

# W.H.O. Volunteer Information for Outsiders Inn at St Paul

AN INTERFAITH and COMMUNITY EFFORT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



Outsiders Inn at St Paul is located at  
St Paul Lutheran Church  
1309 Franklin St. Vancouver WA 98660

*Volunteer entry is doorway off the alley to the east of 532 W 14<sup>th</sup> St.*

**Winter Hospitality Overflow** was established in 2003 to help bridge the gap between limited shelter space and the increased need for warm, safe overnight accommodations for unhoused individuals during Vancouver's coldest months. Extending **HOSPITALITY** to people who are facing extreme challenges was foundational to the program, and it continues to be the most valuable contribution that volunteers like yourself bring to people who are temporarily residing in our shelter.

Originally a seasonal program, in April, 2020, St Paul Men's Shelter began operating as a year-round shelter -- a temporary home -- for 25 men who are in recovery from homelessness, substance abuse and trauma. Staffing and overall management of the site is the responsibility of an organization called Outsiders Inn who hires people with a lived experience of successful recovery from homelessness. The facility at St Paul is also referred to as 'Outsiders Inn at St Paul.'

'**Winter Hospitality Overflow**' (WHO) specifically refers to the period between November 1 and March 31, during which time volunteers from faith groups and other community organizations are particularly sought to assist and interact with guests of the overnight shelters that are located at St Paul Lutheran (for men), St Andrew Lutheran (for women and families), and the more recently added **Satellite Overflow Shelters** (SOS) that operate at three (3) locations on a rotating basis: Beautiful Savior Lutheran, Immanuel Lutheran and River City Church.

We welcome you, individually or in partnership with friends and associates, to assist in enhancing our community's support of people who are houseless by volunteering at the St Paul shelter during WHO season, or at any time during the year.

## **Introduction to St Paul Men's Shelter** **Shelter Referral**

To access all shelters in Clark County, anyone experiencing homelessness or who is at risk of becoming homeless, must contact the Housing Hotline, which is operated by Council for the Homeless (CFTH). **Housing Hotline phone number: 360-695-9677**

Council for the Homeless will determine needs, priority, and availability. If referred to St, Paul Men's Shelter, each guest agrees to abide by behavior standards as outlined by Outsiders Inn.

## **Life at the Shelter**

Upon arrival at St Paul Men's Shelter, men are assigned a bunk which includes a bin for personal belongings. Outsiders Inn manages the shelter with staff-people who have lived experience of a successful recovery from homelessness. During their stay, peer counselors as well as representatives from various social service agencies connect with residents in an effort to help each individual to stabilize and improve their personal situation. After the first week, individuals are assigned a chore which they are responsible for throughout the week.

Residents enter the shelter at 6:30 pm each evening, and must depart each weekday morning by 7:00 am. Evening activities include check-in, dinner, relaxing and watching tv, showers, chores. Lights-out is at 10:00 pm. Mornings are busy with the men getting ready for the day, breakfast and chores. Monday nights after dinner there is a house meeting where residents and staff discuss issues impacting the residents with regards to smooth operations of the shelter, specific topics with a check-in on thoughts, etc. This also gives the group a chance to bring up any grievances, suggestions, and compliments.

Outsiders Inn-St Paul remains open all weekend and some holidays, so residents do not need to leave during the day. Weekends are pretty casual: a lot of the men sleep in, and sometimes a resident or a volunteer will make a special breakfast, or a casual lunch is offered. Residents can come and go throughout the day. Following the evening meal, some of the men lay down to sleep fairly early; others stay up until 'lights out' at 10:00 pm.

## **Meals**

Every morning breakfast of cold and hot cereal is served, as are other items when available. Each evening, dinner is delivered at 6 pm by someone in the greater community who offers to make and bring a meal (more information about volunteering to deliver meals via MealTrain is on page 4. We welcome your group to bring a meal/meals concurrent with your volunteering or at another time during the WHO season.)

Volunteers and staff receive the meal, and get it set up so it is ready when the doors reopen at 6:30 pm. Residents gather to eat their meal at tables within the Hospitality or the Activity rooms. This time and these spaces are conducive to transitioning from a day possibly spent outdoors, or at a job. The meal and the informal atmosphere invites conversations that you might have with the men.

## **On-site Volunteering**

At least one (1) Outsiders Inn staff person is onsite the entire time the facility is open. Sometimes there is an additional staffer or a recurring volunteer.

Your volunteering enhances the shelter with the hands and heart that you share in the time you are onsite. We welcome your volunteer participation on an evening or weekend shift:

1 or 2 volunteers per shift (1 youth aged 11 to 17 years old accompanied by an adult may be an additional volunteer.)

- **Evenings – Saturday thru Thursday 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm** (not Friday nights, unless it is listed on the online Volunteer SignUp)
- **Weekends and holidays - 11:00 am to 2:00 pm**

Any time prior to your first shift, we encourage you to attend an introductory tour of the facility which is offered every Friday evening at 5:00pm (except the Friday of holiday weekends).

Outsiders Inn Volunteer Coordinator, or the St Paul Site Manager, will show you around the shelter, explain schedules and rules, and answer any questions you may have. You and others in your group may attend any Friday, no reservation needed, just show up at the entry (entry is door with doorbell off the alley to the east of 532 W 14<sup>th</sup> St, near the ballot drop box.)

On the day of your volunteer shift, plan to arrive at the scheduled time. There may be updated information to share with you, and it's a chance to get familiar with the site, and what you will be doing during the shift.

Dress comfortably and modestly. You will be walking and standing, and may or may not have much opportunity to sit (accommodations are made for volunteers who have physical limitations.) Expect infrequent exposure to the outside temperature because the exterior doors are opened and closed, plus the living area of the shelter includes a partially-roofed outdoor courtyard.

Park in the metered spaces along 14<sup>th</sup> Street or those on the east side of Franklin between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Walk to the alley that runs south off of 14<sup>th</sup> Street and ends at a dumpster. Along the alley, there is a double door with a doorbell. Ring the bell and the staff will open and welcome you. (*on Googlemaps: 532 W 14<sup>th</sup> St.*)

**Volunteer Activities** may include these or similar activities, as guided by staff:

- **Seek out Opportunities to Interact with residents.** These often happen in the hospitality room but also the day room, patio, or even in the hallways. Cards, a puzzle or an easy-to-play game (bingo has been a favorite, or Yahtzee or dominoes) may entertain some of the residents and provide opportunities for you to connect and interact with the men. You can ask staff for guidance, and for games available.
- **Setting up and Serving Meals** (explained below).
- **Checking-in residents** and assisting with signup for showers, chores or other opportunities.
- **Monitor the shower schedule** and remind residents when their shower time is approaching.
- **Hourly fire safety walks.** Staff will show you locations to check and where to sign off that the fire walk was completed
- **Coordinate and/or participate in chores.** Staff may ask for assistance in coordinating residents' chores. Volunteers may assist the men with their chores but ultimately the residents are responsible for completing their chore. (Chores may include washing dishes, loading the dishwasher, wiping tables, vacuuming, sweeping the patio, cleaning up the activity room, etc)
- **Shelter laundry.** Volunteers generally do not do residents' laundry unless staff approves, but towels and bedding is routinely laundered in washer/dryer that are in the facility.
- **Restocking** bathrooms, laundry room, and pantry.
- **Complete Volunteer Log** and include any comments or concerns. Helpful feedback is also welcomed.
- Volunteer at Outsiders Inn-St Paul encouraged to interact with shelter-residents.

***Your participation and the interactions that you share with residents are a very meaningful experience for them as individuals, and are also extremely helpful to the staff.***

### **Sign-up to Volunteer at St Paul**

All volunteers are required to sign a confidentiality agreement and authorize a criminal background check that Outsiders Inn will complete. The electronic form needs to be completed at <https://www.outsidersinn.org/sws> Allow a week for processing; form is valid for one (1) year.

- November 1 thru March 31 (W.H.O. season) – information and sign up for individual shifts can be found on SignUp.com: <https://signup.com/go/RrXRwrY> For more information, or to engage a team of volunteers for the WHO season, contact St Paul WHO Committee by emailing [whostpaulvanc@gmail.com](mailto:whostpaulvanc@gmail.com)
- April 1 thru October 31 – contact Outsiders Inn Volunteer & Resources Coordinator at [waystohelp@outsidersinn.org](mailto:waystohelp@outsidersinn.org) 562-227-6828
- If you are interested in volunteering on a recurring basis at this (or another site overseen by Outsiders Inn, or to be ‘on call’ for Severe Weather Shelters), contact Outsiders Inn Volunteer & Resources Coordinator at [waystohelp@outsidersinn.org](mailto:waystohelp@outsidersinn.org)

When you sign up for a shift, SignUp.com will send you an acknowledgement that you can put on your calendar. SignUp.com will also send an automated reminder of your shift two (2) days in advance.

### **Provide a Meal at St Paul by volunteering thru MealTrain**

Dinner meals for Outsiders Inn-St Paul are coordinated using a program called MealTrain. We do not have a stove so meals need to be warm and ready to serve. Food for 29 people is needed each evening.



Detailed information about delivery, dates needed, and a peek at what other people are serving can be found on the MealTrain sign-up <https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/04435v>  
*This volunteer activity does NOT require a background check.*

### **Other ways of supporting Winter Hospitality Overflow and Outsiders Inn-St Paul**

**Financial donations:** At any time during the year, contributions to sustain our programs are welcome and very much needed.

- Donate directly at the W.H.O website: <https://whoprogram.org/donate/>
- Mail donations to Council for the Homeless, 2500 Main St., Vancouver, WA 98660, with “WHO-St Paul” or “WHO program” in the memo line.

**In kind donations:** We create to-go lunches for those men who need/ask for them. We keep coffee and a snack table with fruit and snacks that are available anytime. Donations of staple food and pantry items that can be distributed among all Outsiders Inn shelter locations are appreciated. To make a donation, or to check if we can accept your gift, please contact Outsiders Inn by (voice/text) phone (564)-227-6828 or email: [waystohelp@outsidersinn.org](mailto:waystohelp@outsidersinn.org)

Any questions? Contact St Paul WHO Committee at [whostpaulvanc@gmail.com](mailto:whostpaulvanc@gmail.com)

***Thank you for your interest in rendering care and hospitality  
at St Paul Men’s Shelter/Outsiders Inn at St Paul.***