



# HEALING HOUSING

LOVE LIVES HERE

## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



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Our mission at Healing Housing is to shelter and love women healing from addiction.

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## OUR MISSION

is to shelter and love women healing from addiction.

Healing Housing is a 501c(3) non-profit created for women without financial resources, who are in recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. They have experienced trauma, poverty, incarceration and are facing homelessness when they arrive from an area treatment center or from jail.

We began in 2017 as a recovery housing facility, and over the years we have added a full suite of services to become a comprehensive program.

## VOLUNTEER CONDUCT

### **As a Healing Housing volunteer, you agree to:**

- Represent Healing Housing and the women we serve with professionalism, dignity and pride.
  - Display respect and courtesy for Healing Housing employees, other volunteers, guests, visitors, program participants and property.
  - Respect the privacy of persons served by Healing Housing and hold in confidence sensitive, private, and personal information. Remember that program participant stories are their's to tell, not your's to tell.
  - Follow through and complete accepted tasks.
  - Report any emergencies or unsafe conditions to an appropriate staff member.
  - Keep personal opinions and actions separate from those made as a representative of this organization.
  - Be neutral on matters of religion or politics and refrain from promoting religious or political viewpoints in interacting with program participants, other volunteers and staff.
  - Maintain appropriate boundaries with program participants, staff and other volunteers.
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## **Harassment & Discrimination Policy**

Healing Housing has a longstanding commitment to a work environment that respects the dignity and worth of each individual. Inappropriate workplace behavior and unlawful harassment create conditions that are wholly inconsistent with this commitment. The purpose of the policy is to foster an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, whether that harassment is because of race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, gender, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, medical condition or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.

## **Gift and Favors**

Healing Housing volunteers may not give or accept gifts, payments, fees or services or other favors that influence, or appear to influence, the performance of their duties. In particular, volunteers should never directly offer financial or other personal assistance to Healing Housing program participants. All in-kind and financial donations must be received by Healing Housing staff through proper donation procedures.

The one exception Healing Housing makes is in the instance of the donation of a car. All car donations are made directly to the program participant. If you have a car to donate, please contact Program Director Keisha Pyle at 615.678.6882 or email her at [kpyle@healinghousing.org](mailto:kpyle@healinghousing.org). Keisha will let the donor know which program participant is in need and eligible and then she will connect the participant to the donor to make arrangements for the exchange.

## **Confidentiality Policy**

Volunteers understand the importance of communicating information with others as needed to support smooth and efficient operation of Healing Housing and its programs and to guarantee the safety and welfare of all Healing Housing program participants, staff, and other volunteers. Volunteers will not discuss any actions/incidents or use anyone's name(s) with anyone outside the agency.

- Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in undue familiarity with program participants and alumni.
- Volunteers must not discuss program participants' and alumni personal business with other program participants, alumni or family and friends.
- Volunteers are prohibited from transporting program participants in their personal vehicles unless this is the agreed upon role.

If any volunteer becomes aware of any violation, the volunteer must immediately report the conduct to Healing Housing staff so that it can be investigated promptly. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, termination of volunteer.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Healing Housing expects volunteers to support and adhere to the high standards of the business ethics that we have sought to develop and maintain. Healing Housing wants to make it clear that no conflict of interest should exist that could conceivably influence volunteers' judgment in working with Healing Housing program participants.

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## **Client Relations**

It is the policy of Healing Housing that program participants and alumni be treated with dignity and respect. Volunteers must maintain a professional attitude in all dealings with program participants and alumni. Corporal punishment of a client by anyone is prohibited. No volunteer shall strike, abuse, use threatening or intimidating language or inflict cruelty by physical, psychological or any means upon a client.

Additionally, in order to protect program participants, to insure fair and impartial treatment of residents and program participants and to support Healing Housing's mission, the following conduct is prohibited:

- Volunteers are prohibited from dating or pursuing social, romantic or sexual relationships with program participants.
- Volunteers must not meet socially, trade, barter, or otherwise engage in any non professional transactions with program participants.
- Volunteers must not lend or give money at any time to program participants and are discouraged from doing so with alumni.
- Volunteers must not directly or indirectly accept items from program participants in the nature of a tip, gift or the promise of a gift.

## **Social Media**

The following sections of the policy provide volunteers with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely. We want you to help protect our reputation. Volunteers must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about: HH, HH staff, program participants, volunteers or members past or present; suppliers and vendors; and other affiliates and stakeholders.

Volunteers are asked to refrain from accepting friend requests from Healing Housing program participants until they are graduated. Healing Housing does not permit tagging of program participants.

Remember that you must respect confidentiality at all times and protect confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our work, details of current projects, future projects, program participant names, program participant stories or backgrounds or information held on our supporters, staff or volunteers. If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from making the communication until you discuss it with HH staff.

## **Volunteer Trainings**

Please be sure to keep up to date and attend any relevant volunteer trainings provided by Healing Housing when applicable.

## **Grievances**

If a volunteer has any problems or concerns related to his or her volunteer position or to other Healing Housing employees or volunteers, he/she should speak with Tracey Levine, Healing Housing Executive Director, or Pat Ralls, Lead Volunteer Liaison. We will make very attempt to address the concern.

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## A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT TRAUMA

Because the vast majority of our program participants have experienced significant trauma (as evidenced by consistently high scores on the ACE Childhood Trauma Test), we wish for volunteers to have sufficient background to understand the possible reasons for certain behaviors and/or best practices you will encounter as a volunteer at Healing Housing.

### There are six key principles fundamental to a trauma-informed approach:

1. **SAFETY.** Safety for our program participants includes but is not limited to maintaining their anonymity and privacy (therefore no photos, sharing of information as to how you may know them, no mentions in social media, etc). Psychological safety is also paramount. Judgmental comments and forceful suggestions for improving lives are harmful. Be assured that the many areas of programming and support each participant receives do address any changes they should be making. Lastly, some program participants' life experiences have conditioned them to be fearful if someone comes up from behind them. Similarly, touching their bodies in greeting or conversation can be problematic.

2. **TRUSTWORTHINESS AND TRANSPARENCY.** Maintaining trust among staff and program participants is key to both parties flourishing. Any attempt to get in the middle of staff and program participant business will be extremely unhelpful. A common example is to comment on disciplinary decisions.

3. **PEER SUPPORT.** Our program participants have historically diminished voices. There is also commonly distrust of others due to harmful past experiences. The importance of the power to establish hope among themselves and for themselves is highly encouraged. Many women have been recipients of coercive treatment, and therefore shared decision-making within the group is a model that is used whenever possible.

4. **COLLABORATION AND MUTUALITY.** It is not uncommon for our program participants to have been isolated from others and unsupported in every way. Collaboration and mutuality are learned skills that are focused on and encouraged daily.

5. **EMPOWERMENT OF VOICES AND CHOICES.** When volunteering, resist the urge to direct, but rather allow the program participants as many options to decide as possible.

6. **CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL GENDER ISSUES.** We must understand and be responsive to any racial, ethnic, and/or cultural needs of individuals served.



## VOLUNTEER DO'S & DONT'S

**1. AS SPECIFIED ELSEWHERE, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES GIVE MONEY OR OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ANYONE.**

**2. Unless agreed upon in advance, reimbursement for things that were not cleared cannot be made. And any reimbursement that has been cleared still needs a receipt.**

**3. Refrain from any conversations about body image, weight gain or loss, etc.**

**4. Healing Housing does not require any specific religious or spiritual beliefs. Please respect the path that each person is on.**

We are so happy you are here and have chosen to support women on their journey towards healing. Thank you for your time and your generosity.

With gratitude,

*Tracey Levine*

Tracey Levine, Executive Director

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