



Volunteer Policies and Procedures Handbook

INTRODUCTION – Welcome!

Thank you for volunteering with Common Ground Free Store (CGFS) Ministries. As an organization, we can only accomplish our mission through our valuable and wonderful volunteers. We want you to enjoy the work, the shoppers, and other volunteers while also understanding how important the work is that you are doing! We believe you will walk away from your experience knowing that CGFS is a great place to volunteer. Your success is our success. We have created our Volunteer Handbook to help our volunteers know what works best at Common Ground Free Store. Our policies may differ from other organizations so we ask that you familiarize yourself with it before volunteering. It won't answer all your questions, but it should help guide you in the most important areas. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. Any CGFS staff will gladly answer them for you.

PART 1 – Volunteer Eligibility

Volunteer Hours – CGFS accepts volunteers during the following hours only, unless an official special work day is set by the staff and board of directors. Volunteers must use CGFS's Volunteer Management system to register as a volunteer and to sign up for volunteer shifts. Volunteers are responsible for contacting the Director of Outreach with any changes.

- Monday: 9:15am - 1:15pm and 5:15pm – 8:15pm
- Tuesday: 5:15pm – 8:15pm
- Wednesday: 9:15am - 1:15pm
- Thursday: 9:15am - 1:15pm and 5:15pm – 8:15pm
- Saturday: 9:15am - 12:15pm

Shopper Volunteers – Current shoppers (shoppers who have regularly utilized the services of CGFS in the last 6 months) are not permitted to volunteer at CGFS. The only exception to this policy is when a shopper is volunteering with a church or official organization to which they belong. On the day the shopper is volunteering, the shopper volunteer will not be permitted to shop or hold items to take later. Shoppers who volunteer with a group during store hours are allowed to work in the following positions:

1. Kitchen
2. Serving Food in the hospitality area
3. Floor Manager

Shoppers who do not follow our volunteer policy will not be allowed to volunteer in the future. CGFS reserves the right to determine on a case-by-case basis if a shopper is eligible to volunteer after the 6-month period.

Youth Volunteers – CGFS welcomes youth volunteer groups during store hours and for special work projects. All youth volunteers must have completed 5th grade. We require all youth groups to have a minimum of 2 adult leaders. If there are any middle school aged youth (currently in or entering 6th grade through 8th grade), CGFS requires a ratio of 1 adult for every 5 youth (minimum of 2 adults).

An individual youth (not with a group) who wishes to volunteer at CGFS without a guardian present must be 15 years of age and/or started their freshman year of high school. A volunteer must be at least 12 years old to work in the kitchen and must work with an adult.

Family Volunteers – CGFS welcomes families who want to volunteer together. We require that children who are in 5th grade and below work directly with their guardian (1 parent/guardian per child).

Community Service – CGFS welcomes community service volunteers who are age 15 and older (under 15 requires a parent/guardian to volunteer with them) on an individual basis. CGFS accepts people who need community service for the following reasons:

- Housing
- School
- Organizational (churches, social groups, etc.)
- Court-ordered, with the exception of the following offenses:
 - Sexual assault or predation
 - Violent crimes
 - Theft

CGFS reserves the right to turn anyone away for court-ordered community service.

PART 2 – Volunteer Expectations

Record Management: The Director of Outreach maintains confidential records on each volunteer throughout the organization. Volunteers are expected to use Common Ground Free Store’s (CGFS) Volunteer Management system to register as a volunteer and to sign up for volunteer shifts. Volunteers are responsible for contacting the Director of Outreach with any changes to their personal information, such as contact information.

Dress Code: Volunteers are representatives of CGFS and are responsible for presenting a positive image to constituents and the community. Volunteers will dress appropriately and modestly for the conditions and performance of their duties. Volunteers shall wear a nametag (provided to volunteers at the beginning of each shift) while representing Common Ground Free Store. CGFS staff reserves the right to ask someone to change clothing if deemed necessary.

Attendance and Time: Volunteer attendance and timeliness is important to the efficient operation of CGFS. Volunteers shall notify the Director of Outreach with as much notice as possible if they are unable to be present on their scheduled day. Volunteers should arrive 45 minutes before the store opens to allow sufficient training and instruction. Volunteers should sign in and out on the sign-in sheet to record and verify hours worked, especially if working for community service hours.

Flexibility: Understand that while we will do our best to place volunteers in volunteer positions that are preferred, volunteers need to understand that may not always happen and be willing to work where assigned.

Confidentiality/Nondisclosure: Any information that a volunteer learns about CGFS, its directors, employees, volunteers, shoppers and their personal information, or donors, as a result of volunteering at Common Ground Free Store, that is not otherwise publicly available, constitutes confidential information. Volunteers may not disclose confidential information to anyone outside of Common Ground Free Store employees. The disclosure, distribution, electronic transmission, or copying of Common Ground Free Store's confidential information is strictly prohibited. Any volunteer who discloses confidential information will not be allowed to volunteer in the future.

Conduct: Volunteers are expected to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interest and safety of all volunteers, staff, shoppers, and mission of CGFS. The following are only some examples of inappropriate conduct which could lead to dismissal:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of CGFS's property or that of any CGFS volunteer or staff.
- Theft of donations or shopping while volunteering. No items are allowed to be taken from the donation center (back room).
- Altering CGFS shopper records.
- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and/or illegal or unauthorized possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the volunteer environment.
- Creating a disturbance on CGFS premises, at sponsored activities, or in areas which could jeopardize the safety of others.
- Improper use of CGFS's property or property owned by any other individual.
- Lack of cooperation, or other disrespectful conduct including inappropriate language and conversation.
- Violation of CGFS, federal, state, or local safety and health rules.
- Inappropriate use of telephones, computer equipment or systems, or other CGFS-owned equipment.
- Unauthorized disclosure of CGFS proprietary or confidential information.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.

Emergency Closings: CGFS strives to ensure the safety of all volunteers. In the event of inclement weather, volunteers will be responsible for contacting the Director of Outreach to inform him/her if they cannot volunteer during their scheduled time. If CGFS should close, the Director of Outreach or other staff will notify volunteers scheduled via phone, text, or email as soon as possible. CGFS closes when there is a Level 2 or higher weather emergency and when Delaware City Schools closes.

Safety and Security: CGFS desires to provide a safe volunteer environment. Volunteers are responsible for using the following recommendations to help ensure a safe environment.

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- It is best to not bring personal items with you to volunteer. Never leave your purse, wallet, or other valuable items unattended. Keep your items with you at all times or keep them in the volunteer designated area in back room. CGFS is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property and will not reimburse a volunteer for any personal property that disappears.
- Do not engage in arguments or disputes. Notify a manager immediately should an angry or threatening situation arise.

Telephone Usage — CGFS’s telephones are for business purposes only. Personal cell phone usage should be kept to a minimum and should not interfere with volunteer service. When dealing directly with shoppers, cell phone usage is prohibited.

Computer Usage—CGFS computers are for CGFS business only. They should not be used for personal business while volunteering.

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace – CGFS is committed to providing volunteers with an environment that is free from discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual’s sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. CGFS encourages volunteers to bring any incidents of sexual harassment to the immediate attention of a store manager or the Executive Director.

Conflict of Interest – CGFS is judged, in large part, by the individual and collective performance of its volunteers. CGFS must recognize the importance of a volunteer’s duty to CGFS, and to its supporters, to act in a manner that merits public trust and confidence. Each volunteer must act in all matters in a manner that will safeguard the reputation and integrity of CGFS and will preserve and strengthen public confidence in CGFS activities. Likewise, volunteers must refrain from engaging in any transaction in which personal interests conflict, potentially conflict or appear to conflict with those of CGFS. Some of the more common situations are listed below. This list is illustrative only and should not be regarded as all-inclusive:

- **Accepting or Offering Payment or Gifts:** No volunteer shall accept payment of any kind (including gifts, cash, discounts, concessions, services or other similar item or benefits) for services rendered as part of his or her volunteer service. This includes payment for speaking engagements or for participation in workshops or similar activities. Similarly, no volunteer should offer payments or gifts to individuals (other volunteers or staff).
- **Improper Influence:** Any volunteer should not, when acting on his or her own behalf or when acting on behalf of another person, business, or organization, attempt to influence CGFS’s position on any issue, matter or transaction, nor participate in any discussions pertaining to a related organization.
- **Political Activities:** Volunteers are encouraged to take an active interest and to participate in the political and governmental process. However, a volunteer must never represent that his or her political donation, endorsement or other political activity was made or engaged in with the approval, or on behalf, of CGFS. Likewise, volunteers must not engage in political activities during their volunteer service on behalf of CGFS.
- **Making of Statements:** No volunteer shall use CGFS stationery or any title of CGFS or refer to CGFS or misidentify him or herself as an employee thereof in connection with any matter as to which he or she is not authorized as a representative of CGFS and to express an opinion on its behalf.