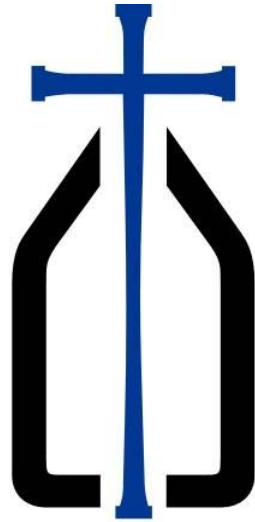


# Volunteer Manual



CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS

# A Guide to Volunteering

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## History of Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas

*In the quiet hours when we are alone and there is nobody to tell us what fine fellows we are, we come sometimes upon a moment in which we wonder, not how much money we are earning, nor how famous we have become, but what good we are doing.*

*—A.A. Milne*

Southeast Texas is alive with many diverse cultures. Immigrants from various areas of the globe come to Southeast Texas with their native cultures and religious customs. Many of those who fled to the United States in the early 1970s were Catholic. In 1975, the United States Catholic Conference assumed a dominant role in the resettlement of these immigrants. The Diocese of Beaumont accepted the responsibility of resettling refugees and set an initial target of 1,000 people. On October 25, 1976, the Resettlement Office was incorporated to address this issue. The Resettlement Office's services included providing reception, placement, case management services, childcare, job development, job placement, support services to refugees. On August 28, 1986, this corporation was renamed The Partnership for Human Development. Later, the operations of Catholic Charities, the social services arm of the Diocese of Beaumont, were transferred to the corporation of Partnership for Human Development. On December 18, 1989, the agency was renamed Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Beaumont. Two years were spent evaluating the social service safety net throughout the diocese with the goal of designing programs that met a recognized human need without duplicating the services provided by other organizations. From this research, programs of service developed. On January 11, 2007, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Beaumont was renamed Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas. Catholic Charities currently offers seven programs in the Diocese of Beaumont's service area: Asset Building Case Management, Counseling Services, Disaster Response, Elijah's Place, Hospitality Center, Immigration Services and Parish Social Ministry.

## Statement of Identity

We are a tax-exempt, multi-program service organization serving nine counties in Southeast Texas. Inspired by the social teachings of the Church, we currently provide services in the areas of children and family services, immigration services, parish and social ministry, and advocacy. All services are available to anyone, regardless of their religion, race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability or citizenship status.

## Mission Statement

People of faith providing solutions to targeted human needs, aspiring towards a universal community that preserves and supports the dignity of all.

## Service Motto

*“Providing Help and Creating Hope”*

# SHARING CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: Challenges and Directions

## Reflections of the U.S. Catholic Bishops

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching has been articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar and episcopal documents. The depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of these documents. In these brief reflections, we wish to highlight several of the key themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition.

### Life and Dignity of the Human Person

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. Our belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. In our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion and assisted suicide. The value of human life is being threatened by increasing use of the death penalty. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

### Call to Family, Community, and Participation

The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society – in economics and politics, in law and policy – directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. The family is the central social institution that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

### Rights and Responsibilities

The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

### Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

### The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected – the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

### Solidarity

We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that "loving our neighbor" has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

### Care for God's Creation

We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.

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# Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas Programs



## Asset Building Case Management

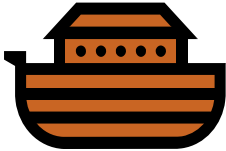
### Asset Building Case Management

Asset Building Case Management (ABC) unites financial education with long-term case management, helping low-to-moderate income families repair their credit and commit to increasing their savings. Clients identify appropriate financial goals and receive case management support to make progress towards home ownership or continued education opportunities.



### Counseling Services

Counseling Services offers individual, couple, family and grief counseling according to a sliding scale, making the service more affordable to those with limited capacity to pay for professional mental health support.



### Disaster Response

Disaster Response addresses emergency relief needs caused by natural or man-made disasters, as well as personal tragedies. The program also engages in disaster preparedness training that equips volunteers with skills needed to mobilize for future regional disasters.



### *Elijah's Place*

*Elijah's Place* gives peer and adult support to children ages 5 – 18 who are grieving the death of a parent or sibling or who have been affected by separation or divorce.



### The Hospitality Center

The Hospitality Center operates in Port Arthur, serving a hearty midday meal every day of the year to the homeless, unemployed, elderly, disabled or others who may lack access to sufficient food.



### Immigration Services

Immigration Services provides subsidized legal services to immigrants seeking the legal protections afforded them under the law.



### Parish Social Ministry

Parish Social Ministry lends support and training resources to local church leaders and members attempting to organize local social justice ministries and community services.



## Acronyms

ABC	Asset Building Case Management
CO	Counseling Services
CSF	Central Services Facility
DR	Disaster Response
EP	<i>Elijah's Place</i>
HC	Hospitality Center
IM	Immigration Services
PSM	Parish Social Ministry

## About Volunteering

*“People say, “What is the sense of our small effort?” They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time.”*

*-Dorothy Day*

### Definition of “Volunteer”

Catholic Charities volunteers are those who give freely of their time and talent in service to the community by providing help and creating hope.

### Volunteer Coordination

#### Mission Statement

Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas’ Volunteer Coordination actively seeks to provide volunteer resources to the programs of Catholic Charities. It is the responsibility of the program and administrative staff to develop a sufficient volunteer corps, ensure volunteers are properly trained and placed, ensure ongoing volunteer needs are met, and improve volunteer/staff relations. All volunteer supervisors will try to use volunteers to support the programs of Catholic Charities in order to collaboratively provide help and create hope.

#### Vision Statement

It is the vision of Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas’ Volunteer Coordination to have an ample corps of well trained, socially conscious, devoted volunteers who joyfully assist the programs of Catholic Charities as we provide help and create hope.

# Guidelines

It is the policy of Catholic Charities to provide opportunities for volunteers to supplement the work of Catholic Charities.

1. Completion of a volunteer application form including, but not limited to:
  - a. Name
  - b. Address
  - c. Telephone Number
  - d. Special Skills
  - e. Desired Volunteer Experience
  - f. Times Available
  - g. Means of Transportation
  - h. Emergency Contact
  - i. Criminal and sex offender background checks, and if deemed necessary, credit and driving records check (as required by program)
  - j. Copy of current Driver's License and proof of personal automobile insurance (if driving for the Agency/Program).
2. All Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas volunteers must be at least 12 years of age. Volunteers age 12-17 years must be accompanied by an adult who agrees to remain on the premises during the entire time the volunteer is participating with a program. Volunteers under the age of 18 will be limited as to the type of assignments they will be allowed to perform and will be subject to restrictions regarding certain equipment they will not be allowed to use while volunteering. Catholic Charities appreciates volunteers **not** bringing children under the age of 12 with them when volunteering.
3. A written job description including tasks and time schedules will be determined by the Program Director and/or Project Supervisor. The Volunteer may have input regarding the time schedule.
4. The Volunteer may be required to sign the daily volunteer sign in/out log upon beginning daily volunteer hours and upon completing daily volunteer hours.
5. The Volunteer may be required to submit a monthly volunteer log to the Program Director or Project Supervisor.
6. All Catholic Charities volunteers will receive a copy of the Ethical and Personal Conduct Policies and sign an acknowledgement form affirming that it has been received and explained and that they will abide by it.<sup>2</sup>
7. The Hospitality Center can accommodate up to 12 volunteers at any given time (excluding Community Service Workers). If there is a group that has more than 12 participants we will plan to schedule them on two separate shifts as follows (each shift not to exceed 12 volunteers):  
  
Shift One – 8:00a.m. – 10:15a.m.  
  
Shift Two – 10:15a.m. – 12:30p.m.

## Confidentiality

Catholic Charities personnel and volunteers will handle sensitive information from time to time. In an effort to respect our clients and abide by the law, all personnel and volunteers are required to observe a strict code of confidentiality. Under no instance should confidential information be shared with non-Catholic Charities personnel including family and friends. This also applies to other Catholic Charities personnel who do not need to know the information to perform their job. Failure to abide by the code of confidentiality will result in immediate dismissal.

For example, if you volunteer in the kitchen at *Elijah's Place*, it is a breach of confidentiality to go home and tell your spouse that you saw the Smith family in the *Elijah's Place* group.

Or, if you are volunteering with Disaster Response, it is a breach of confidentiality to tell your friend that you read Mr. Garza's name on the list of people receiving assistance.

As with any rule, there are a few exceptions to the right of confidentiality. These exceptions are:

- ☛ Texas State Law requires staff/volunteers to report to the appropriate governmental agency any suspected neglect, or physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.
- ☛ Volunteers must report to the appropriate staff member and seek referral for any reported suicidal ideations or voiced homicidal intents made by participants.
- ☛ At times staff/volunteers may anonymously use case examples of participants. Such instances may include professional training, volunteer training, or fund-raising efforts. A family's name will never be used without specific written consent of the household.<sup>3</sup>

If you have any questions on what is and is not a breach of confidentiality you should ask the Program Director or Project Supervisor.

## Ethical and Personal Conduct Policies

All Volunteers must comply with all Catholic Charities "Ethical and Personal Conduct Policies". Volunteers will be provided with a copy of the policies upon approval to volunteer. All are required to sign a written statement verifying they have read, understood, and agreed to adhere to the policies. Failure to adhere to the policies may result in immediate termination (see Continuation/Termination Policies).

## Time Commitments

Most programs offer a variety of forms of volunteer service with varying lengths of service commitment for those tasks. Because of the need to form sound relationships based on developed trust in facilitation groups, *Elijah's Place* Volunteer Facilitators must agree to a commitment of at least one full year. If after a year, Volunteer Facilitators are still interested in volunteering, they may be invited to continue their service.

## Volunteer Rights

Volunteers are the paramount resource of any non-profit organization. Because of this fact, volunteers are given certain rights and responsibilities to adhere to during their time volunteering with Catholic Charities. Volunteers have the right to:

- ☞ Receive a Volunteer Position Description and adequate training prior to volunteering.
- ☞ Be assigned a proper project/task adequate to the volunteer's skills and time commitment.
- ☞ Be provided proper supervision.
- ☞ Receive respect from the staff and other volunteers at Catholic Charities.
- ☞ Be provided adequate continuing education when required by the position/task.
- ☞ Have the volunteer's personal information kept confidential.
- ☞ Work in a safe environment.

## Volunteer Responsibilities

In order to best aid the programs of Catholic Charities, we expect our volunteers to abide by certain guidelines. The responsibilities of our volunteers include:

- ☞ Complete all training requirements and fill out all required forms prior to volunteering.
- ☞ Adhere to the confidentiality guidelines.
- ☞ Arrive at the proper location, at the proper time, ready to volunteer.
- ☞ Notify the Program Director or Project Supervisor if you will be late or absent.
- ☞ Comply with Catholic Charities' safety and health regulations.
- ☞ Wear clothing appropriate for the work being performed. Appearance during a volunteer's time is to be professional and in good taste.
- ☞ Perform assigned tasks in a timely manner.
- ☞ Maintain a safe and orderly work place and work area.
- ☞ Respect all clients and visitors as guests of Catholic Charities.<sup>1</sup>

## Arrangements for Breaks, Meals & Refreshments

To help keep our volunteers happy and refreshed, Catholic Charities provides coffee and water in the break room. If volunteers are in need of a break, they are allowed to leave the office. Before volunteers leave, they are asked to let their Program Director, Project Supervisor or another staff member know. Depending on the program, it might be necessary to sign out before leaving and to sign in upon returning.

## Training Opportunities

Catholic Charities provides training opportunities geared toward different volunteer opportunities. A list of training opportunities with information on who is required to participate are listed below. For more information or for times and dates of trainings, contact the Office Manager at (409) 924-4410.

**Volunteer Orientation** is required if the intent of the volunteer is to work with a program on multiple occasions, if the task requires an orientation or if the volunteer is generally interested in learning more about Catholic Charities and our array of volunteer opportunities.

**Protecting God's Children Workshop** is required for all volunteers who will be in contact with children, the elderly and/or the vulnerable.

***Elijah's Place* Volunteer Facilitator Training** is held twice a year at the Central Services Facility. *Elijah's Place* training is a 20-hour, multi-day training that provides prospective volunteers with information and training on how to interact with grieving children.

***Elijah's Place* Volunteer Training** is a 2-hour training session for kitchen, clerical, or computer volunteers in the *Elijah's Place* program.

**Driver Training Course** is an online program that is required for volunteers or potential volunteers who have an undesirable Motor Vehicle Report (MVR). Depending on the outcome of a MVR, some volunteers may be required to complete this online course in order to be approved to drive a vehicle for the agency.

**Disaster Response Volunteer Training** is held periodically throughout the year at the Central Services Facility. The 8-hour training consists of a morning and afternoon session developed to prepare prospective volunteers with general information regarding Disaster Response and with specific training on techniques and procedures used in the program.

## Board of Directors

For a current list of the Board of Directors please reference our website.

## Key Staff

For a list of Key Staff please reference our website.

## Organization Chart<sup>2</sup>

A copy of the Agency Organization Chart is available upon request.

## Procedures

*“Volunteering is good for the heart and soul.”*

*-Unknown*

### Check-in procedures

Each time a volunteer arrives at any of the Catholic Charities buildings they must first notify their respective staff contact. This will allow the staff to monitor activities and stay well informed.

Volunteering with different programs requires different check-in procedures. Talk to your Program Director or Project Supervisor if you have any questions.

### What to do if a volunteer gets injured

If an injury occurs while volunteering with a program of Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas, the volunteer must immediately report the incident to the staff member in charge. The staff member must notify their appropriate supervisor and complete an incident record whether medical attention is needed or not.<sup>2</sup>

### Record Keeping

The agency records volunteer hours in order to provide information to the different benefactors and Catholic Charities USA for the annual report. In order to accomplish this, each volunteer signs in on their “Volunteer Hour Log”. Volunteer Hour Logs are found in your Program Director or Project Supervisor’s office. A new sheet needs to be used each month.

For each new Volunteer Hour Log, the volunteer’s name, contact phone number, address, and city, state, and zip code need to be filled out. Each time a person volunteers, they need to document the following information: the date, time in, time out, hours worked, program, and brief description of duties performed.



## Continuation/Termination Policies

Under certain extreme circumstances, volunteers may be immediately dismissed from their volunteer position. These instances for **immediate dismissal** include but are not limited to:

- ☞ Disclosing confidential information without proper authorization
- ☞ Entering the work place with a firearm, whether loaded or not, regardless of firearm license
- ☞ Coming to the work place under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- ☞ Physical or violent threats
- ☞ Sexual harassment
- ☞ Theft or misuse of property of Catholic Charities or the property of another employee or client
- ☞ Falsifying, tampering with or altering any agency, client or volunteer related documentation; including but not limited to: an application for employment, timesheet, mileage report, or shipping and receiving records
- ☞ Any other egregious behavior

In addition to the grounds for immediate dismissal, other circumstances can lead to volunteers being dismissed from their position. The two reasons for dismissal are conduct problems and economic problems. Examples of each are:

### Conduct Problems

- ☞ Poor behavior
- ☞ Disrespecting a client or employee
- ☞ Unreliable volunteer attendance
- ☞ Lack of dependability
- ☞ Use of profanity or abusive language
- ☞ Smoking in the buildings and/or vehicles which Catholic Charities operates

### Economic Problems

- ☞ Reduction in staff to supervise volunteers
- ☞ Program closure in which a volunteer is involved

## Evaluation Procedures

At the end of a project, or at the completion of six months of volunteering, volunteers and the Program Director or Project Supervisor will go through an evaluation process. The process will include a survey and, if necessary, a round table discussion. Evaluations are conducted to identify areas/procedures that work well or that may need some adjustment, and to develop better ideas for volunteer operations. Evaluations provide a time to learn about our strengths and weaknesses and provide an opportunity to better ourselves and our practices.

## Sources used

- 1 Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas, website. [www.catholiccharitiesbmt.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesbmt.org).
- 2 Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas Personnel Policies. Revised July 1, 2009
- 3 *Elijah's Place* Manual
- 4 USCCB Publishing. "Themes from Catholic Social Teaching". Washington, D.C. Publication No. 5-315. ISBN 1-57455-315-1