



Volunteer Handbook



Union Gospel Mission





Welcome

We are so glad you have chosen to volunteer with us. You are a vital member of our team, and we value your time and skills.

Please take the time to read this handbook, as it contains important information and will help prepare you for your service at the Mission.

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Our Commitment to you

We highly value our volunteers, and will endeavor to:

- Treat you as a co-laborer in the ministry of the Mission
- Offer you a suitable assignment with consideration for personal preferences, temperament, life experience and skills
- Provide effective training for your tasks when necessary
- Offer you constructive feedback about your work from a staff supervisor
- Inform you as much as possible about the Tri-City Union Gospel Mission, including policies, staff and programs
- Offer you information about new developments and opportunities
- Provide an orderly designated work place
- Allow you to be heard, to feel free to make suggestions, and have respect shown for an honest opinion
- Give you recognition and appreciation for your generous service

Volunteer Pledge

I believe that I am a valued and necessary part of the ministry of Tri-City Union Gospel Mission and that there is a real need for my services.

Therefore, I will:

- Be timely and reliable in the fulfillment of my duties and accept supervision graciously
- Conduct myself in a professional manner, with courtesy and consideration
- Speak and behave in a manner consistent with the faith and values of the Mission
- Hold in confidence any information gained about guests at the Mission
- Be supportive of Mission staff and their decisions
- Take concerns or suggestions to my site supervisor or the volunteer manager
- Be flexible when changes are needed
- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.



As a volunteer, **I will not:**

- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Volunteer when I have a fever or other contagious conditions.
- Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth.
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use profanity while volunteering at the Mission

TCUGM VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Enrollment

It's easy to get started volunteering at Tri-City Union Gospel Mission. Simply fill out a [volunteer application](#). The enrollment process will usually take 1 to 5 business days after you submit the completed form. Once you've been cleared to volunteer, you will receive a confirmation email or phone call from the TCUGM volunteer coordinator. If you prefer to use a hard copy application form, call our office at (509)547-2112.

Group Enrollments

There are at times volunteer opportunities for groups -- families, school, church, corporate, etc. and the Mission welcomes these groups. It is usually not necessary for each group member to submit enrollment forms, but only one individual representing the group may enroll for the entire group.

The group's name, if there is one, should be entered on the front page of the enrollment form. The applicant representing the group should fill out the personal information on the application form

Community Service Work

There is opportunity for individuals to complete their court ordered community service at Tri-City Union Gospel Mission. Court ordered community service hours are only accepted from "municipal" courts. If you are interested in doing your community service with us, please complete the volunteer application form online or using a hard copy and submit them to the volunteer office. Hard copy application forms are available by mail, or you can [apply on line](#). The enrollment process usually takes 1 to 2 business days from the day we receive your forms. Once you have been cleared to do your community service with us, you will be contacted by phone or email. The volunteer office will work with you to set up a schedule.



Placement

After we have received your application, then we will consider your placement. To do so, we survey the interests, skills, and availability that you indicated on the application. Based upon these and our knowledge of ongoing or current volunteer needs at the Mission, we will try to find a mutually agreeable match. As you consider what opportunities interest you, there are a number of helpful things to know regarding placement:

- **Skills:** Some volunteer positions do require specific skills, education, or certification.
- **Court-ordered Community Service:** For municipal court-ordered community service you will be assigned to the Men's Shelter.
- **Faith:** We welcome those of any faith to come and volunteer. You need not be a Christian, but we do ask that you be supportive of our programs, which are based upon Christian principles. We also expect volunteers to support the work, [mission](#) and [statement of faith](#) of Tri-City Union Gospel Mission while donating time. There are a few volunteer tasks that, by their very nature, really necessitate the volunteer holding a personal belief in Christ. Contact the Volunteer coordinator if you have questions, (509)547-2112.
- **Availability:** Placement often depends greatly upon your availability (time of day, days of the week, frequency, and duration). Positions that center around relationship building, such as Mentoring/ tutoring, will be matched with volunteers who can make an ongoing commitment. At the same time, there are other opportunities that are well suited to one-time or occasional volunteering arrangements.
- **Age:** Age can also be a factor in placement. If you are under the age of 18, wherever you are placed, it is required that you be accompanied by an adult. According to food service laws in Washington State, if you are under the age of 10, we are unable to place you in a kitchen position at our facilities.
- **Disabilities:** There are some areas of our facilities not yet equipped for those who have disabilities. Please let us know if you have a disability, so we can be sure to direct you to a volunteer position at one of our facilities that will be safe and accommodating.
- **Needs of the Department:** The need for volunteers can change with a variety of factors. Some are seasonal, and some vary depending upon workload, staffing, the clients we are serving, etc. New needs and special opportunities also come up from time to time. The staff in the volunteer department is available to apprise you of any changes. Also, a listing of new openings is frequently updated on the [volunteer page](#).



- **Scheduling:** If you have submitted your application materials and received back a confirmation email or phone call from us, then you are free to call (509)547-2112 or [email](#) the volunteer office at any time to schedule your service. For some volunteer opportunities we will be able to schedule directly. For other volunteer opportunities we will refer you to the specific program staff that would be supervising you.

On-Task

Dress code

This dress code is addressed to all volunteers. To prevent accidental injury, and because we disciple a variety of people with various moral vulnerabilities, it is important to observe a comprehensive dress code. Please comply with the following guidelines while present at Tri City Union Gospel Mission facilities.

- **Dress Code for Men**

Long or short sleeve shirt, (a tee shirt is acceptable), pants to the knees or below. Closed-toe shoes when working in the kitchen.

- **Dress code for Women**

Long or short sleeve shirts or blouses, pants to the knees or below, closed-toe shoes in the kitchen, dresses with modest necklines, hemlines to the knees or below. Please no sleeveless dresses, tank tops, or halter tops, no tight fitting or low necklines, or bare midriffs.

Non-Fraternization

People in our recovery programs have agreed to restrict fraternization with people outside the program. We welcome volunteers to interact in a friendly manner while maintaining a respectful and courteous reserve. By using caution when relating to the program guests you will protect their place in the program as well as yourself. Do not give out your last name, phone number, address, or email address. Do not make plans with a program guest to meet outside the Mission unless agreement from the case manager has been given.



Non-Harassment

Tri-City Union Gospel Mission seeks to maintain a work environment free from all forms of harassment. Conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment is considered harassment. Such behavior on the part of a volunteer will result in the volunteer assignment being terminated (see Reassignment or Termination). If you believe you have been subjected to any type of harassment while volunteering at the Mission, you are encouraged to bring the matter to the immediate attention of your supervisor, the department head, or the volunteer manager. Harassment complaints are investigated promptly and appropriate action will be taken.

Confidentiality

The Mission's staff and volunteers are responsible for protecting the privacy of Mission clientele. No information about Mission clients is to be given verbally or in writing to anyone, including news agencies, and no photos are to be taken of clientele without a signed release from the Mission and client involved. We take confidentiality very seriously, as it can be a life and death issue for some of our guests.

Notice of impending absence

The staff of Tri-City Union Gospel Mission rely on volunteers to accomplish many tasks, and it is important to be there as scheduled. However, we understand that some changes are unavoidable. As soon as you learn you are not able to volunteer as planned, please call the TCUGM office during business hours, (509)547-2112. On weekends, evenings or holidays, call the facility you were scheduled to serve, and get a message to your site supervisor. Last minute changes to the volunteer schedule are a hardship to the Mission staff and to the program clients. Please make every effort to keep your volunteer commitments.

Gifts to clients

Guests at the Mission shelters have most of their physical needs provided for by the shelter. If a volunteer learns about a guest's unmet need, the most productive way to respond is to alert the guest's case manager to the need. At no time should a volunteer give money to a resident or visitor at one of Mission's facilities. A card or small gift may be appropriate on special occasions or at significant milestones, such as the client's graduation from a class or program, but it is not expected, and giving such a gift is entirely voluntary.



Supervision

Volunteers working on site at a Mission program will be supervised by one of the paid staff. The supervisor will be available to answer questions and provide aid at all times. If the volunteer is ever unclear as to who is the supervising staff person, or where the supervisor is, the volunteer should request that information. Supervision will include making the volunteer(s) familiar with the location of restrooms, drinking water/coffee, emergency exit routes, the volunteer's work area, exactly what work is expected, the location of supplies, and any other applicable information and working guidelines.

Meals

Meals are available daily at the dining facility located in the men's shelter, and volunteers giving service at any of our facilities during mealtime are welcome to eat.

Hours reports

Volunteers are asked to keep a record of the time they serve the Mission. A sign-in sheet will be provided at each location. It is important to the Mission for volunteers to record their time consistently. It is also important in case of emergency for the Mission to have a record of all persons in the building, and the sign-in sheet provides that record.

Smoking policy

All buildings operated by the Mission are non-smoking facilities. Smoking is not allowed on the property.

Personal belongings

Volunteers are responsible at all times for their own personal belongings. We encourage you **not** to bring purses, wallets, cameras, large amounts of money and other valuables when you come to serve. The Mission is not responsible for lost or stolen items. If something is missing, please report it to your supervisor.

Reassignment or termination

If a volunteer is unable to provide a satisfactory or useful service, or if the volunteer assignment is not currently needed, The TCUGM volunteer coordinator will attempt to reassign the volunteer to an appropriate task. The volunteer relationship may be terminated in the case of non-compliance with volunteer policy, or behavior that is angry, threatening, harassing or disrespectful of staff or clients.



Fire

When you first begin volunteering at one of our facilities, take a few moments to survey the posted fire evacuation routes and note the location of the various building exits. If you are unclear about the exits or fire evacuation routes, please ask the facility staff for that information. It may also be helpful to ask the staff to make you aware of the location of first aid supplies. If you are alerted to a fire (by fire alarms, staff, or public officials) while volunteering, evacuate as quickly as possible by following the posted routes. Do not worry about locking doors, shutting down, etc.; there are staff designated with these responsibilities. Once outside the building, stay in relatively close proximity, so that we can keep track of those who successfully evacuated the building.

Food

- According to Washington state food code, children under the age of 10 are not allowed to be in food preparation areas during the preparation of foods. [WAC 246-215-151 (5)] So, we can only allow volunteers over the age of 10 to help serve food in our shelter kitchens.
- It is unlawful for any person afflicted with any contagious or infectious disease that may be transmitted by food or beverage to work in or about any place where unwrapped or unpackaged food and/or beverage products are prepared...(RCW 69.06.030)
- Volunteers in the kitchen should receive information or training regarding safe food handling practices prior to the commencement of volunteering. (RCW 69.06.050) This may come in the form of training by TCUGM staff or a short video shown at the beginning of a kitchen volunteer shift.
- If the volunteer works more than 14 consecutive days in the calendar year in a kitchen position, they need to obtain a food and beverage service workers' permit. (RCW 69.06.050)
- Kitchen volunteers should always wear closed-toe shoes and long pants to provide protection. Long sleeves are also recommended.



Personal Safety While Volunteering

- Volunteers are expected to remain in their assigned work area. Please do not enter other areas of the shelters without the knowledge and permission of your supervisor.
- Do not give out personal information to anyone other than Mission employees while volunteering.
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings. The Men's Shelter dining room can be crowded and noisy during a public meal, so please pay attention to the people around you and give plenty of personal space to the guests.
- Dining room guests should be treated with respect and courtesy. Take care not to startle them or get involved in an argument. Move away from any guest who begins to use a loud voice or seems agitated. Alert a staff member to any situation that concerns you.