

Volunteer Policies Update 2025

We are so grateful for your decision to volunteer with the Winston-Salem Rescue Mission. Your time, energy, and compassion make a lasting difference in the lives of the men and families we serve. This guide is here to help you feel informed, supported and confident in your role as a volunteer.

OUR MISSION, VALUES AND VISION

Mission

Helping our hurting neighbors find hope and healing through the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ.

Core Values

We are a Christian organization that believes in the triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and affirms the transforming life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the salvation for all humanity, and seeks to put Christ at the center of all we say and do.

We are a non-denominational ministry that provides services for anyone who calls on us for help regardless of race, religion, cultural or ethnic background.

We are a service ministry following the example of Christ who came “not to be served, but to serve” and carrying out the Great Commandment to “love our neighbors as ourselves”.

We are called to proclaim the gospel to anyone who is lost and in need of the grace and forgiveness found only in Jesus Christ.

We seek to glorify God in all we do, believing that by serving the needs of our neighbor, showing kindness and compassion to the hurting and the lost, and sharing the good news of the gospel of Christ with all people we bring glory to God and fulfill our purpose in life.

Statement of Faith

Needs are met on three basic levels:

Physical needs are met by providing food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, education, work training and other services that create healthy and whole persons;

Emotional needs are met through integrated Biblical counseling, addiction recovery programs and caring support;

Spiritual needs are met through Bible study, chapel services, personal counseling and a call to Christian faith and practice.

Community Outreach

The Mission provides several services to meet the needs of the general public in the Triad area. These services include outreach to over 6,000 individuals each year:

Free Medical and Dental Clinics (Host-site for Samaritan Clinic -run by volunteer doctors, dentists, nurses)

Free Food Pantry (provides 53,000 meals/year)

Free Clothing Ministry (through our Thrift Store) (10,000 pieces of clothing)

Thrift Store (providing affordable gently used items including furniture, mattresses, clothing, appliances, electronics, and more)

The Mission is a 501(c)3 organization and is privately funded with the majority of our donations coming from individuals, churches and businesses. 80% of our donations are used to directly fund our programs which help those in need. We also receive gently used donations for our Thrift Store. The Mission is supported by over 400 volunteers a year with 6,000 service visits on campus who have the vision of helping those most in need in our community.

What Can You Expect as a Volunteer

We are committed to making your experience meaningful. You will receive a full orientation and training before your first shift. Our Volunteer Coordinator is here to guide you and answer any questions you have along the way. We want you to feel connected to the work and understand the impact you're making. We will provide a safe, welcoming environment with clear instructions and regular opportunities for feedback and growth. Volunteers will be recognized throughout the year and we are always looking for ways to show our appreciation.

Your Role and Responsibilities

As a volunteer, your presence and actions matter. We ask that you treat all residents, staff, and fellow volunteers with dignity and respect. Please show up on time, stay for your full shift and let us know in advance if you will be unavailable to attend your shift.

Healthy Interactions and Boundaries

At the Winston-Salem Rescue Mission maintaining healthy, professional boundaries is essential. Volunteers are not permitted to exchange contact information with residents or clients, nor should you offer or accept money, gifts, food or rides. Romantic or overly personal conversations should be avoided. It is important to protect each resident's privacy. If you witness behavior that concerns you or makes you uncomfortable, please report it to a staff member immediately. Your role is one of service, and your support is best given within the structure and safety of our team.

Dress Code and Personal Presentation

We ask all volunteers to dress in a way that is appropriate for the environment and activities you'll be participating in. Closed toe shoes are required as some tasks may involve walking or light lifting. Clothing should be clean, casual and suitable for movement. Avoid clothing with offensive, graphic or political messaging. Please refrain from wearing anything too revealing. This includes midriff tops, short shorts, spaghetti straps or low-cut tops. Hats should only be

worn if part of an assigned task. The goal is to maintain safety and dignity for everyone involved, including you.

Health and Hygiene

To ensure the health and safety of both our community as well as yourself, please stay home if you are sick or have been exposed to contagious illnesses. Good hygiene includes regular thorough handwashing before meals of tasks involving food. Volunteers serving in food prep or distribution will receive additional instructions as needed.

Communications, Devices, and Social Media

We want you to be engaged during your time with us at the mission. Phones should remain silent and only used when necessary. Out of respect for our residents, we ask that you do not post photos, videos or personal stories from your volunteer shift to social media unless you received specific permission from staff. If you would like to help spread the word about the mission or tag us in a post, we welcome it. Just make sure your post reflects our values and doesn't include any identifying information about our residents.

Age and Group Participation

Volunteers between the ages of 12 and 15 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. For student or church groups, we require one adult (age 21 or older) for every five youth participants. If you are interested in bringing a group to volunteer, please reach out in advance so we can plan the best possible experience for everyone involved.

Prohibited items and Behaviors

To keep our campus safe, drugs, alcohol weapons and smoking (including vape pens) are strictly prohibited. Volunteers are expected to refrain from the use of profanity, discriminatory language, or any kind of harassment. Any violation of these standard may result in removal from the volunteer program. If a situation arises where you believe a serious issue is occurring involving any resident, volunteer, or staff member, do not handle it alone and contact the volunteer coordinator or supervisor immediately.

Emotional Awareness & Listening

Many of the people we serve are facing significant challenges. As volunteers, we are here to offer them support through kindness, not advice. If someone opens up to you, it is best to listen with empathy and avoid trying to fix the problem. Instead of saying "I know what you're going through", you could instead say "That sounds really difficult, would you like to talk more about it?" Your presence, patience and listening ear can go a long way in providing comfort. Just remember to avoid giving advice asking intrusive questions, or comparing their experience to your own.

Confidentiality and When to Speak Up

Respecting confidentiality is a vital part of our work here. However, there may come a time when you must report information. If a resident discloses thoughts of self harm or harming others, shares a story of abuse or neglect, or if a conversation leaves you feeling uncomfortable, unsafe, or emotionally burdened, please seek the volunteer coordinator or nearest staff member immediately. We take these matters seriously and will support you in doing the right thing.

Diversity and Inclusion

At the Winston-Salem Rescue Mission, we believe that every person is made in the image of God and worthy of love and respect. We aim to be a place of healing, understanding and belonging for all people. Volunteers are asked to approach service with an open heart and a spirit of humility.

Your Commitment To The Mission

By Volunteering with us, you agree to represent the Winston-Salem Rescue Mission in a way that aligns with our values. You agree to respect the residents and staff, uphold the guidelines outlined here, and carry out your responsibilities with integrity and grace. You also agree to notify us if you're unable to attend a scheduled shift and to reach out if you're unsure, overwhelmed, or in need of support. We are in this together, and you are an essential part of what makes the work of this mission possible.