please make sure to read and understand the policy. Your supervisor will discuss expectations and responsibilities for your specific position.

Volunteers are critical to this organization. We cannot begin to help the number of people that we do without the commitment of people who volunteer their precious time. We want your volunteer experience to be great – in hopes that you will stay with us for a long time to come, and that you will invite others to volunteer with you at City Gospel Mission.

We pray the Lord will use your time of service through City Gospel Mission to not only bless others, but also to draw you closer to Him and His people.

May the Lord bless you!

In Him,

Roger Howell
President

Sherman Bradley
Vice President

The Story of City Gospel Mission Breaking the Cycle of Urban Despair — One Life at a Time

City Gospel Mission has been serving the hurting, needy, and homeless since 1924, providing services such as daily meals, overnight shelter for men, discipleship classes and chapel services, as well as recovery and rehabilitation programs for men and women. All services provided through the Mission are designed to help lead those in need to begin building caring relationships with staff and volunteers. These relationships provide a foundation of love and accountability that is critical for successful life-change to happen in men and women.

Each year the Mission provides more than 120,000 meals and more than 24,000 nights of shelter to people in need. A hot, delicious meal served with loving kindness can lead a hurting or homeless person to seek the help they need to change.

City Gospel Mission is committed to working through local churches and with volunteers, focusing on building relationships with those they serve and helping those-in-need learn about and grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.



Mission and Vision

Our Mission – (What We Do)

*To break the cycle of urban despair – **one life at a time***

Our Vision – (What We Want)

Jesus Christ** transforming Greater Cincinnati through **Churches

Our Values – (What We Believe)

*We value changed lives through intimate **Christ-centered relationships** by extending dignity and respect to **all***

City Gospel Mission's Statement of Faith

“With the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, we witness to everyone we serve the love and grace of God the Father through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful men regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a volunteer with City Gospel Mission I:

____ **Agree with and affirm the CGM Mission Statement and Statement of Faith**

____ **Agree to honor and respect the CGM Mission Statement and Statement of Faith and agree not to be contradictory, in word or action, while volunteering with CGM.**

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

City Gospel Mission's Volunteer Policy and Procedures

Qualifications to Volunteer

Volunteers are matched with roles based upon their gifts and abilities, interests, experience, and time availability. As stated before, the biggest need within the organization is for individuals and groups who can give a regular, ongoing commitment of their time. For some positions placement is also based upon successful completion of the screening process, which may include a criminal background check.

Statement of Faith

City Gospel Mission is a Christian organization, and while we do not mandate that all volunteers believe in what we believe, there may be areas where such a commitment is required, as in speaking in chapel, teaching bible studies, or mentoring in one-on-one relationships. All City Gospel Mission volunteers must agree that they will not teach or speak out against our statement of faith, and to sign an agreement stating this.

Volunteers are encouraged to share their Christian faith, including sharing their testimony, praying, and sharing Scripture, as God leads them.

Age Requirements

We recognize that many families enjoy serving together and the benefit of exposing children to serving others. Because the safety of our volunteers and our guests is extremely important, the following age restrictions apply:

- The minimum age for an individual volunteer is 16, and they must have written parental consent.
- Volunteer youth groups must be at least Jr. High age and have appropriate adult supervision if under the age of 18. (1 adult sponsor for every 10 youth)
- The minimum age for serving at the Diner (food kitchen) is 10 years. Youth under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Youth must be properly supervised AT ALL TIMES.
- Absolutely NO one under the age of 16 is permitted in the kitchen due to safety reasons.
- Any volunteer driving participants in a ministry vehicle or their own vehicle must be at least 21 (and complete the necessary paperwork and background check).

Other Qualities

For many positions there are specific qualifications listed in the *role descriptions* that are important for that particular position. For most positions there are universal qualifications that will help determine if urban ministry is a good fit for you. Some of these qualifications include:

- The ability and desire to work with adults and/or children from varied economic levels and backgrounds
- A heart and compassion for men and women who are struggling with addictions and other obstacles
- Patience!
- The ability to set strong personal boundaries
- A strong desire to see men, women, and children have a personal relationship with Christ and experience restoration in all areas of their lives

Types of Volunteers

There are three main types of volunteer roles at City Gospel Mission:

1. **High-Impact Volunteers** – High Impact Volunteers partner with our staff to touch lives, by helping on an ongoing, regular basis, either weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. They feel a calling to serve the poor - rather it's behind the scenes or one-on-one. These are the volunteers who are helping to build relationships with our clients, or assist our busy staff with administrative and behind-the-scenes work.
2. **High-Impact Church Partners** – Churches who partner with us on an on-going basis serve at least monthly, performing important roles such as leading a chapel service, teaching an enrichment class, and preparing and serving a meal while ministering to our guests. Churches are vital to our mission and vision. They may bring anywhere from 5 to 25 volunteers when they come to serve
3. **One-time or short-term individuals and groups, and Special Event volunteers** – One-time opportunities are more limited, however there are often needs and ways to help the Mission when an individual or group is limited to helping out once or occasionally, especially at special events.

Screening and Placement

Volunteers are placed in positions based on their gifts, passions, and time availability. You are encouraged to visit the programs prior to making a commitment. It is very important that you know the requirements and expectations of a role before accepting a position, and that the position is a good fit for you. *All volunteers (except for “one-time” volunteers) are required to complete a volunteer application.* Criminal background checks may be required for certain positions.

Role/Job Descriptions

Every ongoing City Gospel Mission volunteer position has a written role description.

The role description describes the requirements, duties, and purpose of a particular volunteer role or position. It helps the volunteer understand expectations, and is used in training and in evaluation. At the time of your orientation, you will be given a role description for your particular volunteer role.

Background Checks

Volunteers in certain positions must be properly screened in order to protect our participants.

This includes volunteers in mentoring roles, and those who provide transportation for participants, are alone with participants, or work with youth under 18.

Background checks may include criminal and driver checks (local and national), as well as reference checks.

Orientation and Training

New volunteers will receive on-the-job orientation, where they will receive an overview of CGM’s operations and policies, and responsibilities and expectations of your specific role or position. It is also important that volunteers understand the “do’s and don’ts” for their own safety and protection as well as our clients’.

In addition to on-the-job training, certain roles may require more specific and structured training. All CGM volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend the Understanding Poverty training, which is offered quarterly through the Mission. For certain position, this training is required. Please check

Supervision and Support

Supervision

Every volunteer has an identified supervisor (paid staff or volunteer) who is responsible for direct management. The supervisor is responsible for direct communication, encouragement, connection, and orientation. It is important that you know who your direct supervisor is.

Conflict Resolution

City Gospel Mission follows the biblical means of resolving conflict and grievances as taught in Matthew 18:15-17. If you have a grievance or disagreement, you should seek to resolve the conflict in a timely manner with the person directly. If you are not able to resolve the conflict, then involve your supervisor, or the other person's supervisor.

Attendance

If you are unable to report for your assignment for any reason, please call your supervisor as soon as possible. Please try to let them know in advance, if at all possible. We understand that illnesses and family or other obligations sometimes arise which may prevent you from serving when you are scheduled. Please remember though, that there may be many people who count on you, and a commitment to volunteer is taken seriously.

Resignation

If it becomes necessary to leave your position at City Gospel Mission, please notify your supervisor as far in advance as possible. Please remember that many people may be affected by your departure.

Dismissal

Volunteers who do not follow the rules and procedures of the organization or who fail to satisfactorily perform their roles may be subject to dismissal.

Miscellaneous

Signing-in and Volunteer Hours

All regular volunteers are required to sign-in each time they serve in any capacity at the Mission. The sign-in books are located at the back desk. There is a separate book for Diner and Chapel volunteers who come with churches, and one for individual volunteers who provide other services.

Volunteers who work off-site will be instructed on how to submit their volunteer hours to their supervisor. Accurate volunteer hours are tracked and are used for obtaining grants, for reporting organizational statistics, to track volunteers, and are required to be reported to our auditors each year.

Name Tags

Regular volunteers will receive a personalized name tag which identifies you as a volunteer. Please ask for the name tag when you sign in, and return it upon leaving the building.

Volunteers who serve in the Diner will wear a “generic” name tag that identifies them as a Diner volunteer. These are distributed in the kitchen and must be returned when your shift is complete.

The News Media/PR

Volunteers shall not give information, make statements, or policy announcements to the news media, before consulting with their supervisor, who must then consult with the President or the Vice President of Development. If a reporter requests information about City Gospel Mission, please refer them to the paid staff person on duty, who must then refer them to the President, or the Vice President of Development.

Photographs

No one (volunteers or otherwise) is permitted to take photos or videos of our guests or program participants without the permission of paid staff.

Personal Property

City Gospel Mission does not assume responsibility for the loss, damage or theft of personal belongings, and volunteers are strongly advised not to carry valuables or unnecessary amounts of cash with them when they come to volunteer. Do not ever leave your wallet, purse or other valuables in your car.

Fraternization

In general, activities, actions, conduct, involvement, and relationships in which volunteers are authorized to engage with participants/guests are those listed in the volunteer's job description.

Examples of inappropriate and prohibited behavior include:

- Interacting with participants when a volunteer is off duty.
- Engaging in any monetary transactions.
- Hiring any participant/guest (without the permission of the Program Director).
- Accepting any personal favors from participants/guests.
- Any physical or romantic relationship between a volunteer and participant/guest.
- Inappropriate physical contact with a participant/guest.
- Moral or social behavior which could have serious detrimental influence on participants/guests.
- Procuring alcohol, illegal drugs or unauthorized prescription drugs from or for participants/guests.

Harassment

Every form of harassment is prohibited at City Gospel Mission. Harassment can include “jokes”, comments or other personally offensive or unwelcome behavior based on a person's age, ancestry, color, creed, sex, marital status, medical condition, physical handicap, race or religion.

Sexual harassment is defined as sexual suggestions, language, physical advances, requests for sexual favors and 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 must report the incident immediately to your staff supervisor, program manager, or Volunteer Services. Each charge of sexual harassment will be investigated with consideration given to confidentiality.

Confidentiality

Protecting the interest of the program participants is of utmost importance. Never give out information over the phone about a participant. Even acknowledgement that a person is a participant in our programs can be a breach of confidentiality. You should refer such calls and requests for information to a staff person.

You may be excited to discuss your work with City Gospel Mission with family and friends. Please be extremely mindful and sensitive about using the name of participants outside of City Gospel Mission, even when asking for prayer. Please do not use their last name. If an adult or child discloses plans to hurt him or herself or someone else, or discloses ongoing abuse, you must immediately inform your supervisor.

Responsibilities and Rights of Volunteers

City Gospel Mission relies heavily on the commitment of hundreds of volunteers to help touch lives. Volunteers are held in high regard and are valuable resources. You should be aware that as a volunteer of City Gospel Mission, you are entitled to certain “rights”, and that there are also responsibilities and expectations that are held of our volunteers.

Your rights as a volunteer include:

- being treated like a co-worker and as part of the organization
- having a proper orientation and training for your position
- being matched in consideration with your gifts, skills, desires, and time availability
- to be provided proper supervision and support
- the right to be heard and to make suggestions

Your responsibilities as a volunteer include:

- understanding your limits and abilities, setting boundaries and saying “no” if necessary
- showing up on time and calling ahead if you are unable to make your scheduled time
- knowing and following the policies and consulting with your supervisor if a policy is unclear
- acknowledging your need for training and to participate
- signing in or reporting your volunteer hours as instructed
- fulfilling your commitments to participants and staff in as far as you are able

Guidelines for Volunteers ***(i.e. “Do’s and Don’ts”)***

There are general guidelines and rules that are necessary in order to ensure the safety of volunteers, and to protect our guests and program participants. Keep in mind that some of these rules may change as you grow deeper in relationship with adults you may be working with. Always check with your supervisor first to make sure it is in the best interest of the participant and yourself.

1. **Do not give out personal information** (other than your name) to participants and guests.
2. **Avoid excessive emotional or any romantic attachment with any of the guests or participants.** No one should have one-on-one meetings with members of the opposite sex.
3. **Never give out money** or other items. Money is distributed only with staff approval.
4. **Lock your car, keep valuables out of sight.** It is best to leave any valuables at home. City Gospel Mission is not responsible for damage or loss incurred while you are volunteering.
5. **Don’t promise to help guests and participants outside of the ministry.** This includes a job, money, clothing, etc. Please remember that the staff is experienced at helping people. You may not really be helping them, although you think you are.
6. **Do not give any guest or participant a ride in your vehicle.**
7. **Dress modestly and casually,** while serving at the City Gospel Mission. Women should avoid tank tops and short-shorts or short skirts.
8. **Report any inappropriate behavior** or anything that causes you to feel uncomfortable to a staff person on duty.
9. **Always listen to those in charge.** Our staff has been trained and instructed to handle different situations, and to keep everyone safe.
10. **Be yourself.** Don’t feel you should talk or act in a certain way to “fit in.”

(Continued)

11. Practice **active listening and empathy**. Do not make decisions for the residents.
12. **Profanity is never acceptable** with working with staff, clients, or other volunteers.
13. **Do not give medical advice.**
14. **Sign-in every time that you volunteer at the Mission**
15. **Volunteers are encouraged to talk about Christ and share the gospel** as they feel led. Talk about what the Lord has done for you personally. You are encouraged to share stories about your life and how God has helped you overcome obstacles and given you purpose in life.
16. **Please give us feedback** if you have suggestions or comments. Contact your supervisor or Volunteer Services (see contact page).
17. **Relationships are what help life change to happen.** Remember that it takes a long time for relationships and trust to develop.

Building Relationships

Why Relationships are Important...

Simply put—lives are changed through relationships. We often take the relationships we have for granted—our family, friends, church community and co-workers. *Many of the adults and children that we work with lack meaningful relationships in their lives.* All services and programs offered through City Gospel Mission are for the purpose of introducing relationships to a person, and to continue to go to a deeper, life-changing relationship. The ultimate goal is to help each person become a part of a thriving, healthy church community where they can grow in Christ while being surrounded by caring, supportive relationships on their journey toward wholeness.

Important things to know about building relationships:

1. **Relationships take a long time to develop.** They don't happen overnight. It takes perseverance, patience and a commitment to develop the kind of relationships that help to bring about life change. A trust bond develops slowly. Many of the children and adults that we work with have never experienced a healthy, trusting relationship.
2. **There are different levels of building relationships.** Not every volunteer will be building friendships on the deepest level with all the men, women or children through City Gospel Mission, but every role of a volunteer provides support in some manner to those who are the deep relationship builders. For example, some volunteers will help create the environment where those who are working on the deepest levels can effectively connect with adults or children who are hurting and walk with them towards restoration.
3. **When considering what a life-changing relationship looks like, think of friendships--**who are your friends and how do you relate to them?

A friend knows not only the person's name, gives and helps meet the person's needs, but he or she also chooses to get involved in the other person's life. Friends know where their friends live, what they consider important, the names and whereabouts of their children, and have earned the privilege of accountability and the right to give advice when appropriate. Friends allow others into their lives and protect themselves with healthy boundaries. It is very important to be able to set boundaries when you are developing a relationship with an adult or child through this ministry. This is for your benefit as well as those you are developing relationships with. Examples of some of these boundaries are listed in this booklet (in Policy and Guidelines, and Code of Conduct).

People who are willing to be this kind of friend to hurting and homeless adults or urban children are rare. *Yet it is these kinds of friends who are key to helping people walk through tough times toward a restored life.* That is why we are in need of people who can give a regular, ongoing commitment of their time.

City Gospel Mission Contact Info

City Gospel Mission

1419 Elm Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Phone: (513) 241-5525
Fax: (513) 345-1079

www.citygospelmission.com

Administrative Office

1947 Auburn Ave.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219
Phone: (513) 621-2873
Fax: (513) 345-1049

CityCURE

1947 Auburn Ave
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219
Phone: (513) 621-2873
Fax: (513) 345-1049

www.citycure.com

Volunteer Services

Phone: (513) 345-1025

rwagner@citygospelmission.com