

HELPING HANDS VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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Jewish Family Service of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, Inc.

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Senior Volunteer Coordinator

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Dear Volunteer:

Welcome to Jewish Family Service of Nashville and Middle Tennessee's Helping Hands program. The program is designed to reach out to senior citizens and people with disabilities in the Jewish community of Nashville.

The success of our program depends on people like you who are willing to offer valuable time, support, and caring to a population in need. We appreciate your taking this opportunity to carry on the Jewish tradition of "gmilut chesed," acts of loving kindness. We hope that you will gain much satisfaction from your work.

Included in this handbook is information that should prove helpful to you. If at any time you have questions, concerns, or ideas, please do not hesitate to share them with me.

Thank you for becoming a part of the Helping Hands family and for giving so generously of yourself by giving the gift of time and caring. I am delighted to have the opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,

Jamie Maresca
Senior Volunteer Coordinator

HELPING HANDS FACT SHEET

What is the program?

Helping Hands is a program designed to support senior adults and people with disabilities in the Nashville Jewish community.

What are the goals of the program?

The goal of providing services in client's own homes is to help people continue to live independently as long as possible, as well as to feel connected to the larger Jewish community. The goal of providing services to clients in assisted living facilities is to enable people to maintain their Jewish connections and Jewish observance.

How does the program work?

The program seeks to match the interests and skills of volunteers with the needs of clients in order to create a mutually rewarding volunteer experience. The Senior Volunteer Coordinator provides orientation and ongoing supervision and support.

What are some of the services which volunteers provide?

In the clients' homes, volunteers offer friendly visiting, telephone reassurance, and other services. In assisted living facilities, volunteers offer friendly visiting, telephone reassurance, Shabbat services, holiday celebrations, and cultural, social, and religious programming.

Why are Helping Hands volunteers important to Jewish Family Service?

Helping Hands volunteers of all ages are an indispensable part of Jewish Family Service. By performing many vital tasks, they supplement and enhance the work of the agency's professional staff. Volunteers also transmit the warmth and concern of the community to those we serve.

THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

Meeting People

Volunteering provides the opportunity to meet people and form friendships. Volunteers often form strong bonds with the clients whom they serve, as well as with other volunteers.

An Opportunity For Personal Growth

As a Helping Hands volunteer, you will work with people whose lifestyles, needs and goals may be very different from your own. Volunteering offers an opportunity to learn more about other people and, in turn, to learn more about yourself.

New Skills

Through orientation and work on the job, you will have the opportunity to learn new skills. These skills may be useful in future work or educational endeavors.

Documentation of Your Volunteer Experience

Helping Hands will maintain a record of your volunteer service and can document your volunteer work for a future employer or a school application. We are happy to write a letter regarding your volunteer contributions.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Above all, as a volunteer, you have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of families and individuals who need your friendship, caring, support, and assistance.

HELPING HANDS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Scheduling and Attendance

The decision to volunteer is a serious commitment to yourself and to your client. We will arrange the schedule to suit your availability. We will also work hard to match your unique personality, skills, interests, and availability to the needs of a particular client. Once you commit to participate, regular participation is essential. The people with whom you will be working will depend on your reliability and responsibility. In some situations, you may be the only consistent person in someone's life. Often, your visit is the highlight of your client's week.

At the same time, unforeseen events do occur in everyone's life, and we know that we need to respond with understanding and flexibility. Therefore, if you need to miss an arranged appointment or if you cannot keep your commitment, please let us know as soon as possible. In this way, we can take whatever steps are necessary to accommodate you to the best of our ability and to ensure that we are meeting the needs of those we serve.

Keeping Track of Your Time

For a variety of reasons, it is important that we keep accurate records. We ask that each volunteer keep careful track of the time that he/she spends with the client and the type of interaction. Please fill out the Monthly Log sheet (a sample Monthly Log Sheet is on the following page), and be sure to return it to the Senior Volunteer Coordinator each month. If there is a problem that requires attention, please inform the Senior Volunteer Coordinator in a timely manner in addition to including a comment on the monthly log.

It is also important that we have up-to-date records on our volunteers. Please let us know if you have a change in name, address, telephone number, or e-mail address.

Jewish Family Service
Helping Hands Volunteer Monthly Log Sheet

Volunteer Name _____ Month _____

Client Name _____ Date Seen _____ Hours Spent _____ Telephone Time _____ Travel Time _____ Comments _____
Client Name _____ Date Seen _____ Hours Spent _____ Telephone Time _____ Travel Time _____ Comments _____
Client Name _____ Date Seen _____ Hours Spent _____ Telephone Time _____ Travel Time _____ Comments _____
Client Name _____ Date Seen _____ Hours Spent _____ Telephone Time _____ Travel Time _____ Comments _____
Client Name _____ Date Seen _____ Hours Spent _____ Telephone Time _____ Travel Time _____ Comments _____

Please use back of form for any additional comments.

PLEASE RETURN TO: Jamie Maresca, Jewish Family Service, 801 Percy Warner Blvd., Nashville, TN, 37205. Fax: 615-301-0676. E-mail jamie@jfsnashville.org

Confidentiality

It is essential that volunteers observe, maintain and protect the confidentiality of clients. Please avoid sharing with anyone information that identifies the client. Information about the needs and problems of clients should be shared with the Senior Volunteer Coordinator or other Jewish Family Service staff only. Jewish Family Service staff will share necessary information with you that prepares you for your work with clients and will always respond to your questions and concerns.

Sensitivity

Volunteer positions require sensitivity to clients' feelings and taking the initiative to empower clients as much as possible. This means that your "helping" needs to include a component of "helping people to help themselves" whenever possible. In this way, the client will be encouraged to feel more in charge of his or her own life. Please remember that you're not there to fix problems, but rather to listen. Listening is helping!

Clients may want to talk about things that are difficult, such as death, grief, or loss. Usually the best response is thoughtful listening, accepting his/her feelings, acknowledging concerns, and indicating that what he/she relates to you will be kept confidential.

Client Problems

Clients sometimes discuss problems with a volunteer. These discussions may be an indirect call for help. It is important that you bring any client problems to the attention of the Senior Volunteer Coordinator in case intervention is needed. Also, please contact the Senior Volunteer Coordinator if you notice any changes in your client's functioning (such as confusion, depression, extreme forgetfulness, disorder in the house, lack of food in the house), appearance (potential signs of elder abuse, potential signs of elder neglect), or health (lesions, visible weight loss, chronic cough).

Emergency Procedures

During a visit with your client, you should employ the following procedures if anything unusual or frightening happens that you feel you cannot handle.

Examples of possible emergencies, though rare, might be if your client becomes ill or if there is an accident involving your client. If there is an emergency, **call 911 immediately**. Stay with your client until help arrives and inform medical personnel of your client's medical history. Stay calm and make your client as comfortable as possible without trying to move him/her. Call your Senior Volunteer Coordinator at 354-1686 or the Executive Director at Jewish Family Service at 354-1644 as soon as possible to discuss the incident.

Conflicts of Interest

Volunteers should avoid activities that could be construed as a conflict of interest. It is important neither to accept from clients nor to give to clients loans or gifts of money or property. In addition, please refrain from offering medical, legal or financial advice to clients. All issues of this nature should be referred to your Senior Volunteer Coordinator.

Liability Insurance

Please be aware that financial responsibility for motor vehicle accidents lies with the owner of the vehicle. If a volunteer is involved in an accident, the volunteer's personal policy is the only source of recovery for damage.

If a volunteer uses his or her own vehicle to transport a client, we require proof of insurance with \$300,000 minimum limits. We will keep a copy of your policy's declaration page on file, and we will request an updated copy each year.

Supervision and Support

Your Senior Volunteer Coordinator is always available to answer questions and address concerns. Please feel free to discuss with her any questions or

concerns that you have about your client. In this way, she will be able to give you all of the support and information that you may need. Your Senior Volunteer Coordinator will contact you regularly to give you support.

TIPS FOR FRIENDLY VISITORS

What to do during visits:

- ◆ Be punctual and predictable. Plan your visits, and let the client know as soon as possible if you cannot come at the appointed time.
- ◆ Leave your personal troubles at home.
- ◆ Be an attentive, enthusiastic, and understanding listener.
- ◆ Respect the confidences shared by your client.
- ◆ Encourage your client to be as independent as possible. Be resourceful in helping him/her to maintain or renew former interests or activities. Whenever possible do with, rather than for, your client.
- ◆ Use your sense of humor.
- ◆ Find common interests. Once you find an interest in common with your client, build your relationship on that.
- ◆ Offer to contact the Senior Volunteer Coordinator if a client asks a question that you cannot answer (e.g., about community resources).
- ◆ Acknowledge birthdays or other special days with a card.
- ◆ Be aware of and sensitive to any restraints that have been placed upon your client due to financial hardships or physical limitations.
- ◆ If your client has a hearing impairment or a limited command of English, speak slowly and distinctly in standard English, facing him/her. Avoid standing with your back to a window or light, as your face will be a shadow. Remember that there is no need to raise your voice.
- ◆ If your client has a vision impairment, offer your arm when moving from place to place. Don't take your client's arm because this pushes him/her ahead of you. Place his/her hand on the back of a chair, the banister of a stair, or the framework of a door of a car and then your client can assist him/herself.
- ◆ Walk slowly and carefully when escorting your client. If he/she uses a walker or cane, allow him/her to use it fully. Be especially attentive to steps, curbs, and uneven surfaces. Let your client hold onto you for support if he/she asks.
- ◆ Inform the Senior Volunteer Coordinator of any major changes you observe in your client's behavior, health, appearance, or surroundings.
- ◆ Be relaxed and enjoy yourself!

What not to do during visits:

- ◆ Do not administer medication or give medical care.
- ◆ Do not jump into a conversational gap too quickly; some silences are okay.
- ◆ Do not give specific financial, medical, or legal advice.
- ◆ Do not accept valuable gifts.
- ◆ Do not overstay your visit. It is better to leave before the client shows signs of fatigue. Your visit should generally last no more than one hour.

ARRANGING THE FIRST VISIT

- ◆ Telephone the client to introduce yourself. Identify yourself as a Jewish Family Service Helping Hands volunteer.
- ◆ Set the time and date for the first visit. Establish the length of the visit.

THE FIRST VISIT

- ◆ Be punctual.
- ◆ Explain that you are looking forward to visiting them and are happy to spend some time together.
- ◆ Tell a little about yourself to help draw your client out.
- ◆ Ask about hobbies, music, club affiliations, etc. See last page of handbook, *The Art of Talking*, for more ideas about what to do during a visit.
- ◆ Listen as the client shares memories.
- ◆ Alert the client five or ten minutes before the visit is coming to an end.
- ◆ When leaving, review the day and time of the next visit, perhaps mentioning something you might plan to do.
- ◆ Express your enjoyment of time spent together that day.
- ◆ *Most of all, relax, be yourself, and enjoy the visit!*

TIPS FOR TELEPHONE REASSURANCE

Because many clients are hesitant to allow strangers into their homes, a telephone friend can provide them with the opportunity to establish a caring relationship with someone without opening their doors to the unknown.

- ◆ Several telephone calls may be required to gain the trust of the client. Try to create a warm and accepting atmosphere.
- ◆ You will call the client once, twice, or a few times weekly. It will be helpful to keep the calls reasonably short (5 to 20 minutes), but take your cues from the client.
- ◆ Complimenting and encouraging the client will promote self-respect and positive feelings.
- ◆ Be a thoughtful listener, showing interest and understanding. Try not to argue, interrupt, be judgmental, or give advice.
- ◆ Take care before giving the client your telephone number. Some clients may be lonely and overly needy which can lead to excessive phone calls. You can remind the client that he/she may call the Senior Volunteer Coordinator at any time with questions or concerns.
- ◆ If any physical or mental changes occur during telephone calls, please inform the Senior Volunteer Coordinator. **If you feel there is an emergency, call 911 immediately.** Then contact the Helping Hands office (354-1686 or 354-1644) so that family members can be notified.
- ◆ Check with the Senior Volunteer Coordinator if both the volunteer and the client want to explore other services of the Helping Hands program, such as friendly visiting.

TIPS FOR VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

- ◆ Be punctual and predictable. Let the client know if you are running late. If he/she feels anxious, a delay of even ten minutes can seem like hours.
- ◆ Allow extra time for getting in and out of the car, walking to offices, etc.
- ◆ Call the client to reconfirm on the morning that you are scheduled to drive. If the passenger lives in an apartment building, ask if he or she can wait for you in the lobby.
- ◆ Remind the client to bring anything necessary for the appointment (i.e., glasses, medication, hearing aids, etc.)
- ◆ If the client cancels the scheduled ride, please call our office. If you arrive to pick up the client and he/she does not answer, please call our office at once.
- ◆ Drivers should escort the client to the car and provide any necessary assistance. Keep in mind that not all clients need or want assistance in getting in or out of a car, but they may appreciate your asking.
- ◆ Ask the client to fasten his or her seatbelt. You should refuse to transport any client who refuses to wear a seat belt.
- ◆ Drive the client to the scheduled destination. Escort him/her into the building. Depending on the type and anticipated length of the appointment, as well as the client's state of health, you may wait for the client or return for him/her at a scheduled time. If you plan to return for him/her, be sure to leave a number where you can be reached. At your client's request, you may accompany him/her to see the doctor.
- ◆ When you arrive at a doctor's office with a client, it may facilitate the appointment to tell the receptionist (with the client's permission) that you are a volunteer, and ask how long the appointment will take. Be persistent!
- ◆ If a client asks you to drop him/her off somewhere other than home after the appointment or if the client asks you to take him/her to the store or pharmacy on the way home, feel free to do so if you have the time.
- ◆ Do not accept gifts or money from a client. If he/she insists, you may suggest making a donation to Jewish Family Service.
- ◆ **In the event of a medical emergency, call 911.** It is essential also to contact the Helping Hands office immediately (354-1686) so that family members may be notified.

THE ART OF TALKING

Most older people enjoy the role of mentor to pass on what they have learned to others. Older people are repositories of history, culture, unique experiences, and versatile skills.

How do you break the ice when you visit or call, and what will you talk about? It's easy! Just remember that your new friend has a wealth of knowledge and experience that can be shared with you.

Below are some suggested topics for sharing:

- ◆ What was the happiest day of your life?
- ◆ What skills are you most proud of?
- ◆ What was something funny that your children/grandchildren have done?
- ◆ How did you earn your first dollar?
- ◆ What is your favorite hobby? How did you start it?
- ◆ What causes have you been interested in?
- ◆ What is your favorite song?
- ◆ What country did your ancestors come from? What kind of stories did they tell you?
- ◆ How did you meet your husband or wife?
- ◆ Did you ever have any pets?
- ◆ Do you think the "good old days" were so good?
- ◆ What is the most striking invention in your lifetime?
- ◆ What kind of games or sports do you like? (This could lead to a rousing game of gin rummy, checkers, or Scrabble!)
- ◆ Where did you spend your happiest vacations?
- ◆ Talk about his/her family pictures.
- ◆ Make his/her family tree.
- ◆ Record family history or experiences on paper or into a tape recorder.
- ◆ Bring in pictures, magazines, newspaper articles, or collections to add variety and stimulation to visits. Encourage interests, both old and new.
- ◆ Do a puzzle together.
- ◆ Enjoy and discuss radio, television, movies, or hobbies.
- ◆ Plant a dish garden together and watch it grow.
- ◆ Exchange recipes and cook together.

Jewish Family Service of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, Inc.

Established in 1853, Jewish Family Service of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, Incorporated is a 501(c)(3) private, not-for-profit organization providing professional social services to all residents of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, without regard to religious affiliation. Jewish Family Service relies on funds from Jewish Federation of Nashville, United Way (designate #24), grants, endowments, fundraising, donations, and client fees.

The mission of Jewish Family Service is to provide professional social services from Jewish perspectives which respond to and support individuals and families through life's transitions. Licensed and experienced professionals, under qualified supervision, provide all clinical services.

Services include:

- ◆ Adoption
- ◆ Case Management
- ◆ Counseling & Psychotherapy
- ◆ Emergency Financial Assistance
- ◆ Family Life & Community Enrichment
- ◆ Information & Referral
- ◆ Refugee Resettlement

Our office is open Monday through Thursday from 9AM to 5PM and Friday from 9AM to 4PM. Evening appointments are available. Jewish Family Service is located one mile south of the 70S/100 split at The Gordon Jewish Community Center of Nashville.

Jewish Family Service of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, Inc.

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