ROOM IN THE INN - MEMPHIS

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

For RITI Campus Volunteers
409 Ayers Street

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

RITI Volunteer Program

Room In The Inn-Memphis volunteers offer essential “Holy Hospitality" both on campus and off. Volunteers are welcome alongside staff and guests so that we can work towards our mission and goals.

Volunteer Odyssey

Regular volunteer shifts are found on Volunteer Odyssey

Please register for them on the website so hours can be tracked and attendance can be known.

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

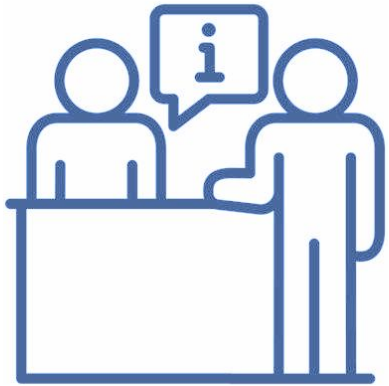
Front Desk Shifts

Currently Tuesdays and Thursdays 9 AM-12 PM, but other shifts open as needed.

Will work with Hospitality Coordinator during shift

Looking for strong customer service skills and confidence taking calls.

Supplied with script, written resources, phone, and computer



Kitchen Shifts (Brunch, Lunch, and Dinner)
Serving with a Smile

Daily shifts (even on weekends and holidays) working alongside kitchen staff

Please wear closed toed shoes and long pants

Serving with a Smile is more than just serving plates- you help prep dishes, clean up, and interact with our guests

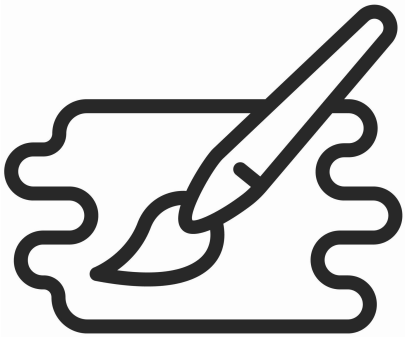
These shifts allow volunteers to spend time with guests on a regular basis

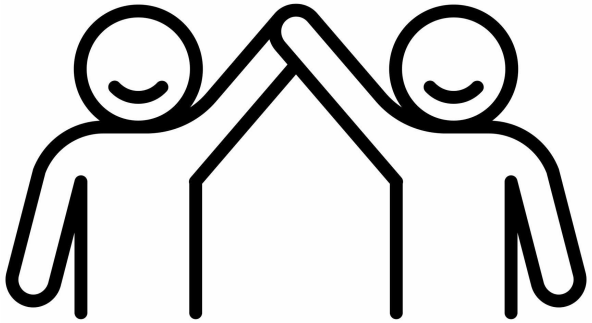
Working Around Campus

Want to plan a project? Organize an area? Create artwork with guests?

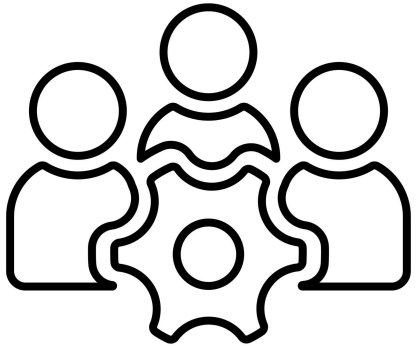
Let the Volunteer Coordinator (VC) know and you can set up a time to come to campus!

- Email volunteers@ritimemphis.org or bailey@ritimemphis.org to get connected!





Group Volunteering



Connect with the VC to discuss dates and service projects/activities for groups visiting Memphis or larger local groups.

VC and Group Leader will decide on what project/service group will do while on campus.

Group Volunteering typically starts with a tour of campus that then leads into the planned activity. VC can have discussion questions and/or housing game prepared for student groups.

What to Expect When You Arrive

Please park in the spots to the right of the building- if you hit a gate, you have gone too far!

You will be greeted by front desk staff and asked to sign in on our kiosk.

The VC or other staff will take you to your volunteer location and give a brief tour!

Standard of Conduct

Appropriate Dress- for the most part, casual dress is perfect for volunteering!

If you are working at the front desk, feel free to wear business casual.

If you are working in the kitchen, we ask that you wear long pants and closed toed shoes for your safety

Please refrain from wearing any exposing clothing or anything with words or graphics that could be seen as inappropriate

Campus Agreement- sign on kiosk agreeing to:

Appropriate Behavior

Healthy Boundaries (shown on next slide)

Youth Volunteer Consent Form- all youth volunteers will need to have this filled out and on file by their first time volunteering on campus

Healthy Boundaries

Dress Appropriately

Be Respectful

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

Do Not Share Personal Info

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 guest.

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

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 welcomed or judged. They get that enough on the streets. Room in the Inn is their safe place.

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

OUR GUESTS ARE SONS, DAUGHTERS, PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS…

- **MENTAL ILLNESS**
  Schizophrenia, bipolar disease, 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 similar traumatic event
- **ADDICTION**
  Drugs, alcohol, sex, gambling, and other addictions
- **SEVERE FAMILY DYSFUNCTION**
  Abusive caregivers, 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 learning 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 that 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 of public assistance or charity for basic living needs
- **SYSTEM NAVIGATION**
  Inability to effectively navigate Government and Social Service Agencies

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 THE FOLLOWING DISABLING CONDITION…

WHAT WILL WE TALK ABOUT?

Any number of subjects!

Talk to them like you would and 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.

HELPING INDIVIDUAL GUESTS

RITI guest 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
RCC@ritimemphis.org

FAMILY INN TEAM
familyinn@ritimemphis.org