



**“Serving Today. Providing Hope for Tomorrow.”**

## **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

Version: February 6, 2025

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# Welcome!

Welcome to Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston (Catholic Charities or Agency). We are so glad that you have decided to volunteer with us.

Volunteers play a vital role in helping people in need throughout the Greater Houston area achieve self-sufficiency and live with dignity.

As a volunteer, you join a community of people, who for over 80 years, have provided food, clothing, shelter, and a network of support services to people of all ages and from all walks of life and religious backgrounds. Our community also promotes social justice, serving as a voice for the poor and vulnerable.

Annually, Catholic Charities, with your assistance, provides help and creates hope for nearly 100,000 people as they create better lives for themselves and their families.

Throughout the year Volunteers donate more than 10,000 hours of service, helping us in almost everything we do, including feeding families through our pantries and food distributions; supporting refugees and immigrants to ensure their success; providing legal immigration services; and much more.

This Volunteer Handbook is designed to introduce you to Catholic Charities and to provide a basic overview of the practices and procedures which provide all of us – employees and volunteers – with guidance and direction. As volunteerism within the organization grows and changes, there may be a need to modify the practices, procedures, and other information described in this Volunteer Handbook. When such changes occur, you will be notified by email. It is your responsibility to keep your paper copy of the Volunteer Handbook current and stay informed about volunteer procedures.

If you have any questions or need any clarification of the information contained in this Volunteer Handbook, please contact the Volunteer Services Manager.

Whether you're a veteran volunteer or this is your first time, we hope you benefit in many rewarding ways from your volunteer experience with Catholic Charities.

## Catholic Charities strives to provide you with:

- **A Volunteer Assignment** that reflects your personal goals, background, and experience.
- Efficient and Effective **Training**.
- **Opportunities** for Continuing Education.
- **A Variety of Volunteer Experiences**.
- **Recognition** as a contributing member of our volunteer team.
- **An Open Door** to hear your concerns.
- **Regular News and Updates** regarding the Agency and the Volunteer Program.



## YOUR VOLUNTEER SERVICES TEAM

### SYLVIA MIRELES

Director, Purchasing and  
Support Services

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### ASHLIE GUTIERREZ

Volunteer Administration  
Assistant

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713.874.6571

## YOUR STAFF SUPERVISOR

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Concerns

To discuss a concern or report an issue, please contact the Director of Purchasing and Support Services or the Manager of Volunteer Services.

## AGENCY LOCATIONS

### MAIN OFFICE

2900 Louisiana Street, Houston 77006

*Just northeast of Elgin*

Main: 713-526-4611

### HOUSTON/HARRIS COUNTY

#### **El Rio Warehouse**

1000 S Loop West, Houston 77054

*Near NRG*

#### **Guadalupe Basic Needs Center**

326 South Jensen Drive, Houston 77003

*East of Downtown Houston near Navigation Blvd.*

**713-227-9981**

#### **Refugee Resettlement**

600 Bering Dr., Houston 77057

*Near Chimney Rock and Woodway*

#### **St. Frances Cabrini Center**

**for Immigrant Legal Assistance**

5599 San Felipe Street, Suite 300

Houston 77056

*Galleria Area*

**713-595-4100**

#### **W.T. & Louise J. Moran Health Center,**

**John S. Dunn Building**

2615 Fannin Street, Houston 77002

*Corner of Fannin and McGowen*

### FORT BEND COUNTY

#### **Mamie George Community Center**

1111 Collins Road, Richmond 77469

**281-202-6200**

#### **United Way Service Center**

**Fort Bend County**

12300 Parc Crest Dr. Stafford 77477

### GALVESTON COUNTY

#### **Galveston Beacon of Hope Center**

4700 Broadway, Suite B-101 77551

**409-762-2064**

#### **Texas City Basic Needs Office**

712 5th Ave. North 77590

**409-948-0405**

## PARKING

### PARKING AT THE MAIN OFFICE

Catholic Charities maintains two parking lots – one at the Main Office and one across the street at the corner of Tuam St. and Louisiana St. Paid, side-street parking is available on Louisiana, Tuam, Smith, and Annie Streets.

### Important

- Prior to 4 p.m., all vehicles should be moved from the Smith St. side of the Main Building.
- No parking is allowed between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. on Louisiana St.
- Strict towing and ticketing is enforced and costs more than \$250 at volunteer's expense.
- Unfortunately, damage to parked vehicles has occurred on side streets.

**Please Note**

- If you choose to park on any side street, parking is at your own risk and cost.
- Catholic Charities is not responsible for any tickets or towing fees that volunteers incur or for any damages to your vehicle on or off Agency property.

**PARKING AT THE GUADALUPE BASIC NEEDS CENTER**

Free parking is available across Jensen Drive at the Eternal Rock Church. Please secure your belongings and take additional caution crossing Jensen Drive. A parking guide is available in the volunteer portal.

**AMPLE, FREE PARKING IS AVAILABLE AT THESE LOCATIONS:**

- El Rio Warehouse
- Galveston Beacon of Hope Center
- Mamie George Community Center
- St. Frances Cabrini Center
- Texas City Basic Needs Office

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Most Agency locations are open Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Catholic Charities is closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Holy Thursday (Offices close at noon)
- Good Friday
- Easter Sunday
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- The Feast of the Assumption (August 15 annually)
- Labor Day
- All Saints Day Observance (October 31, 2025)
- Thanksgiving Day and Thanksgiving Friday
- Christmas Observance – December 24 and 25

## AGENCY LEADERSHIP

### **Cynthia Nunes Colbert, MSW**

President and CEO

Ms. Colbert took the helm of Catholic Charities in 2012. She is an experienced leader and has served more than 25 years in nonprofit management.

Colbert led the agency through recovery efforts following Hurricane Harvey, Tropical Storm Imelda, Winter Storm Uri, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people in Southeast Texas have been helped under Colbert's leadership.



Cynthia was appointed to the board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas's Houston Branch and was elected Chair *pro tem*. She serves on the board of United Way of Greater Houston as well as Texas Executive Women and is a senior fellow with American Leadership Forum.

## AGENCY SENIOR LEADERSHIP

### **Ardiane Ademi**

Vice President - Refugee Services

### **Tammy Casey**

General Counsel | Vice President - Legal Services Programs

### **Brian Gillen**

Vice President - Development & Stewardship

### **Elise Griesmyer**

Vice President - Immigration Legal Services

### **Santiago Inchaurregui**

Vice President – Youth Services

### **Nikita Loston**

Vice President – Human Resources

### **Monica Perez**

Vice President – Family Support Services

### **Kendrick Solomon**

Vice President – Finance

### **Mark Sliter, LMSW**

Interim Senior VP of Programs

### **Brooke Weissinger**

Vice President – Housing Services



# **BECOMING A CATHOLIC CHARITIES VOLUNTEER**

## **User Profile**

All interested volunteers must complete a user profile on Catholic Charities' Volunteer Portal at [ccgalvestonhouston.galaxydigital.com](http://ccgalvestonhouston.galaxydigital.com).

## **Accommodation**

The Agency will make reasonable efforts to accommodate volunteers with physical disabilities. Please contact the Manager - Volunteer Services for more information.

## **Background Checks**

Most individual volunteer opportunities require a criminal background check for persons 18 years and older. Catholic Charities utilizes an online service (Sterling Volunteers) to conduct background checks. Volunteers may not begin before the background check. Background checks are conducted annually for active volunteers.

## **CMG Safe Haven Training**

"Safe Haven" is a three-part video series, which identifies real-life abuse and neglect situations that volunteers and employees may encounter. The training addresses important topics such as pornography, grooming techniques, social media interaction, and boundary violations. The training also covers the different types of abuse and neglect.

All volunteers 18 and older must complete CMG Safe Haven training no more than thirty (30) days after their start date. Volunteers can complete the course online at <https://galvestonhouston.cmgconnect.org/>.

## **Disqualification**

Current and potential volunteers may not serve for the following reasons:

- Any child abuse or neglect charge, indictment, or conviction
- Any felony conviction
- Any assault conviction
- Any DWI/DUI conviction within ten (10) years of the application date
- Any misdemeanor conviction within five (5) years of the application date
- Any court-ordered probation, parole, or community service referral

## **Orientation**

Each volunteer must attend a New Volunteer Orientation within 30 days of signing up for their first volunteer opportunity.

## **Qualifications**

Volunteers may not begin a placement until they are placed and complete all required paperwork, screenings, qualifications, and/or trainings. The qualifications required for each individual volunteer opportunity are available in the volunteer portal.

**Placement**

The Agency will make reasonable efforts to place volunteers in suitable assignments that reflects the volunteer's personal goals, background, and experience. However, the Agency reserves the right to determine the specific assignment for each volunteer based on Agency needs.

**Volunteer Database**

The Agency maintains a confidential file in the Agency's database for each volunteer. The file will include volunteer contact information and volunteer screening, training, and assignment records.

Volunteers are responsible for submitting accurate and complete information to the Agency. The Agency will release volunteer information as required by law and/or if authorized in writing by the volunteer.

**Youth Volunteers**

Youth will be placed in age-appropriate volunteer activities. Youth must be at least 13 years old to volunteer. Youth who are 13 and 14 must be accompanied by an adult guardian or parent. Youth volunteers ages 15-17 are usually not required to be accompanied by a parent or guardian; however, they must submit a written permission form signed by a parent or guardian prior to volunteer placement.

## **ABOUT CATHOLIC CHARITIES**

### **OUR VISION**

People of faith helping people in need achieve self-sufficiency and live with dignity.

### **OUR MISSION**

Guided by God's love, Catholic Charities helps people in southeast Texas by providing caring, compassionate services and advocating for social justice in collaboration with parishes and communities.

### **CATHOLIC CHARITIES HISTORY**

The Catholic Charities movement in the United States traces its history to the opening of the first orphanage by the Ursuline Sisters in New Orleans in 1727. By 1900, there were 827 private institutions of charity under the auspices of the Catholic Church, providing long-term care to the aged, the infirm, and dependent children.

In 1910, in Washington, D.C., the Most Reverend Thomas J. Shahan and Right Reverend Monsignor William J. Kerby, in cooperation with lay leaders of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, formed the National Conference of Catholic Charities. In 1986, the National Conference of Catholic Charities was renamed Catholic Charities USA. Catholic Charities USA is one of the nation's largest, private human service organizations.

In 1943, Bishop Christopher Byrne asked Monsignor John J. Roach to establish a Catholic Charities organization for the Diocese of Galveston-Houston. Beginning as a one-person information and referral resource, Catholic Charities has grown to accommodate and assist an ever-growing and diverse archdiocese. For more than 80 years, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has provided a wide variety of social services to the most vulnerable members of the greater Houston community.

## **SUMMARY OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING**

### Life and Dignity of the Human Person

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred, and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. Our belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all the principles of our social teachings. In our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion, the death penalty, and assisted suicide. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

### Call to Family, Community, and Participation

The person is not only sacred, but also social. How we organize our society in economics and politics, in law and policy directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. The family is the central social institution that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

### Rights and Responsibilities

The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected, and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

### Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

### The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, the basic rights of workers must be respected: the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

### Solidarity

We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that "loving our neighbor" has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

## CATHOLIC CHARITIES BELIEF STATEMENTS

We are a Roman Catholic organization. Founded by the Roman Catholic Church to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities, Catholic Charities looks to Sacred Scripture and the traditions and teachings of the Church to guide its mission, to inform its decisions, and to inspire its staff and volunteers in their acts of service to others.

We embrace the broadest definition of “who is my neighbor”. Catholic Charities provides services to the most vulnerable, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, or creed.

We respect the religious diversity of the people we serve. We believe that the best witness of the God we serve is the unconditional love that we share with those who come to us for help. They can expect to find an environment that is open and welcoming to all, while reflecting the traditions of our Catholic faith.

We welcome people of all faiths to join us in service. We value collaboration, and we respect the dignity of each person. Catholic Charities does not require those who join us in service to share our religious beliefs. We do expect our beliefs to be respected, and we expect those who join us in our mission to uphold our values and moral tenets in carrying out their work.

We are inspired by God’s love, rooted in faith, and united in service to provide unconditional love and necessary help to people of all faiths by stabilizing and strengthening individuals and families in need across the ten counties of the Archdiocese.

We animate the Gospel of Jesus Christ by putting love into action.

We see a world where our neighbors, who are challenged by mind, body, or spirit, find the open doors of Catholic Charities in their communities, and are met with help, hospitality, and hope.

## **CATHOLIC CHARITIES FAQ**

### **Does Catholic Charities only serve Catholics?**

We serve people of all ages and from all walks of life and religious backgrounds, not just Catholics.

### **Are you the Church?**

While we are a faith-based organization, we are not a church. We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation that provides human and social services in the Greater Houston area. We collaborate with the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and local parishes to address the needs in our community.

### **What areas do you serve?**

We serve individuals and families in ten Archdiocesan counties in Southeast Texas: Galveston, Harris, Austin, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Grimes, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker, and Waller.

### **How is Catholic Charities funded?**

Catholic Charities is funded by multiple sources, including government and foundation grants, the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, individual and private donors, contributions from special events, and program service fees. As a United Way agency and a member of Catholic Charities USA, Catholic Charities also receives financial support from those agencies as well.

### **Are you supported by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston?**

The agency does receive some funding from the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, mainly through the Diocesan Service Fund (DSF); however, the funding only covers a small portion of the agency's annual budget. Our annual operating budget is primarily funded by state and federal grants and generous donations from foundations, corporations, and individuals.

# VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

In the workplace and in all interactions with clients, volunteers, and the public, volunteers are expected to adhere to the following Volunteer Code of Conduct:

1. **To work conscientiously** to achieve the objectives of Catholic Charities.
2. **To perform assigned duties at a satisfactory level** of quality, accuracy, and effectiveness.
3. **To be honest and act with integrity** in the performance of duties and interactions with others.
4. **To work cooperatively with staff and volunteers** in a respectful and positive manner; to acknowledge the statements and actions of other staff members/volunteers; and to communicate in appropriate and respectful ways.
5. **To be punctual and to plan and manage** assigned duties to achieve effective and productive use of time.
6. **To be responsive** to the guidance and instructions of supervisors.
7. **To perform in a professional manner** as reflected in appropriate appearance and behavior.
8. **To keep and hold confidential** all Agency and client information in accordance with Agency policies and procedures and in compliance with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.
9. **To respect the privacy** of clients and to use client information in an appropriate and responsible manner.
10. **To protect the rights** of clients in accordance with Agency policies and procedures.
11. **To adhere to** the Foundational Standards established in this Volunteer Handbook.

The Agency reserves the right to dismiss any volunteer who violates the Volunteer Code of Conduct and/or Agency policies.

### **Absence**

The Agency recognizes volunteers may occasionally be absent. The volunteer must notify his/her supervisor at least 24 hours as soon as possible prior to the absence.

### **Alcohol-Free and Drug-Free Workplace**

Catholic Charities maintains a drug-free and alcohol-free workplace. Agency volunteers are prohibited from:

- using, abusing, selling, distributing, and/or possessing illegal drugs or abuse of alcohol or drugs (legal or illegal), which may impair an individual's ability to perform his/her job or poses a risk to volunteers or others; and/or
- unlawfully manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, or using controlled substances or any prescription-strength medication that has not been prescribed to the user; and/or
- consuming alcohol or misusing drugs while at work or during working hours.

**Attendance**

Volunteers are responsible for accurately signing in and out each day they perform volunteer service either by entering the information in the Agency online volunteer database or submitting handwritten documentation on Agency sign-in sheets.

**Conflict of Interest**

Catholic Charities volunteers must act with honesty, integrity, and transparency in all interactions with staff, contractors, clients, and volunteers. The Agency requires disclosure of any potential or actual conflict of interest and prohibits both nepotism and dual relationships.

**Confidentiality**Duty to Protect Confidential Information

Catholic Charities is committed to protecting the confidential information of clients and employees. Every volunteer has a duty to maintain this commitment to confidentiality in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations, and all grants and contracts.

Agency programs and departments may have additional confidentiality requirements related to their clients and services. Volunteers must consult their supervisors for program-specific and/or department-specific confidentiality requirements and procedures.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Every volunteer is required to safeguard the confidentiality of Protected Health Information (PHI), which generally encompasses individually identifiable health information, including electronic and paper records and oral statements, that:

- a. Is created or received by a health care provider, health plan, employer, or health care clearinghouse;
- b. Relates to the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual or payment for services to the individual; and
- c. Identifies the individual or can be used to identify the individual.

Agency programs and departments may have additional HIPAA requirements related to their clients and services. Volunteers must consult their supervisors for program-specific and/or department-specific HIPAA requirements and procedures.

**Dress Code**

As representatives of the Agency, volunteers and interns are responsible for presenting an appropriate image to clients and to the community. Volunteers should dress appropriately for the work environment and duties.

**Driving**

Volunteers who are assigned to a placement that requires driving Agency clients must show proof of current automobile insurance for the car he/she will be using to transport the Agency's clients. Volunteers/Interns are not allowed to drive Agency vehicles. The Agency will conduct a Texas Department of Public Safety Driving Record Check before placement and annually.



**Information Technology**

The Agency's information technology (IT) resources, including without limitation, computer systems, phone systems, communications networks, and other information generated and/or stored electronically, are the property of the Agency.

**Agency Right to Monitor**

Volunteers should not have an expectation of privacy in connection with the Agency's IT resources. The IT department may monitor electronic activity and use patterns. The monitoring includes without limitation accessing stored information and electronic equipment and reviewing logs of incoming and outgoing messages and the content contained in the messages. Volunteers should observe appropriate discretion in the use and maintenance of Agency resources. The Agency reserves the right to collect IT resources at any time for any reason. All Agency standards and requirements, such as the Code of Conduct, Confidentiality, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment provisions, shall apply to the Agency's IT resources.

**Emergency Weather**

At the discretion of the CEO, Catholic Charities offices may be closed due to weather. Supervisors will notify volunteers if the Agency will be closed.

**Out of Pocket Expenses**

Volunteers will not be asked to and should not incur out of pocket expenses or purchase items for the Agency. Volunteers should talk with their supervisor or a member of the Volunteer Services Team about supplies and/or equipment needed to complete their assignments.

**Placement Training**

The placement supervisor will provide basic training to each volunteer. Some programs require additional training that the volunteer must complete before beginning the placement.

**Safety**

The safety of all employees, volunteers, and clients is an Agency priority. The prevention of injuries and accidents is an essential part of a volunteer's work. If an injury or accident occurs, please report the incident/accident to your supervisor immediately.

**Supervision**

Each volunteer will be assigned a staff supervisor. The supervisor and volunteer will establish the scope and timeframe of the volunteer commitment. The supervisor will provide the volunteer with position-specific training, forms, and materials. Frequency of supervision will vary according to the volunteer's skill level and the size/complexity of the workload.

**Volunteer Badge**

Volunteers must wear an Agency badge in a clearly visible location while performing volunteer service inside any Agency facility. The Agency will issue a volunteer badge when the volunteer has completed the orientation process. Volunteers may request a replacement badge from the Volunteer Services Manager.

**Weapons-Free and Firearms-Free Workplace**

Volunteers are prohibited from possessing firearms, explosives, other dangerous weapons, and/or replicas of dangerous weapons while on Agency premises or in any vehicles owned, leased, or operated by the Agency. This prohibition against weapons possession is in effect to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Catholic Charities expects all volunteers to report violations immediately to his/her supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator. Violation of this provision or applicable law may result in dismissal and/or criminal prosecution.

## No Discrimination or Harassment Policy

Catholic Charities strives to provide a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each volunteer has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices. The Agency expects that all relationships in the workplace will be professional and free of bias and prejudice.

Consistent with its foundational standards, Catholic Charities is committed to maintaining a workplace without discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, genetic information, status as a covered veteran, and any other characteristic protected by law. **Catholic Charities prohibits any such discrimination.**

Prohibited conduct is unacceptable in the workplace; in any setting outside the workplace, such as in the presence volunteer colleagues or during volunteer-related social events; and in any context (including use of social media) that may interfere with or undermine Catholic Charities' mission, values, or services.

### Definition of Sexual Harassment

For the purposes of this Volunteer Handbook, the term "sexual harassment" is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example:

- a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's volunteer participation;
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for volunteer decisions affecting such individual; or
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's volunteer performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and can be illegal under federal and state laws. It is important to understand that Catholic Charities prohibits unwelcomed, offensive conduct as a matter of workplace dignity and professionalism, which means such conduct is prohibited even before it may become so severe or pervasive as to violate the law. When such conduct is reported, Catholic Charities will take prompt action to investigate and stop such conduct at its earliest stages.

### Examples of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle or overt behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include:

- unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors;
- sexual jokes and innuendo;
- verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies;
- leering, whistling or touching;
- insulting or obscene comments or gestures;
- display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
- sexual stereotyping; and

- other physical, verbal, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

### Other Types of Harassment

Harassment based on any other protected characteristic also is prohibited. Harassment includes verbal, written, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of the individual's (or his/her relatives', friends', or associates') race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, and that:

- has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive volunteer environment;
- has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's volunteer performance; or
- otherwise adversely affects an individual's volunteer opportunities.

### Examples of Other Types of Harassment

Harassing conduct includes, for example, epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group based on protected characteristics, particularly when circulated or published in the workplace, or during scheduled work time, or using work equipment, including, for example, via e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, tweets, blogs, social media sites, or other means.

As with sexual harassment, harassment based on other protected characteristics also may constitute discrimination that can be illegal. As with sexual harassment, it is important to understand that Catholic Charities prohibits such unwelcomed, offensive conduct as a matter of workplace dignity and professionalism, which means such conduct, when based on other protected characteristics, also is prohibited even before it may become so severe or pervasive as to violate the law. Catholic Charities will take prompt action to investigate and stop such conduct at its earliest stages when such conduct is reported.

### **Duty to Report Misconduct**

#### Responsibility

Catholic Charities requires that volunteers maintain high standards of professional and personal conduct. As representatives of the Agency, volunteers must practice honesty and integrity in performing their duties and must conform to the standards and requirements in this Volunteer Handbook.

### Examples of Volunteer Misconduct

Examples of volunteer misconduct include, without limitation, the following:

- a. Violation of the Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- b. An act of dishonesty or breach of trust, such as theft, fraud, or falsification of records.
- c. Actual or apparent harassment.
- d. Actual or apparent discrimination.
- e. Violation of the Zero Tolerance Standard or the Mandated Reporting requirement.
- f. An act or omission that creates a security or safety risk for staff, clients, or the public.
- g. An act or omission that adversely affects the Agency's public image.

- h. Unauthorized disclosure or use of confidential information, such as using confidential information for personal gain.
- i. Unauthorized possession, distribution, or use of any illegal drug or narcotic, or any other violation of the Alcohol-Free and Drug-Free Workplace policies.
- j. Fighting, taunting, or bullying.
- k. Possession of weapons or firearms on any Agency premises.
- l. Destruction or waste of property that belongs to the Agency, Agency staff, or volunteers.
- m. Removing, destroying, or borrowing any Agency property without prior permission.

#### Reporting Misconduct

A volunteer is required to report actual or suspected misconduct to the Manager - Volunteer Services. Each report will be investigated and, if appropriate, corrective action will be taken.

#### Confidentiality

A volunteer may report misconduct or suspected misconduct on a confidential basis. Reports will be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible, subject to the investigation process and any applicable legal requirements.

#### Good Faith Report

When reporting a concern about misconduct or suspected misconduct, a volunteer must act in good faith and with reasonable grounds for believing the reported information indicates misconduct. A malicious report (made in bad faith, without a reasonable basis for the actual or suspected misconduct) is a serious offense and may violate the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

#### No Retaliation

Retaliation will not be tolerated against a volunteer who reports misconduct or suspected misconduct. A volunteer who is found to have retaliated against someone in response to reported misconduct commits a serious offense and may violate the Volunteer Code of Conduct. Any volunteer who believes that he/she is being retaliated against must immediately report the retaliatory conduct to the Manager - Volunteer Services.

## Zero Tolerance Standard – Mandated Reporting Requirement

### Zero Tolerance Standard

In addition to the prohibitions against discrimination and harassment in the workplace, Catholic Charities prohibits every form of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of clients, including but not limited to children, persons over 65 years of age, or adults with a physical or mental disability. The Agency enforces a zero-tolerance standard for any form of abuse, neglect, or exploitation regarding clients.

Examples of prohibited behavior include without limitation:

- a. Any sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and inappropriate sexual behavior perpetrated by an Agency's employee, contractor, or volunteer with an Agency client.
- b. Any sexual relationship of any kind between a client and an employee, contractor, or volunteer.
- c. Any sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited, regardless of the local age of majority or age of consent. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense.
- d. Any exchange of assistance, money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior is prohibited.

Violation of the Zero Tolerance Standard constitutes gross misconduct and is grounds for immediate dismissal, as determined by the Agency in its sole discretion.

### Mandated Reporter Requirement

If a volunteer has knowledge or suspicion of any incidence of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a client, the volunteer must report such information *immediately* to the Manager - Volunteer Services and the Agency's General Counsel.

## **Social Media Policy**

### Volunteers may not:

- a. share and/or disclose on social media any confidential and/or proprietary information regarding Catholic Charities, its employees, contractors, volunteers, or clients.
- b. use the Agency's logos, trademarks, content, web addresses, email addresses, or other symbols affiliated with the Agency without the express written authorization of the Agency's Director of Communications.
- c. use Catholic Charities email addresses to register on social networks, blogs, websites, or other social media sites.
- d. create links from blogs, websites, social networks, websites, or other social media sites to the Catholic Charities website; and
- e. use or post photos or information regarding the Agency's volunteers, staff or clients;
- f. use social media during work hours, unless the activity is authorized by the volunteer's supervisor.

Offensive, obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, harassing, abusive, violent, intimidating, threatening or similar inappropriate or unlawful comments or posts will not be tolerated.

### Agency Right to Remove Content

Catholic Charities has the right to remove posts, comments, photos, posts, and other content from any Agency publication in its sole discretion.

### Media Interaction

Unless authorized in writing by the Director of Communications, volunteers are prohibited from acting as a spokesperson for the Agency or posting comments as an Agency representative in a social media communication. Volunteers must direct all media inquiries to the Manager - Volunteer Services.

**End of Volunteer Handbook**