

CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

PACEM Volunteer Guidelines 2024

Thank you for participating in PACEM!

PACEM Hosting Dates:

January 6, 2024 – January 20, 2024

PACEM Training Date:

Friday, January 5th at 6:30PM
in the PAC (Parish Activity Center)

This training is important for Leads, Overnight Volunteers, and Food Captains.
All volunteers are welcome and encouraged to attend.

PACEM Volunteer Guidelines for Incarnation

Incarnation will be hosting up to 36 men this year!

Masks will be optional for all volunteers and guests. (Subject to change.)

Remember that this is a low barrier emergency shelter of last resort. We do not know the backgrounds of our guests. *Children should be supervised by adults at all times and a single adult should never be left in a room alone with a guest.*

VOLUNTEER/STAFF RELATIONS

PACEM Shelter staff members will always be present when the PACEM guests are in the PAC. The PACEM staff are trained on interacting with guests who are in the crisis of homelessness and are familiar with the operating procedures of PACEM.

Incarnation Volunteers shall defer to the PACEM staff in the following instances:

- Verbal or physical conflicts involving guests.
- Any discussion of any gift or financial contribution to a guest.
- Any acute medical condition of a guest (unless you are a paramedic, RN, LPN, or MD).
- Assignment of cots or sleeping space.
- Passing out extra blankets or clean linens.

In these situations, the assistance of volunteers may be needed and greatly appreciated, but the PACEM staff should take charge. Please inform the Lead Volunteer, Tom Eckman (Incarnation-PACEM Chairman), or Marta Daley (Incarnation Coordinator of Charity) of any questions or concerns regarding PACEM staff and operation.

Volunteers, please note:

- Please do not let anyone in your building unless they are known to you. Please check with the PACEM staff if you are unsure if an individual is a PACEM guest.
- Current guests may only enter the PAC when PACEM staff is present.
- Terminated guests may not enter a PACEM site, including the host congregation site for any reason.
- Friends and extended family of guests may not enter the PAC, unless approved by a PACEM staff member.

VOLUNTEER/GUEST RELATIONS

To make these weeks an enjoyable time for both volunteers and guests, it is important for each person to feel respected, safe, and comfortable. Listed below are tips that may help:

- **According to the Diocese, all children under the age of 18** must be accompanied by a parent/guardian/teacher and supervised **AT ALL TIMES.**
- Children will not be allowed to leave the building without being accompanied by a parent/guardian/teacher.
- When youth groups are present, a ratio of one adult for every four youth is required. Adults must know which youth they are responsible for supervising.
- All volunteers should wear modest clothing.
- **Masks will be optional (subject to change).**
- Two volunteers should be present when accessing the storage room, kitchen, or any enclosed room, other than the main area. DO NOT allow PACEM guests in the storage room.
- DO NOT give any guest special treatment, this can cause conflicts with other guests.
- Never take guests home, and do not give out any personal information.
- Avoid touching guests without their consent.
- Try to use guests' names or respectful titles (Mr., Mrs., Sir or Ma'am).
- Be respectful of different personality types (introvert, extrovert).
- Never take pictures of guests without their written permission.
- *Practice a "ministry of presence,"* making yourself available to our guests.
- Avoid taking sides in conflicts between guests.
- Be clear and precise with expectations or rules and then consistent and firm in enacting them. Please help PACEM staff members to understand rules specific to Incarnation.
- Help our needy guests avoid temptation by keeping valuables (purses, coats, etc.) in a separate, secure place (e.g. kitchen or your vehicle).

APPROACHING PACEM GUESTS

Many volunteers have little difficulty in unfamiliar social situations and need no guidance in matters of initiating conversation. However, an equal number of us do not share this gift. For us, it may be good to bear in mind that beyond racial, economic, and social boundaries, we are all as equal as we are unique; we are all both gifted and ordinary; and we are all likely to both fail and succeed at some point in life's journey. Our guests are people with hopes, dreams, and fears, just like us.

DO:

- Introduce yourself to initiate conversation.
- Be warm, friendly, and available.
- Share your experiences, strengths, and hopes in a very considerate and loving manner.
- Let guests know you care and why.
- Talk about sports, weather, movies, etc.
- Listen.
- Ask "How was your day?"
- Watch TV with a guest ... which may open a door to broader topics.
- Observe a guest's actions and body language for clues about approaching that person: Have a cold or illness? Look down & out of sorts? In an upbeat mood? Quiet and reserved? Closed off and unresponsive?
- Continue to be available to reserved/unresponsive guests.

DON'T:

- Try too hard. Just be yourself.
- Dig for personal information or ask a lot of questions. For example, "Why are you homeless?" "Do you have children?" "Are you divorced?" and etc.
- Take it personally if a guest is non-responsive or does not want to talk.
- Push religion or politics.

FINALLY,

- Have fun and be flexible.