



# Volunteer Handbook

## Updated June 16, 2025

## **Volunteer Job Descriptions**

### **Outside/Floating**

1. Greet and welcome each person
2. Provide a brief overview of “Expectations”
3. Ask guests if there is anything you can pray with them about or if they have any prayer requests
4. Walk guest through what to expect
5. Ask if they have any questions
6. Take them to the reception desk
7. Zip tie belongings in locker

### **Reception/Hospitality Suite**

1. Sign guest in with intake form and shower info. All information is optional. If name is not shared, please ask for a nickname to refer to them as during their stay. At the very least, record that we had a guest and any observable info.
2. Run point on referrals to outside organizations
3. Provide basket with shower supplies
4. Provide scrubs and shower shoes to guests
5. Help guest with coffee and snacks
6. Keep room neat and clean
7. During down time, make new baskets with shower supplies.

## **Shower/Laundry Rooms**

1. Orient guest to shower room
2. Inform them of the timer on the shower. It is not a camera
3. Provide guests with any additional shower supplies not included in the shower basket as needed (children's or special shampoo etc)
4. Assist guests in operating laundry machines
  - \*Clean lint trap in dryer after each load
5. Clean shower after each use with Clorox spray and brush
6. Keep rooms clean and neat
7. Last call for laundry is 2pm; last shower is 2:45pm

## **After Hours**

1. Wash all used towels with clorox water in 1 washer and scrubs in other washer with detergent
2. Dry all towels and clothes
3. Clean showers
4. Disinfect all surfaces, door handles etc
5. Inspect hiding places such as ceiling tiles in bathroom, in ledge of shower, in toilet lid. If you find contraband, call the local police to dispose of it (704-866-6702). Please the sign in sheet with names; we are merely disposing/turning in.
6. Communicate supply needs and any repairs needed to Judy
7. Refill shower dispensers
8. Sweep and Mop floors

9. Make sure both doors and all windows are closed and locked.
10. Turn off lights and power cords in coffee area and charging station.
11. Empty water cooler.

### **All Volunteers**

1. Greet each guest
2. Engage each guest warmly in conversation. They are our guests; get to know them and their story.
3. Give Drew or Judy any feedback. As you greet our guest                      you may think of ideas
4. Offer help, show them where they should go
5. Be like Jesus. Love and Serve
6. Be flexible and use common sense

**Crowd Policy**

In the event of a larger crowd where the laundry wait is exceeding our capacity for the day, the outside volunteer needs work with receptionist to text the guests when their turn is ready.

If volunteer or guest is uncomfortable giving their phone number, they can get a free Google voice number.

## **REFERRAL SERVICES**

### **NC 211**

Call 211 or 1-888-892-1162

Information and referral services provided by United Way NC.

### **Gateway Gaston**

Text 704-800-3836

Information and referral services provided by Gateway Gaston

## **WOUND CARE AND NON EMERGENCY PARAMEDIC ASSISTANCE**

### Community Paramedics

Phone number- 704-862-6288

Services- Can provide wound care, followup after an incident where a person does not know if they should seek medical attention or not.

## **CRISIS, MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES**

### Suicide and Crisis Line

**988 (Text or Call)**

Provides 24/7/365 assistance with mental health, emotional distress, alcohol or drug use

### Mobile Crisis

**855-527-4747**

provides 24/7/365 mobile crisis service response to the Cleveland, Gaston, and Lincoln County communities for all ages.

### Phoenix Counseling Center

2505 Court Dr, Gastonia

Phone (704) 842-6359

<https://phoenixcc.us/>

Services: Provides mental health crisis stabilization and detox. Other services include substance abuse outpatient, tailored case management, peer support, and medication management.

## **NEED AN ID?**

Voteriders

Call or Text 844-338-8743

E-Mail: **NorthCarolina@voteriders.org**

Free help to get a North Carolina Drivers Licence or ID.

**FOOD****Second Harvest Gaston County food pantry list-**

<https://www.secondharvestmetrolina.org/file/agency-downloads/Gaston-Pantry-List.pdf>

Bountiful Blessings Food Pantry (Temporarily Closed for Upgrades)

Mount Zion Restoration Church

2311 Crescent Lane

Gastonia, NC 28052

Phone: (704) 865-8616

Email: **bbfoodpantry@yahoo.com**

Services: Food distribution

Hours of Operation: Thursdays starting at 7:30am

Crisis Assistance Ministry

805 West Airline Avenue

Gastonia, NC

Phone: 704-867-8901

Website: **www.crisisassistancegastonia.org**

Service(s) Offered: Greater Gastonia residents only – food, utilities, heat, and rent.

Hours of Operation: Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.. May apply online.

Criteria- depends on the situation but can receive food once per every 30-90 days

Displaced Roses

Wednesdays from 10am-2pm.

805 S. York St., Gastonia, NC 28052.

(Located within Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. Door access is on the Chester Street side, directly across from the bus stop. Bus #3/Brown Line will bring you directly there). Services offered:

Showers, Laundry, Identification Replacements, Application assistance for Food Stamps, Medicaid, Doctors appointments, and other community resource services, including access to technology and cellphones.

## Healthcare

### Kintegra Health

(704) 874-3316 for Medical or Behavioral Health Services

Website: **[https:// Kintegra.org](https://Kintegra.org)**

Service(s): Health care, health education and preventive care services

Hours of Operation: Varies by location; call for details.

### Partners Behavioral Health Management

901 S. New Hope Road

Gastonia, NC 28054

Phone: (888) 235-4673

Website: **<https://www.partnersbhm.org/>**

Services: Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

## **VETERAN SERVICES**

### Veterans Services of Gaston County

5700 Executive Center Dr, Ste 217

Charlotte, NC 28212

Phone: 855-962-8387

Website: **<https://www.abccm-vsc.org/>**

Service(s): Veteran survivor's benefits, veteran burial benefits, veteran education benefits & veteran benefits.

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. Appointment Hours: Monday – Friday, 12:30 – 4 p.m. Call the office prior to arrival.

### Veterans Services of the Carolinas

965 Roberts Drive, Gastonia

Phone: 704-866-3606

Website: **[www.gastongov.com/789/Veterans-Services](http://www.gastongov.com/789/Veterans-Services)**

Email: **[VeteranServices@gastongov.com](mailto:VeteranServices@gastongov.com)**

Veterans Services of the Carolinas (VSC) is a division of Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry (ABCCM) that supports our nation's Veterans and their families, through Housing, Employment, Outreach, and Call Center Service Coordination, we collaborate with community partners and faith communities to engage with Veterans and meet their critical needs.



## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### Hope United Survivor Network

Emergency 24/7 Phone: 704-852-6000

Phone: 704-862-6783

Website: <https://hopeunitedgaston.com/>

Address: 176 W Franklin Blvd, Gastonia, NC

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### Goodwill Career Center

Website: <https://goodwillsp.org/location/gastonia-career-center/>

Hours- M - F, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Address- 359 W Main Ave Gastonia, NC 28052

Phone number- (704) 916-1610

Services- Job search support, career training, resume workshops

## **General Information on Mental Health**

**The information contained below is not exhaustive training in interacting with those who are experiencing homelessness. It is best practices and general information intended to help individuals feel more prepared and comfortable volunteering at the Wash Hut.**

Homelessness affects people from all walks of life. Reaching out to them with respect, warmth, and empathy not only communicates God's love but also sets the stage for building a good relationship. People tend to respond with respect when given respect. Many, not all, of our unhoused neighbors have experienced trauma and may be experiencing mental health and/or substance abuse challenges. It is far more likely that our unhoused neighbors will be victims of violence rather than commit a violent crime.

14-21% of the unhoused population are victims of violence, vs 2% of the general population.

According to the National Institute of Health, APPROXIMATELY 25% of the unhoused population experiences severe mental illness like schizophrenia, and about 30% struggle with drug and alcohol addiction.

### **Personal Boundaries**

It is suggested that you wear gloves. Wearing gloves when working with unhoused individuals is primarily for protection from potential health risks and infectious diseases. The unhoused population is more likely to be exposed to various diseases and may have higher rates of infection. Gloves help prevent the spread of these diseases to those working with them and vice versa.

It is also suggested that you do not give out your personal phone number and that you do not discuss in detail where you live or work. If you would like to be able to text with our Wash Hut guests, consider downloading Google Voice. Google Voice is a free service and App for your phone that assigns you a different phone number for text and voice calls. Instructions for signing up are available here.

<https://support.google.com/voice/answer/115061?hl=en&co=GENIE.Platform%3DAndroid>

### Active Listening

The first step in building a good relationship is to be an **active listener**: The image below explains ways to do this:



### Positive Language

The second step is to use **Positive Language** that is clear and concise. Positive language involves using words that are affirmative and empowering, creating a supportive and encouraging atmosphere. Examples are in the image below.

## POSITIVE LANGUAGE ALTERNATIVES

Calm down.	→	How can I help you?
Stop crying.	→	I can see this is hard for you.
You're ok.	→	Are you ok?
Be quiet.	→	Can you use a softer voice?
Don't hit.	→	Please be gentle.
Stop yelling.	→	Take a deep breath, then tell me what happened.
Don't get upset.	→	It's ok to feel sad

Below are the Wash Hut expectations that will be communicated to each person using positive language.

### **Wash Hut Expectations**

#### **What You Can Expect from Us**

You can expect:

- To be treated with respect and dignity
- A safe place for a shower and to do laundry
- A cup of coffee and a snack while you wait
- Last load of wash starts no later than 2:00 pm, Last shower starts no later than 2:45 pm

#### **What we expect of you**

We expect you:

- To place all valuables in the locker provided
- To use kind words and actions towards all volunteers or other patrons
- To refrain from using drugs, alcohol, or smoking on the premises
- To be responsible for your items. (The Wash Hut volunteers are not responsible for lost or stolen items.)

### **De-Escalation**

In the unlikely case that you encounter someone who is upset, see the attached document for steps on de-escalating a situation.

If you need to engage with individuals who are having active hallucinations or delusions.

- Be aware that the hallucinations or the delusions they experience are their reality. You will not be able to talk them out of their reality. They experience their hallucinations or delusional thoughts as real and are motivated by them.
- Communicate that you understand that they experience those events. Do not pretend that you experience them. Do not “go down the rabbit hole” of asking them questions.

- Some people with paranoia may be frightened, so be aware that they may need more personal space than you.
- Please know that mental illness has nothing to do with a person's intelligence level. So do not lie to them, as it will usually break any rapport you might want to establish.

Basic First Aid to help with wound care (if you want to), or you can call Community Paramedics. The American Red Cross offers a First Aid App that provides great directions. First Aid supplies are located at the sign-in desk.

- Always wear clean gloves
- Assist in cleaning the wound
- Assist in drying the wound
- Assist in covering the wound

If you believe someone is experiencing an Opioid Overdose, follow the directions included with the Narcan Medication located at the sign-in desk.

This is a video that helps understand Opioid Overdose:  
[https://youtu.be/h-g6hw\\_YDzY?si=QtsRegs9e4WL0-yw](https://youtu.be/h-g6hw_YDzY?si=QtsRegs9e4WL0-yw)

