



**Interfaith Outreach™**  
*Igniting the power of community*

# **Volunteer Handbook**

*“Interfaith Outreach volunteers always bring a smile to my face, no matter what else is going on. It makes my day that much better to see so many good people in one day.”*

*- Interfaith Outreach Client*

As a volunteer of Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners, you are valued. You commit your time and skills to help serve the unmet basic needs of people in the community. You are making a difference in the lives of our clients and helping them to move forward. Your hospitality, joy and compassion help to make Interfaith Outreach a comfortable, safe and enjoyable place for people to find help. You are making the community a better place. Volunteering heightens community engagement by building a vibrant and healthy community for all.

This document outlines our volunteer policies and procedures. It will help you to understand your important role as a volunteer and guide you in carrying out your responsibilities. With your help, Interfaith Outreach will remain a warm atmosphere of love and support for all people in our community.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment. By working together, this community can change the odds for struggling families in need. We truly appreciate your partnership!

Liz Erstad-Hicks & Najmo Yusuf  
Community Engagement Department

**Mission:**

Engaging the heart and will of our community to respond to emergency needs and create opportunities for all to thrive.

**Vision:**

Building a vibrant community where everyone counts and all sectors and systems work together for the good of all.

**Values:**

Our community at its best is welcoming, attentive, responsive and inclusive.  
Everyone in our community counts; everyone has an irreplaceable role to play.  
At the heart of our work are relationships built upon mutual respect, trust and accountability.  
Community partnerships provide powerful and life-changing opportunities.  
There is transformative power in giving and receiving.  
We are on this human journey together. The community we build together is more for the sharing or less for the withholding of the gifts of each of us.

**Diversity Statement:**

Interfaith Outreach embraces diversity and is committed to promoting an inclusive environment across all types of difference. Inclusionary relationships are core to our role as an employer, service provider, partner and community leader. We commit to engaging in respectful dialogue, courageous conversations and bold action in service of a community becoming its best.

Diversity includes differences of perspective and preference, sexual orientation, political affiliation, economic status, veteran status, national origin or culture, race, age, gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, language, religion or non-religious background, physical, mental and developmental ability, and all other visible and non-visible differences.

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# I. Interfaith Outreach Overview

Since 1979, Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners has been making an impact in eight west suburban Hennepin communities. Interfaith Outreach provides both emergency and long-term solutions around food and clothing, housing, employment, child care, transportation and access to resources and healthy community connections. Learning and service opportunities engage individuals, businesses, schools, faith communities, civic groups, health systems and foundations. Together, Interfaith Outreach and its partners create opportunities for all to thrive.

Please visit our website, [www.iocp.org](http://www.iocp.org), to learn more about Interfaith Outreach and to view our most recent annual report, [www.iocp.org/annualreport](http://www.iocp.org/annualreport)

## II. Volunteering with Interfaith Outreach

### 1. Volunteer Opportunities

Interfaith Outreach relies on the support of more than 2,000 volunteers each year to help carry out our mission and accomplish our goals. Current volunteer opportunities can be found on our website at [www.iocp.org/volunteer](http://www.iocp.org/volunteer). You can also call 763-489-7505 or email [nyusuf@iocp.org](mailto:nyusuf@iocp.org) or [lerstad-hicks@iocp.org](mailto:lerstad-hicks@iocp.org) to discuss these or other volunteer positions of interest.

### 2. Volunteer Application & Interview Process

Interfaith Outreach volunteers are asked to fill out an application, and submit to Community Engagement. After receiving your application, the Community Engagement Department will contact you to set up an initial volunteer meeting. This will give you the opportunity to describe your skills and interests in more detail, learn more about Interfaith Outreach and discuss the volunteer opportunity that would be most meaningful and beneficial to both parties.

Interfaith Outreach is dedicated to diversity and inclusiveness. We consider all volunteer applications without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status, the presence of a job-related medical condition or disability, or any other legally protected status.

### 3. Registration and Records

In order to work with our volunteers in the most efficient and professional way, volunteers must complete an application prior to volunteering with Interfaith Outreach.

Individuals under the age of 18 are required to provide a parental or legal guardian signature indicating permission to volunteer with the organization.

Volunteers over the age of 18 who will be working closely with clients (youth or adults) or in the Finance Department are required to have a criminal background check. The results will be discussed with you

individually. All criminal background reviews will remain confidential. Background checks will be updated every two years to keep records accurate.

Volunteers who will be using their own vehicles to provide transportation to Interfaith Outreach program participants or drive for food shelf or Resale Select pickups are required to show proof of valid driver's license and current auto insurance on an annual basis. A driving record report will also be conducted to verify your qualifications for this position (see page 11, #17 Driving Interfaith Outreach Vehicles).

#### **4. Orientation and Training**

In order to fully prepare volunteers for their various roles, Interfaith Outreach offers orientations for many of its volunteer programs. Orientations are conducted by Interfaith Outreach staff members and volunteer program coordinators. Interfaith Outreach also provides ongoing trainings and meetings to keep volunteers informed of important information, improve performance and continue developing appropriate skills.

A volunteer position description will provide specific information about orientations, trainings, qualifications, responsibilities and your staff supervisor. Agreeing to take on a volunteer position means following the duties stated on the description. Any significant changes in roles or responsibilities must be approved by the volunteer, the supervisor and the Community Engagement Department.

#### **5. Volunteer Sign In and Tracking of Hours**

Volunteers are asked to sign in at the reception desk every time they volunteer onsite at Interfaith Outreach. We also ask volunteers to wear a lanyard and nametag while on-site so others in the building will know who you are. Once you have completed your volunteer shift, please sign out and return your nametag and lanyard to the reception desk. (The only exception to this would be if you are volunteering at Resale Select when you will sign-in and out on the POS system or if you are volunteering offsite where you would sign-in and out how your volunteer supervisor intends).

Volunteers are asked to record the hours they volunteer so that we can understand the scope of the work done at Interfaith Outreach and the impact volunteers make on our programs. This includes both hours worked inside and outside of our building. When volunteers sign in and out of the building, the hours will be recorded. If volunteers are working independently, they should record volunteer hours on our time cards and submit to their volunteer supervisor on a monthly basis. Volunteer supervisors will explain which method of tracking is best for your volunteer position during your training.

#### **6. Attendance**

Interfaith Outreach's programs and services rely on volunteer support. We ask volunteers to schedule and sign up for regular volunteer roles so that we can consistently run our programs and make our services available to clients. If you need to cancel your volunteer shift due to a conflict of schedule, please notify the volunteer scheduler as far in advance as possible. If it is a last-minute cancellation (i.e. illness, car problems, etc.), please call Interfaith Outreach so we can know right away that you will not

be there. If you are unable to commit to the shifts that are required for your current volunteer role, please contact your volunteer supervisor to discuss the flexibility of the position or other volunteer opportunities that better match your schedule.

## **7. Building Safety**

Volunteers are permitted to access Interfaith Outreach program buildings when a staff person is on-site. This allows for the best support and safety of Interfaith Outreach volunteers. There are few cases in which volunteers may need access the building when a staff person is not present. Volunteers must seek permission from staff in these very rare instances to ensure staff support and awareness.

## **8. Parking**

The Interfaith Outreach parking lot is available to all staff, volunteers and program recipients. Staff and volunteers are asked to park on the west side of the parking lot and toward the north end, if possible. This allows the closest parking spots to be reserved for donors dropping off contributions or Interfaith Outreach clients.

## **9. Volunteer Dress Code**

Please speak with your volunteer supervisor to confirm the appropriate dress for your volunteer environment. Clothing or accessories should not include profanity or be offensive to others.

## **10. Refreshments/Break Room**

Interfaith Outreach's hospitality area is open to all staff, volunteers and partners in the building. Please feel free to access the coffee, tea or treats available on the counters in the hospitality area and use the tables/chairs to take a break as needed during your volunteer shift. Items in the refrigerator are personal items of staff members and should not be touched, unless otherwise noted.

Some volunteer areas have different policies about food or drink while volunteering. Please ask your supervisor what, if any, food or drink is allowed while volunteering versus your break time.

## **11. Recognition**

Interfaith Outreach recognizes the importance of its volunteers. Interfaith Outreach makes an effort to formally and informally recognize volunteers throughout their time with the organization. Though the agency avoids spending substantial resources on volunteer or staff recognition, it is important to us, and is regularly practiced.

## **12. Volunteer Grievance**

Volunteers are welcome to share any concerns or questions with the Community Engagement Department regarding the policies stated in this document. Contact information is at the end of this document.

### **13. Termination**

The relationship between a volunteer and Interfaith Outreach may be ended at any time at the will of either party. Interfaith Outreach will terminate a volunteer if the individual has demonstrated an unwillingness or inability to abide by the policies expressed in this document. Termination must include verbal or written communication between the volunteer and Interfaith Outreach in order to document the termination and understand the conflict. It is Interfaith Outreach's policy that volunteers facing pending charges be suspended from volunteer services due to risk and liability to the organization.

### **14. Bad Weather & Closings**

Your safety is of utmost importance to Interfaith Outreach. If there is an overnight/early morning closing, Interfaith Outreach will follow the lead of the Wayzata Public School District; i.e. if the school district is closed or starts late, Interfaith Outreach will be closed or will start late. Should bad weather develop during the day, all volunteers scheduled to come in should pay close attention to the Wayzata Public School District's closings. If the school district does not close, but you are uncomfortable driving/leaving the house, please notify your volunteer supervisor. Volunteers already on-site as bad weather develops should check with their volunteer supervisor for direction.

## **III. Policies Related to Volunteering**

### **1. Communication & Contact Info**

Volunteers are asked to provide their most current contact information on their application. Email communication is preferred. This saves volunteer and staff time as well as money, so we can focus our resources on serving struggling families. Please let us know if your email, address or phone number changes.

### **2. Speaking with Media**

Please direct all questions from members of the media to Deb Lande, Marketing & Communications Director, 763-489-7509 or [dlande@iocp.org](mailto:dlande@iocp.org). Volunteers are asked not to speak to reporters on behalf of the organization. If a reporter would like to interview you about your volunteer experience, please connect with Deb Lande first so she can help prepare you for the interview and ensure consistent messaging.

### **3. Professional Responsibilities and Volunteer/Client Boundaries**

Interfaith Outreach is a respected organization in the community. In order to maintain that positive reputation, Interfaith Outreach prohibits volunteers from the following behavior during your volunteer time:

- Lending or borrowing money, vehicles or other items to or from clients.
- Accepting gifts or personal favors from clients, such as money, house cleaning, etc.
- Initiating more intimate relationships with clients outside of your volunteer role.
- Imposing personal beliefs and values, including religious or spiritual beliefs on clients.
- Any other behavior that is detrimental to the reputation of Interfaith Outreach.

Interfaith Outreach also asks all volunteer to abide by its standard of *hospitable* help, first making clients feel welcome and then offering assistance as needed. The organization believes in the power of caring and friendly service.

#### **4. Confidentiality**

Interfaith Outreach offers some volunteer opportunities that allow volunteers to work directly with clients and/or access confidential information regarding the organization, donors and clients. All volunteers are required to sign a confidentiality agreement before volunteering with Interfaith Outreach. In doing so, the volunteer agrees to not discuss or share this information with others outside of Interfaith Outreach premises. Failure to follow this policy will result in termination of the volunteer.

#### **5. Photo/Video Release**

Interfaith Outreach documents the impact and success of its programs through media, including photography and videography. All volunteers are asked to sign a release allowing Interfaith Outreach to use media (including photos, videos and names) in any medium or form of distribution for whatever purposes it sees fit. If a volunteer does not agree to this release, they can leave that space blank. Parent consent is required for photo/video relation regarding volunteers under the age of 18.

#### **6. Solicitation and Acceptance of Money and Goods**

Interfaith Outreach appreciates the assistance of volunteers in sharing Interfaith Outreach's story and the positive impact Interfaith Outreach has in our community. In addition, volunteers are welcome to invite others to support the work of Interfaith Outreach through in-kind, financial or time donations. Any *formal* solicitation should first be coordinated with the Interfaith Outreach Development Department.

#### **7. Technology and Equipment Use**

The primary use of Interfaith Outreach equipment and resources is for business purposes. Personal use of Interfaith Outreach resources should be limited and timed so as not to interfere with the general daily workflow. Interfaith Outreach staff and volunteers are prohibited from attempting to access any computer, system or data file without proper authorization or illegally downloading files from the Internet.



Interfaith Outreach will provide equipment for volunteers to carry out their roles, such as pallet jacks, hydraulic lift, etc. Interfaith Outreach will provide training and will be held harmless in case of injury.

### **8. Alcohol, Drug and Smoke-free Work Environment**

Interfaith Outreach maintains a tobacco-free building in accordance with state law. Smoking or use of any other tobacco products is strictly prohibited in the Interfaith Outreach building, on Interfaith Outreach campus grounds or in Interfaith Outreach vehicles. Interfaith Outreach prohibits volunteers from engaging with drugs or alcohol during their volunteer shift with Interfaith Outreach. Remnants of drug or alcohol use are not appropriate (e.g. alcohol on the breath).

### **9. Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment**

Interfaith Outreach does not tolerate any discrimination or harassment in its programs, activities or volunteering based on race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age or any other basis prohibited by law.

Harassment including sexual, racial, religious, ethnic or any other form is prohibited, unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Substantiated instances will be met with disciplinary action up to or including termination of volunteer relationship.

Any volunteer who feels that they are a victim of harassment or discriminations by a supervisor, manager, employee, customer or other person in connection with their volunteering should bring the matter to the Community Engagement Department immediately. All such reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly. No individual shall be retaliated against for making a good faith report of behavior contrary to this policy.

### **10. Illness Policy**

Volunteers who are sick should not report to their regular volunteer shift but should speak with their supervisor about being gone or finding a substitute. By staying home when they are sick, volunteers prevent sickness from spreading to other volunteers, clients or youth in the building.

### **11. Clients as Volunteers**

Interfaith Outreach clients are encouraged to find ways to get involved in the community, including volunteering with Interfaith Outreach. Clients may contact the Community Engagement Department to discuss opportunities to volunteer. Current Interfaith Outreach clients are limited to volunteer opportunities that do not involve client-to-client service (e.g. food shelf distribution) or access to confidential information about the organization or other clients (e.g. intake, data entry, etc.). Current Interfaith Outreach clients are defined as anyone who has received service within the last 12 months. Interfaith Outreach clients should inform the Community Engagement Department about their client status in order to find appropriate opportunities.

### **12. Court Ordered Volunteers**

Interfaith Outreach can work with court-ordered volunteers if their skills, availability and criminal record meet our current needs and standards. Acceptance of court-ordered volunteers is made on a case-by-case basis by the Community Engagement Department. Court-ordered volunteers must make an appointment with the Community Engagement Department to discuss the reason for their community service and the specific requirements they are looking to fulfill. Staff will keep this information confidential and will use it to determine if the volunteer is a good fit with Interfaith Outreach's needs.

Individuals convicted of certain serious charges will not be accepted into Interfaith Outreach's volunteer program due to potential safety risks to other volunteers, staff, clients and partners. Interfaith Outreach will not accept volunteers who have ever been convicted of a:

- Violent crime
- Theft-related felony
- Crime of sexual nature
- Crime whereby the conviction related to the volunteer position

### **13. Youth volunteers**

Interfaith Outreach supports and encourages youth and family volunteering opportunities. When determining age limits for volunteers in specific roles, our highest priority is respecting the families we serve and maintaining volunteers' safety.

Please speak with the Community Engagement Department to find age-appropriate volunteer opportunities for yourself or your family.

### **14. Personal Use of Donated Items**

Volunteers are prohibited from using or taking donated items for their personal use. If an item is no longer needed by Interfaith Outreach, a volunteer may have the opportunity to purchase that item if the sale of the item is in line with the donor's intent. In that case, the purchase of the item respects the donor's intent by generating funds for Interfaith Outreach in relation to their donation.

### **15. Incident Reports**

Volunteers are expected to fill out an incident report form with their staff supervisor after any unusual incident during their volunteer shift, big or small. The forms can be found at the reception desk. It is best to discuss the incident with your supervisor when the form is being turned in. This allows staff to gather additional information regarding the incident, if needed. An example of an incident might include a client becoming visibly angry in the food shelf, a volunteer cutting their finger or a shopper suspected of shoplifting.

### **16. Safety of Youth & Vulnerable Adults Served by Interfaith Outreach**

Volunteers may interact with Interfaith Outreach youth and vulnerable adults in a variety of ways. If a volunteer has any concern of child abuse or neglect, or the abuse of a vulnerable adult, please notify a staff person right away. A staff member will help the volunteer document the situation using an incident report and the staff member will follow up in the appropriate manner.

## **17. Driving Interfaith Outreach Vehicles**

### *Screening Process to Drive Interfaith Outreach Vehicles:*

Interfaith Outreach owns a truck, cargo van, and two passenger vans for use of its programs. Volunteers who help transport Neighborhoods Program youth or pick up donations are able to use these vehicles, rather than their personal vehicles, for volunteer work on behalf of Interfaith Outreach. Before driving any Interfaith Outreach vehicles, volunteers must provide a copy of their valid driver's license, insurance and complete a driving record check. After paperwork has been completed and filed, a volunteer must set up a vehicle orientation with a staff member. After that orientation, the volunteer is allowed to drive Interfaith Outreach vehicles, but only on behalf of Interfaith Outreach programs (e.g. picking up food donations for the food shelf). A driving record check will be updated each year to determine qualifications for this volunteer role.

### *How to Access Vehicles:*

Once a volunteer has undergone the appropriate screening noted above, the volunteer has access to the truck or van, as needed, for pickups on behalf of Interfaith Outreach. Volunteers are required to sign out the keys when they're taken and sign them back in when they return. Volunteers are not permitted to take the keys ahead of time or keep the keys after their delivery unless otherwise discussed with your supervisor. Volunteers are not permitted to make a copy of the keys at any time. Following these guidelines helps Interfaith Outreach to maintain safe use of its vehicles and easily manage shared use among programs.

### *Driving Interfaith Outreach Youth for Programming:*

Volunteers may drive youth in their personal vehicle under these conditions:

- Volunteer has up-to-date driving record check on file
- Volunteer has copy of their vehicle insurance and valid driver's license on file with Interfaith Outreach
- Volunteer has up-to-date background check on file
- Volunteer understands that their personal auto insurance is primary in the event of an accident
- Volunteer is accompanied by an Interfaith Outreach staff person
- Signed written permission from parent knowing that their child will be in a personal vehicle

## **18. Appropriate Boundaries When Working With Youth**

The following are helpful guidelines for maintaining boundaries when working directly with children.

- Follow the rule of three. Never allow yourself to be alone with a child; this protects the child from being vulnerable to inappropriate comments or actions when alone with a volunteer, and it also protects volunteers from being falsely accused of crossing child-volunteer boundaries.
- Limit physical touching. You may accept a hug from a parent or child, but avoid initiating a hug. Other forms of touch may be okay, such as a high five or shoulder touch with a parent or child who you know, but consider cultural norms or differences in these interactions. When in doubt, follow the client's lead.
- Do not meet with youth outside of programming activities coordinated by the organization.
- Do not provide rides to youth, unless it is a part of the volunteer role you were recruited and trained to do.
- Imposing personal beliefs and values, including religious or spiritual beliefs on students is prohibited.

## IV. Key Staff

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