



# Volunteer Handbook

Serving Rochester, Rochester Hills, Auburn Hills, Oakland Township and Addison  
Township

Neighborhood House  
1720 S Livernois, Rochester Hills, MI  
248-651-5836  
Main Office: Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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# Welcome

Dear Friend of Neighborhood House:

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Neighborhood House (NH). Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization; giving hundreds of hours each week so we may continue our mission and create better tomorrows for our families. This packet includes all the information you need to get started volunteering here at NH. We look forward to welcoming you to the team!

It is our goal that you will find your volunteer experience a rich and rewarding part of your life. The contribution of each individual greatly affects the success of our organization. In short, you will be part of an exciting non-profit agency that is motivated to make a difference in our community.

I hope that this information gets you excited about all the wonderful volunteer possibilities here at NH. We truly appreciate your interest and support of our programs. Our programs would not be possible without the work of nearly 500 volunteer hours each month. We hope you will join us and help families at NH write the next chapter of their lives.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy Losinski".

Kathy Losinski  
Executive Director

# Mission & Values

## **Our Mission**

Neighborhood House walks the path toward self-sustainability with our neighbors during times of hardship.

## **Our Vision**

Neighborhood House envisions a community of neighbors helping neighbors thrive.

## **Our Core Values**

*Respect* - All people are treated with respect and without discrimination.

*Accessible Assistance* - People who are in need of basic human services will receive high quality, prompt and compassionate assistance.

*Network* - We build on the resources of the faith-based, civic and business communities to meet the needs of our neighbors.

*Honesty* - We conduct ourselves with integrity by acting at all times in a consistent, transparent, responsible and fiscally prudent manner.

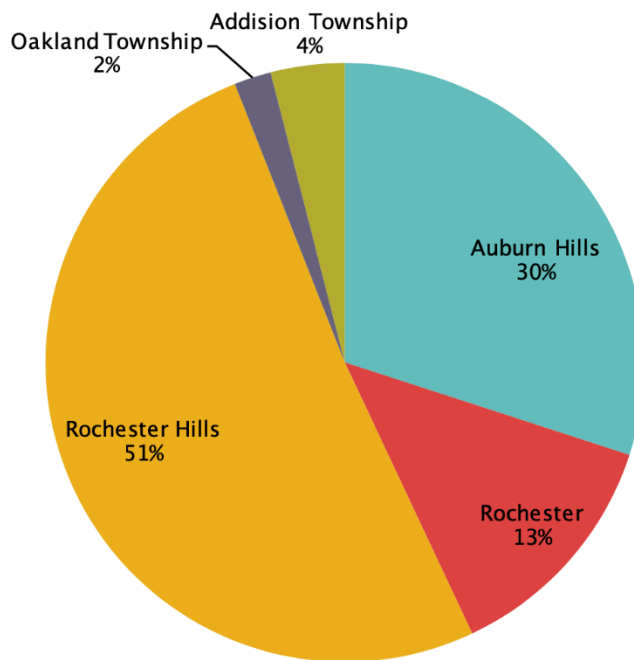
*Inclusivity* - We collaborate with other human service providers to bring additional assistance, if needed, to our neighbors.

## Service Area and Services Provided

Whom do we serve? Those living in Rochester, Rochester Hills, Auburn Hills, Oakland Township, Leonard and Addison Township.

People living paycheck to paycheck or worse in these areas come to Neighborhood House for help.

### Who Do We Serve?



### Our Services

- Clothes Closet – NH clients shop for free clothing assistance. Proceeds from sales at our resale shop allow us to provide our clients with gently used clothing and household items. We receive clothing donations from our local community.
- Food Pantry – Emergency food for individuals and families. The Food Pantry always welcomes donations from our community members.
- Counseling Services – Confidential counseling appointments with experienced professionals to discuss employment, emotional, financial, and spiritual needs.
- Financial Assistance – Financial assistance for emergency needs including rent, utilities, car repairs, etc. Our case study group reviews all requests for financial assistance weekly.

- Transportation – Our van transports senior citizens, disabled or low-to-moderate income clients to medical appointments, social service agencies, and job interviews in the greater Rochester area.
- Referrals for Assistance – Helping our clients find the right resources to address issues with debt reduction, domestic violence, legal issues, medical, dental, psychological treatments, substance abuse, and more.
- Employment Initiative – We provide classes such as financial focus, and computer classes that give our clients the tools to obtain a job and succeed.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

At Neighborhood House, a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace is one where all employees, clients, and volunteers, whatever their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education or disability, feel valued and respected. We are committed to a nondiscriminatory approach and provide equal opportunity for employment and advancement in all of our departments, programs, and worksites. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and ensure that all voices are valued and heard. We're committed to modeling diversity and inclusion for the entire human services industry of the nonprofit sector, and to maintaining an inclusive environment with equitable treatment for all. To provide informed, authentic leadership for cultural equity, Neighborhood House strives to:

- See diversity, inclusion, and equity as connected to our mission and critical to ensure the well-being of our staff and the communities we serve.
- Acknowledge and dismantle any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and continually update and report organization progress.
- Explore potential underlying, unquestioned assumptions that interfere with inclusiveness.
- Advocate for and support board-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our organization's work, and how best to address that in a way that is consistent with our mission.
- Help to challenge assumptions about what it takes to be a strong leader at our organization, and who is well-positioned to provide leadership.
- Practice and encourage transparent communication in all interactions.
- Commit time and resources to expand more diverse leadership within our board, staff, committees, and advisory bodies.
- Lead with respect and tolerance. We expect all employees to embrace this notion and to express it in workplace interactions and through everyday practice

## **Hold Harmless Policy**

I understand that this policy discharges the Neighborhood House from any liability or claim that I, the Volunteer, may have against the Neighborhood House with respect to bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from my participation on the Neighborhood House's work site. I also fully understand that the Neighborhood House does not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide financial assistance or other assistance, including but not limited to medical, health or disability insurance, in the event of injury, illness, death or property damage.

I understand that I expressly waive any such claim for compensation or liability on the part of the Neighborhood House beyond what may be offered freely by the representative of the Neighborhood House in the event of such injury or medical expense.

I hereby release the Neighborhood House from any claim whatsoever which arises or may arise in the future on account of any first aid treatment or other medical services that are conducted in connection with an emergency during my time with the Neighborhood House.

I understand that my time with Neighborhood House may include various activities that may be hazardous to me and I hereby expressly and specifically assume the risk of injury or harm in these activities and release the Neighborhood House from all liability for injury, illness, death, or property damage resulting from the activities of my time with the Neighborhood House.

I grant unto the Neighborhood House all right, title, and interest in any and all photographic images and video or audio recordings that are made by the Neighborhood House during my work with the Neighborhood House, including, but not limited to, any royalties, proceeds, or other benefits that are derived from such photographs or recordings.



## **At-Will Policy**

1. Neighborhood House (NH) is an at-will employer and sustains volunteers on an at-will basis. As such, NH may terminate your service, with or without cause, and with or without notice.
2. NH can reject an applicant. Either the volunteer or NH can terminate a relationship at any time, with or without cause, with or without notice.
3. The policies, procedures, or benefits contained within these documents do not constitute an employment contract and are subject to change at the discretion of NH. The posted electronic version will be deemed to be the accurate source should there be a discrepancy with a written manual.
4. This at-will relationship exists regardless of any other written statements or policies contained in this manual or any other documents or any verbal statement to the contrary.
5. No one can enter into any kind of relationship or agreement, which is contrary to the previous statement.

## **Separation from Service Policy**

1. The Neighborhood House director can terminate any volunteer at any time, with or without cause, with or without notice. Generally, this will be done in consultation with the volunteer's immediate supervisor.
2. In the event that a reduction in the workforce becomes necessary, the NH director shall determine the balance of volunteer levels necessary to meet the operational needs of NH. The director may eliminate or consolidate positions, or reduce work schedules, all of which are determined at the NH director's sole discretion.
3. Volunteers have the right to separate from service at any time, with or without cause, or with or without notice, although notice would be appreciated.

## Volunteer Records Policy

1. Materials that comprise a volunteer's record may include:
  - A. Initial application form
  - B. Documentation related to reassignment or termination
  - C. Notification of leaves of absence
  - D. Accident or incident reports
  - E. Any work restrictions or need accommodations related to emergency treatment or special procedures
  - F. Reports of disciplinary actions
  - G. Written grievances
  - H. Commendations, letters, memoranda, and e-mail messages relating to performance
  - I. Records of attendance at work
  - J. Voluntary information from the employee
2. Access to a volunteer's record shall be limited to:
  - a. Neighborhood House (NH) director
  - b. Volunteer coordinator
  - c. Volunteer
  - d. Law enforcement
3. Volunteers are responsible for notifying the volunteer coordinator in writing as soon as possible whenever changes occur in the following areas:
  - a. Home address
  - b. Phone number
  - c. Legal change of name
  - d. Any health issues or disabilities, which require accommodation for the volunteer's position.
  - e. Volunteers are encouraged, but not required, to provide additional information that may be valuable in case of an emergency.
  - f. Names and phone numbers of contacts in case of an emergency

## **Scheduling and Time Recording Policy**

1. Volunteers will use one of Neighborhood House's (NH) online scheduling systems to add or remove themselves from the volunteer schedule.
2. Volunteers are essential to accomplishing NH's mission. If you cannot make your volunteer shift for whatever reason, please cancel your shift by using the online scheduling system. When you cancel your shift using the system, our volunteer coordinator is immediately notified. Please refer to the documentation regarding the use of the online scheduling system (Signup.com) if you have any questions. If you have not received this documentation, contact the Volunteer Coordinator.
3. Volunteer sign-in sheets are located at all three of our locations. Please enter the appropriate information when you arrive at the location. Having an accurate record of volunteer time helps us when we are talking about the work of NH, our limited staffing options and high reliance on volunteers to complete our work.

## Hours of Service Policy

1. Neighborhood House has three locations and each has different hours.
2. Main office hours are:
  - a. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
  - b. Saturday and Sunday, Closed
3. Clothes Closet hours are:
  - a. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
  - b. Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
  - c. Sunday, Closed
4. Food Pantry hours are:
  - a. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
  - b. Saturday, 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
5. All three facilities are closed on New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following day, Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve day.
6. NH may be closed when weather conditions deteriorate to the point where emergency situations prevail, when vital equipment in the building fails or when there is a general emergency impacting a facility.

## Inclement Weather Policy

In the case of a weather emergency, the Neighborhood Office, Clothes Closet and Food Pantry will be closed at the discretion of the Executive Director.

We **no** longer follow the Rochester Public Schools closing policy.

The Neighborhood House will post on our website homepage ([www.ranh.org](http://www.ranh.org)) if we are closed.

If there has been several inches of snow or extreme cold conditions, we will also post on our website homepage that we are open.

However, please use your own discretion regarding the conditions of the roads. If you do not feel comfortable driving, please stay at home.

## **Anti-Harassment Policy**

1. Neighborhood House (NH) is committed to a work environment that is professional and harassment-free for all employees and volunteers.
2. NH prohibits harassment of its employees based on any characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.
3. Sexual harassment includes a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include, but are not limited to: unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, catcalls or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display or circulation in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures (including through e-mail); and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.
4. Harassment based on any other protected characteristic or classification is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, sex, gender, age, national origin, disability, height, weight, marital status, familial status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law, including characteristics of the individual's relatives, friends or associates.
5. Volunteers should report any issues to their supervisor or to the Executive Director of NH.

## Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of the Neighborhood House (NH) that volunteers of NH may not disclose, divulge, or make accessible confidential information belonging to, or obtained through their affiliation with NH to any person, including relatives, friends, and business and professional associates, other than to persons who have a legitimate need for such information and to whom NH has authorized disclosure as a designated agent of NH. Volunteers shall use confidential information solely for the purpose of performing services as a volunteer for NH. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law.

Volunteers must exercise good judgment and care at all times to avoid unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information. Conversations in public places such as restaurants, elevators, and public places, should be limited to matters that do not pertain to information of a sensitive or confidential nature. In addition, volunteers should be sensitive to the risk of inadvertent disclosure and should for example refrain from having confidential information on desks or otherwise in plain view and refrain from the use of speakerphones to discuss confidential information if the conversation could be heard by unauthorized persons.

At the end of a volunteer's assignment or upon the termination of a volunteer's relationship with NH, he or she shall return, at the request of NH, all documents, papers, and other materials regardless of medium, which may contain or be derived from confidential information in his or her possession.



## Substances Use Policy

1. Use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol, during working hours on Neighborhood House (NH) premises or while performing organization business is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
2. Smoking, including the use of electronic cigarettes, is prohibited throughout the NH's facilities.<sup>1</sup> There is also no smoking permitted within 20 feet of any entryway, vent, or doorway to the building.

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<sup>1</sup> Michigan Clean Air Act, P.A. 198 of 1986

## Media Relations Policy

1. There may be situations when the news media desires an interview with a Neighborhood House (NH) volunteer, including appointed officers, directors, and committee members, concerning issues outside of our normal press release information. It is important that these issues be represented to the public in a responsible, consistent and positive manner. Therefore, the NH Executive Director, or a designated representative, will respond to all media inquiries. No other person is authorized to speak to media or other agencies on behalf of the organization about NH matters.
2. Press releases will be reviewed and approved by the NH Executive Director or designated representative. This will apply to all forms of social media, social networking sites, internet postings or traditional media outlets.
3. Volunteers are encouraged to share information created by NH on social media related to the mission, policy positions, advocacy efforts, and other association news because this information is intended for the public. Legal affairs, client experience, confidential, sensitive, or financial information are not intended for public distribution.
4. Posts by volunteers, even if posted on personal accounts, are still a reflection on NH. If you are posting on social media, please:
  - a. Respect the law.
  - b. Post professionally and respectfully.
  - c. Use a disclaimer when posting personally that views expressed are personal and not the views of the association.
  - d. Do not post disparaging, embarrassing, or defamatory statements about the NH, staff or volunteers, the NH's mission or advocacy efforts.
5. NH may require volunteers to remove, correct or revise internet postings in violation of the policy. Additionally, a violation of the applicable social media policy might be cause for removing a volunteer from his/her position.

## **Use of Personal Vehicles Policy**

1. You must be 21 or over to be a NH volunteer driver and follow all state and federal traffic laws.
2. NH does not provide insurance for volunteers. Volunteer drivers must provide their own auto and liability insurance. We encourage you to consult with your own insurance agent regarding the extension of your personal insurance to include community volunteer work.

## Use of Technology Policy

1. Technology is an integral part of the Neighborhood House's (NH) operations. Proper use is a necessity to protect NH's substantial investment as well as to ensure the maximum productivity of employees and volunteers.
2. The appropriate and regular use of technology is considered an important part of many volunteer's jobs. Volunteers are expected to read, and as appropriate, respond to job-related electronic or digital messages on a timely basis.
3. The use of technology shall be for job-related or other approved purposes and minimal personal use that does not result in added cost to NH or in any way impair operation of systems.
4. All credentials (logins, usernames, and passwords), and keys are the property of NH. No volunteer may use a credential, or key that has not been issued to that volunteer or that is not made known in advance to the appropriate supervisor. No volunteer shall permit another person to use another's credentials or key without the permission of the volunteer's immediate supervisor. Passwords must be created and changed as established by the Executive Director. No password may be used which is not known to the Executive Director.
5. Volunteers should have no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of NH technology including stored e-mail, files, web browsing history or voicemail messages. All messages and files created, sent, received or stored in NH's systems as well as all other data generated on NH technology are property of NH. Malicious destruction or unauthorized access to messages, files or data will not be tolerated and may subject the violator to discipline including termination or prosecution.
6. To assure compliance with licensing provisions, the Executive Director must approve all installations, transfers or removals of software programs on NH computers. NH volunteers are not to make or acquire unauthorized copies of computer software. The electronic communications and Internet systems must not be used to send (upload) or receive (download) protected copyrighted materials.
7. Volunteers must obtain permission from their supervisor before connecting personal hardware to NH equipment.
8. NH's systems must not be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages or communications. Among those which are considered offensive are any messages which contain sexual implications, racial or ethnic slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comment that offensively addresses someone else's age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, race, national origin, disability or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or

local law. Moreover, NH's systems cannot be used to view or transmit profane, obscene, or pornographic materials at any time.

9. Any misuse of technology within NH shall be reported to the NH director.

## **Safety & Emergency Preparedness Policy**

1. Neighborhood House (NH) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for staff and volunteers as well as persons and families served.
2. Each program will provide volunteers with information on facility safety plans and safety protocols related to the assigned volunteer position.
3. It is essential that each volunteer be responsible for keeping their work area and/or equipment clean, orderly and free of hazards.