

ROOM IN THE INN - MEMPHIS

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

For RITI Campus Volunteers
409 Ayers Street
2021 Edition

WHAT IS ROOM IN THE INN?

MISSION

Sheltering those experiencing homelessness in a safe environment of hospitality.

VISION

Holy Hospitality

CORE VALUES

Building Community on Love and Respect
Welcoming All as an Expression of Faith
Giving Hope and Hospitality in a Safe Environment



OUR FACILITY

SLEEP SPACE

Recuperative Care Center guests have their own room during the Covid-19 pandemic.

When it is safe, some same-gender guests will share a room. Family Inn guests are roomed by family. Bedrooms are guests' personal space and considered private.

MEAL SPACE

There are several common areas available to set up for socially distanced eating during Covid-19. When it is safe to do so, all guests will rotate in dinner shifts in the dining room.

BATHROOM FACILITIES

Guests may use the bathroom facilities in their own rooms or the public bathroom available on the activity hall when in common areas.

GATHERING SPACES

There are several public areas available for visiting, playing games, watching movies, etc. Supervising Staff can let you know which spaces are available.

BASIC EMERGENCY NEEDS

- +Staff on Duty will greet you at the front desk and be available on site throughout the evening
- +Walkie-Talkie for lead volunteer on each floor to contact Staff on Duty as needed
- +First Aid Kit & AED on each floor
- +Fire Extinguisher
- +Phone Service on each hallway
- +Clearly Marked Safety Exits & Access

SMOKING

Designated smoking areas are marked outside. Smoking is not allowed in any other areas.

COVID-19

ENTRANCE

Everyone entering the building will answer health screening questions and receive a temperature check as they sign-in.

GUESTS

All guests will receive a Covid test before entering the Recuperative Care or Family Inn programs and are monitored daily for symptoms. Vaccines will be required once accessible.

STAFF

All RITI Staff have been fully vaccinated in order to safely serve our guests and volunteers.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL

Washing/sanitizing hands is required when entering the building and should be repeated as often as necessary. Restrooms and hand sanitizing stations are located throughout the building.

Masks are required at all times when not eating, drinking, or alone in a room.

Social distance of 6ft or more must be kept between any individuals not of the same household during meals or anytime masks are not being worn.

Cover all coughs and sneezes.

Refrain from touching (handshakes, hugs, high fives, etc) anyone outside of your household.



What Do Volunteers Do?

There are many ways to serve. Here are just a few examples.

GUEST HOSPITALITY

Spend quality time with guests playing games, having conversations, enjoying a cup of coffee together

CLEANING/ORGANIZING

Help with light housekeeping and laundry. Organize supplies.

MEALTIME HELPERS

Set-up, serve, and clean-up meals. Visit with guests.

VOLUNTEER ASSISTANT*

Help register and orient new volunteers. Provide hospitality to volunteers.

FRONT DESK ASSISTANT*

Greet visitors entering the lobby. Answer and route calls.

CLASS LEADERS*

Lead a group/class on campus. Possible topics: exercise, health/wellness, recovery, creative expression, financial literacy, anger management.

RCC ASSISTANTS*

Assist staff with daily duties in the Recuperative Care Center

FI ASSISTANTS*+

Assist staff with daily duties in the Family Inn.

TUTORING*+

Assist children/youth with homework and educational needs.

***Training Required**

+Background Check Required

HEALTHY BOUNDARIES



Dress Appropriately



Be Respectful

To all guests & volunteers. Treat each guest as an individual.



Do Not Share Personal Information

Contact information, social media requests, specifics on where you live.



Do Not Give Rides

Apart from regular RITI transportation, do not offer special transportation for a guest.



Stay Visible

Always interact with guests in common areas visible by staff and other volunteers.



Cell Phones Away

Keep your cell phone usage to a minimum. Enjoy your time with guests.



Confidentiality

Do not share personal information about guests with other people or on social media without consent.



Calm Voice, No Touching

Maintain a calm, non-anxious presence with guests. Never touch a guest without permission



Refrain from Gifts

Only do for/with one person what you can do for/with any & all.



No Smoking

Help us promote an environment of hospitality and healing by refraining from all forms of smoking while at RITI.



Each Guest is an Individual

Be present & listen, but do not expect to "fix" someone's situation.



Be Honest

Don't make promises you can't keep. Don't make promises on behalf of RITI.



Accept Responsibility for Your Actions



Use Your Instincts

If something or someone makes you uncomfortable (guest or volunteer), alert a supervisor so the situation can be monitored and addressed.

EACH PERSON HAS A NAME, A STORY, AND DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE.

WHILE A SMALL PART OF OUR POPULATION IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC ISSUES, MOST ARE FACING A MUCH MORE COMPLEX SET OF ISSUES.

PEOPLE WHO ARE CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INVARIABLY SUFFER FROM A COMBINATION OF SEVERAL OF THE FOLLOWING DISABLING CONDITIONS...

OUR GUESTS ARE SONS, DAUGHTERS, PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS...

- **MENTAL ILLNESS**

Schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and other severe and persistent mental illness

- **PHYSICAL DISABILITIES**

Profound injuries, illness, birth defects, or socially debilitating physical traits (such as disfigurement, dental deficiencies, or obesity caused by 'survival' mentality)

- **EDUCATIONAL DEFICIENCIES**

Inability to read/write, the lack of basic academic skills or no high school diploma

- **SEVERE TRAUMA**

History of sexual or physical abuse, combat, catastrophic loss of family or a similar traumatic event

- **ADDICTION**

Drugs, alcohol, sex, gambling, and other addictions

- **SEVERE FAMILY DYSFUNCTION**

Abusive parents, broken homes, and/or multiple residences/caregivers

- **NO FAMILY OR SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT SYSTEM**

Total lack of family or support systems due to death, alienation, or institutional childhood

- **LEARNING DISABILITIES**

Dyslexia, ADHD and other disorders that interfere with education and life functioning

- **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

Low IQ or brain damage that hinders intellectual functioning

- **CRIMINAL HISTORY**

Existence of a criminal record that seriously limits opportunity

- **LIMITED OCCUPATIONAL SKILL SET**

Inability to do anything beyond the most basic manual labor

- **TRANSPORTATION DEFICIENCIES**

Inability to purchase, maintain, insure or legally drive a car or obtain transportation through public or private means.

- **LIFE SKILL DEFICIENCIES**

Inability to manage the most basic life function such as hygiene, housing, transportation, and interpersonal relationships

- **PRIOR LONG-TERM INSTITUTIONALIZATION**

Extended stays in foster care, juvenile institutions, mental hospitals, or other institutions

- **GENERATIONAL POVERTY**

Two or more generations of family dependent on public assistance or charity for basic living needs

- **SYSTEM NAVIGATION**

Inability to effectively navigate Government and Social Service Agencies

GUEST ORIENTATION

WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE GUESTS BEGIN THE PROGRAM?

REGISTRATION

Guests you will encounter on campus at RITI-Memphis have been registered in the appropriate program and are working daily with our staff.

Families come through MIFA referrals. RCC guests are referred by area hospitals.

All guests must receive a negative COVID-19 test before admittance. Guests and staff are screened for symptoms daily. All guests will be vaccinated when the vaccine is accessible for them.

ORIENTATION

All guests at RITI must attend an orientation session as their stay begins. This orientation explains how the program works and the principles of nonviolence and respect. If guests do not follow these guidelines, they will be asked to leave the program. The orientation video for congregational shelter is available on our website: ritimemphis.org, and the same guidelines apply for guests on campus.

GUEST ORIENTATION

WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE GUESTS BEGIN THE PROGRAM?

RULES & GUIDELINES

- Respect (For self, others, property - in words and action)
- Non-violence in words & actions
- No possession of drugs or alcohol.
- Men and women sleep separately.
- Guest rooms are private and for their designated residents only. All visiting takes place in common areas. Please see the Child Safety Policy for additional guidelines for the Family Inn.

WHAT IF THE RULES AREN'T FOLLOWED?

If you believe a guest is behaving or speaking inappropriately, notify the staff on duty. Any incidents or accidents that occur during your supervision must be reported immediately.

**EACH VOLUNTEER HAS A
UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY
TO OFFER THE GIFT OF
HOLY HOSPITALITY.**

WHAT WILL WE TALK ABOUT?

Any number of subjects!

Talk to them like you would any other new acquaintance.

Ask them what they did during the day, or what their favorite food is, or about the most recent big sporting event.

Ask them how they are doing. Then, really listen.

Look them in the eye and offer a friendly ear.

Most of the time, the people they encounter pretend they are not there.

Treat them like a fellow human being.

You will have a lot more in common than you think.

WHAT IF I FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE OR UNSAFE?

If someone is not following the rules and guidelines of the RITI community, tell a coordinator or RITI Staff On-Duty right away. They are trained in how to handle a myriad of situations.

If you are just generally uncomfortable, find another task besides interacting with the guests—clean the kitchen, help organize, etc. Even if you are uneasy making a new friend, you can still be a valuable volunteer.

Working with people experiencing homelessness might not be your thing. That's OK. Thank you for giving it a try! But please, if you feel compelled to comment on any of our guests' behavior or personalities, do so away from Room in the Inn. They are most definitely our guests, and we would never want to make them feel unwelcome or judged. They get that enough on the streets. Room in the Inn is their safe place.

HELPING INDIVIDUAL GUESTS

RITI guests often share their personal stories with volunteers, and their experiences can inspire generosity and kindle a desire to become more deeply involved with a particular individual. This might include offering special assistance with employment, housing, medical needs, or some other request.

Before providing help to a guest, volunteers should consult with a member of the RITI team. Staff members may not know about the difficulties a guest is experiencing and can provide additional support and guidance. They can serve as liaisons between the volunteer and guest in order to protect confidentiality and fairness. Finally, RITI staff members might be able to present a more complete picture of someone's specific needs. They are working with our Campus Guests daily to give the best and most complete care possible both during their stay and beyond.

Reaching out is an act of faith. Room in the Inn - Memphis provides a venue for fellowship that can result in empowerment and change. Its staff serves as a sounding board in determining appropriate assistance for individual guests so that a congregation's resources can be used in the most effective way.

RITI STAFF

We're Here for You!
(901) 467-0122

MAIN OFFICE
innkeeper@ritimemphis.org

VOLUNTEER SERVICES
volunteers@ritimemphis.org

RECUPERATIVE CARE TEAM
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FAMILY INN TEAM
familyinn@ritimemphis.org