

2023 Volunteer Guide and Procedures

Welcome to the Arcata House Partnership!

Thank you for joining us in our effort to support residents in our community experiencing homelessness. As an organization, we rely on community support. We are excited and grateful to have you with us! Volunteers form an essential part of our organization allowing us to provide consistent and personal care for our clients.

This booklet is a brief guide to help familiarize you with our organization and the role and responsibilities of our volunteers. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Once again, welcome and thank you!

History and Objectives of Arcata House Partnership

Founded in 1991, Arcata House was established by the City of Arcata, a group of local faith-based organizations, and concerned citizens, as a way to better serve people who are homeless in the community. Arcata House has had many collaborations, including with the Humboldt All Faith Partnership, who maintained the Arcata Night Shelter and the Lunch Truck food program for many years. In 2012, the Humboldt All Faith Partnership and Arcata House merged together as Arcata House Partnership in an effort to consolidate resources and join forces to better serve people in need in Arcata.

Our mission is to provide advocacy for and services to the homeless and food insecure with compassion, dignity and empowerment.

Values and Principles

Each person here has their own values they believe in and follow, but when we come together as a team, and as part of an agency, then it's not just about our personal values, but about the values of the agency as a whole. The Arcata House Partnership has a set of principles that we expect our staff and volunteers to uphold while working for this organization.

- **Housing First:** All people are ready for housing. Sobriety or compliance in treatment are not necessary to succeed in housing. Rather, housing often provides the foundation for success in dealing with substance use or mental health disorders. Drug use and other harmful behavior does not erase a person's need for housing. In fact, housing often becomes a person's first step towards recovery.
- **Harm Reduction:** Harm reduction evolved as an intervention strategy aiming to reduce the risks associated with drugs use. It recognizes drug use as a complex phenomenon that encompasses a large continuum of behaviors, some clearly safer than others. At Arcata House Partnership, we apply the idea of harm reduction to include how we address a wide variety of behaviors. We strive to provide non-judgmental, non-coercive services and resources to our clients in order to assist them reduce harmful behaviors. We recognize that the realities of poverty, class, racism,

social isolation, past trauma, sex-based discrimination and other social inequalities affect both people's vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with harmful behaviors. We attempt to "meet people where they're at" and focus on doing what we can to support our clients. This establishes that quality of individual and community life and well-being—not necessarily cessation of all drug use—is the criteria for successful interventions and policies.

- **Client Independence:** People experiencing homelessness have the right to self-determination and should be treated with dignity and respect. We see our clients are the primary agents of their own success. As such, we seek to empower them to take charge of decisions affecting their life and express in what ways our organization can assist them in fulfilling their goals.
- **Confidentiality:** Every person, no matter their background, has the right to keep certain information private. In the course of your work as a volunteer, you may see people you know or encounter sensitive information. It is your responsibility to keep this information confidential and respect every person's right to privacy.

When volunteering for the Arcata House Partnership, you may find the work emotionally challenging. It is important that even in these moments we keep in mind these principles and strive to empower our clients.

Volunteer Information

At Arcata House Partnership, volunteers perform essential service for our organization that allow us to provide quality support and resources for our community. Volunteers will work under the direction of staff to perform a variety of services. It will be your responsibility to record and report your hours to your staff supervisor. If at any point you have questions or concerns about the work you have been assigned, please ask the staff member supervising you.

At Arcata House Partnership, volunteer duties get broken up into three different categories:

- **Food Preparation** – These volunteers assist with the preparation and/or distribution of food. To volunteer making food for general distribution you must hold a valid ServeSafe Certification.
- **Pantry** – These volunteers assist with setup and operation of one of our pantries.
- **Support-** These volunteers work providing support during events like the extreme weather shelter or donation collection days.

Above all, we want to encourage our volunteers to find a way to contribute to our organization that works for them. If you have some special idea in mind that is not covered in this guide, please talk to us about it. We love hearing your ideas and want you to help us grow.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

While volunteering with this organization, you will have certain rights and responsibilities. As volunteer you have the right:

- To work in a healthy and safe environment
- To be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation

- To be given accurate and truthful information about the organization for which you are volunteering
- To be given a copy of the organizations volunteer guide and any other guides/procedures that affect your role
- Not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker
- To be provided with orientation to the organization and the role
- To have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988 and
- To be provided with appropriate training and support to carry out your role.

As a volunteer you have the responsibility to:

- Be reliable
- Respect confidentiality
- Carry out the specified assigned duties as directed
- Be accountable for your actions
- Be committed to the organization
- Undertake training as required by the organization
- Ask for support when you need it
- Let the organization know, as early as possible, if unable to attend
- Be courteous to clients, staff and other volunteers
- Raise any issues you may have with the organization
- Do not disparage the organization, clients, staff or other volunteers
- Give notice before you leave an assignment
- Value and support other team members

Active Participation in Program

While your request to volunteer does not guarantee you any specific opportunity or assignment, if you do accept an assignment we ask that you notify us of your intent to leave with sufficient notice that we can have the need refilled.

Volunteer Policies

Volunteer Records

Arcata House Partnership keeps volunteer records on file for insurance reasons and program management. You have a right to inspect certain documents in your volunteer file, as provided by law, in the presence of an Arcata House Partnership representative at a mutually convenient time. No copies of documents in your file may be made, with the exception of documents that you have previously signed. You may add your comments to any disputed item in the file.

Arcata House Partnership will restrict disclosure of your volunteer file to authorized individuals within Arcata House Partnership. Any request for information contained in volunteer files must be directed to the Director, Human Resources. Disclosure of personal information to outside sources will be limited. However, Arcata House Partnership will cooperate with requests from authorized law enforcement or local, state, or federal agencies conducting official investigations and as otherwise legally required.

Breaks and Related Activities

We encourage volunteers to take breaks when they need them. Please just let your staff supervisor know beforehand so they can plan accordingly. Smoking is not allowed in any enclosed area of any of the AHP facilities or vehicles or near doors or windows. Please ask your staff supervisor to direct you to a designated smoking area.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Arcata House Partnership is concerned about the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances as it affects the workplace. The use or possession of these substances while volunteering constitutes a potential danger to the welfare and safety of other volunteers and staff and exposes Arcata House Partnership to the risks of property loss or damage, or injury to other persons. Volunteering while impaired from the use of any drug that may substantially interfere with job performance, pose a threat to the volunteer's safety, or the safety of others, including staff and clients, or risk significant damage to organization's property, is prohibited.

The following rules and standards of conduct apply to all volunteers either on Arcata House Partnership property or during the workday (including meals and rest periods). Behavior that violates Arcata House Partnership policy includes:

- Possession or use of alcohol, an illegal or controlled substance, or being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal or controlled substance while on the job;
- Driving a vehicle for Arcata House Partnership business while under the influence; and
- Distribution, sale, or purchase of an illegal or controlled substance while on the job.

Violation of these rules and standards of conduct will not be tolerated. Arcata House Partnership also may bring the matter to the attention of appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Safety and Liability

AHP aims to provide a safe and healthy environment for all volunteers. If a volunteer is injured in the course of the volunteer's service, it is important that the volunteer notify his or her supervisor immediately. Volunteers should also complete an incident report and submit the report to the

volunteer's supervisor. Arcata House Partnership's general liability coverage, with some limitations and exclusions, protects volunteer workers for covered injury or damage that results from activities or service that volunteers conduct or perform at AHP direction and within the scope of their duties for AHP. AHP's general liability coverage does not provide coverage to volunteers themselves for liabilities they may have incurred for their actions. AHP's volunteer accident insurance coverage covers some injuries to volunteers while volunteers are performing volunteer service on behalf of AHP. In some instances, volunteers must sign a release absolving AHP of liability when AHP volunteers voluntarily and knowingly subject themselves to certain risks while performing volunteer services on behalf of AHP. Contact the Director of Human Resources with questions or for more information about insurance and liability.

Driving Procedures

Volunteers who drive AHP vehicles or intend to use personal vehicles for agency business must be approved by Arcata House Partnership and AHP's insurance company. Volunteers who are not approved by AHP's insurance may drive personal vehicles for agency business with the Executive Director's approval, as long as they do not transport other staff, volunteers, or clients. All drivers who drive their own vehicles need to have their own insurance. Failure to get approval may result in ending the volunteer's relationship with AHP.

Use of Private Vehicles: Arcata House Partnership does not reimburse the cost of driving a car between home and a place of work or business. For business-related use of your vehicle, you will be reimbursed at a rate based on the Federal IRS approved highway mileage guides. Mileage reimbursement covers fuel, maintenance, insurance, transportation and operating costs. Tolls and reasonable parking charges will be reimbursed in addition to the mileage allowance.

- Include the date(s), the points of departure and arrival, as well as the total amount in the Expense Report's "Description of Expenses" table.
- Note that fuel costs are included in the per-mile reimbursement rate. If you request reimbursement for mileage, you will not be reimbursed separately for fuel costs.
- The rate for personal vehicle use will be set each year by the Board of Directors as part of the budget process. Arcata House Partnership does not assume liability for damage to personal automobiles used on business and does not assume liability for deductibles or any other uninsured loss to the vehicle. Expenses for repairs, whether or not they result from the traveler's acts, are not reimbursable. Under no circumstances will Arcata House Partnership reimburse parking fines and moving violations

Complaint Procedures

In situations where differences arise between volunteers or between volunteers and staff we advise the involved parties to first try to resolve the issue amongst themselves. If a third party is needed, please contact your staff supervisor. Under no circumstances should the differences be made public or involve other members of the organization. If the grievance is in regards to your staff supervisor, your appeal should be made to the Director, Human Resources.

Thank you very much for volunteering with the Arcata House Partnership. We're excited to have you on the team. Together, we can provide the supportive services that our community needs. With your help, we will assist people experiencing homelessness fulfill their goals, working with them with compassion and care.