

ST. VINCENT de PAUL THRIFT STORE VOLUNTEER MANUAL



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Welcome

Every volunteer at St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store (Cabrini Conference) is an important part of the Society's effort to assist the needy in the greater Wausau area. When committed individuals join together to help, lives can change for the better. We welcome you to our dedicated family of members, employees and volunteers and we thank you for your commitment. Programs and services administered by St. Vincent de Paul could not be implemented without the volunteer time donated by so many like you. Again, we thank you, and we trust that your time spent volunteering at the Store will be rewarding.

Our great staff of volunteers are men, women and young adults from all walks of life. We make use of their special talents and skills. Consequently, every effort will be made to match the interest and skills of each volunteer with our needs. The most important qualification to be a volunteer though, is to have a caring heart and a sharing personality.

Purpose of Our Store

The Store benefits the community in several ways. First, profits directly fund the works of the ministry; that is, helping the poor. Second, the Store provides low cost, and in many cases, free clothing, furniture, and household products to those in need. Third, the Store creates an opportunity for people to participate in charitable works through their donations or volunteer services. Here at the Store all of our efforts and assets are designated for the assistance of the needy in a Christian spirit. The St Vincent dePaul Society makes no distinction in who we serve based on race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or ethnic background.

About the St. Vincent de Paul Society (Cabrini Conference)

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a world-wide organization founded in Paris, France, in 1833 by Frederic Ozanam for the purpose of serving the needy with food, housing and guidance. Following the example of its patron saint, St. Vincent de Paul, the goals of the Society are spirituality, service and friendship.

The Cabrini Conference serves the communities of Wausau and its surrounding areas. Our members, all volunteers, primarily address issues of basic human need, many that cannot be handled by other agencies. In addition to providing financial assistance, our unique contribution is the "Home Visit." When we receive a call for help, we schedule a home visit, where two of our members meet with the "friend in need." More than just monetary assistance, "Vincentians" provide the dignity and comfort of human contact, so lacking with other forms of aid.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store Mission Statement

St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores throughout the United States are an association of lay employees and volunteers dedicated to serve our needy sisters and brothers. All who come to are stores are welcomed with dignity and respect. We hope they leave as friends to shop with us again. Those who cannot afford the clothing, furniture and other household items they need will be provided for through a Vincentian initiated referral system.

Our customers, employees and volunteers are treated equally without regard to race, color, creed, age, sex or national origin. All people including the disadvantaged, handicapped and other special persons, are employed so that we may benefit from the talents and abilities of everyone seeking employment.

Serving Christ's needy is the first purpose of all St. Vincent de Paul stores. To continue in this ministry, we will use sound business practices. Surplus funds will be used to support parish conferences and other Society charitable causes approved by our councils and board of directors.

"You are the servant of the poor.....They are your masters, and the more difficult they will be, the more unjust and insulting, the more love you must give them. It is your love alone that the poor will forgive you the bread you will give them."

St. Vincent de Paul, 1581 - 1660

Equal Opportunity

The St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store Cabrini Conference provides equal opportunity to all volunteers without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, handicap or disability, sexual orientation, or any other factors prohibited by law, except as such factors may be lawfully used to determine job related requirements.

Application and Interview Process

Every volunteer must fill out an application form and a health record form. Files kept for each volunteer are confidential. During the interview, conducted by a member of the Store management or board, a determination will be made as to working times, i.e. days and hours; and to jobs and tasks available. We do not have a set schedule for volunteers but reliable times are desired. Many volunteers prefer to come in daily for 3-4 hours and others may come in once or twice a week. We will make great effort to accommodate volunteers to times, skills and preferences. Volunteers also must sign a form stating that they have been given, and that they have read and understood, this volunteer handbook.

Hours, Attendance and Punctuality

Volunteers will report to the Store General Manager or one of the Assistant Store Managers. Each volunteer needs to record their hours. Time sheets will be located in the break room. Time should be recorded at the beginning and at the end of the volunteer visit. The Store asks all volunteers to report punctually for their shifts and to work their scheduled hours. Please contact the Store General Manager or one of the Assistant Store Managers if you will be tardy or are unable to be present. Volunteers are welcome to use the break room. We will provide soft drinks and coffee to show our appreciation.

Safety, Injury and Incidents on the Job

We appreciate the help of our volunteers in watching and reporting unsafe situations. Safety is the responsibility of everyone. Please report all injuries, regardless of how small, that occur on store property or while on duty, to management immediately. Volunteers are not excluded from our basic Liability Insurance policy. Any claims in excess of the volunteer's personal insurance will be filed with our carrier. A report must be made with Store management at time of injury. Smoking is permitted only outdoors and away from public doorways. Smoking in the retail area and all other work areas is prohibited by fire and safety regulations. Because of liabilities, a volunteer's children under the age of (16) may not be present during a volunteers hours. We ask that volunteers not bring friends along to their volunteer assignments without approval from the Store management.

Personal Belongings

The St. Vincent de Paul Society is not responsible for the personal property of volunteers. Besides clothing, food and necessary items, volunteers are discouraged from bringing personal property into the Store without identifying it to the Store General Manager. Such items can be mistaken with donated materials and St. Vincent de Paul property. Lunches, snacks and refreshments may be brought in but are permitted in the break room only. Volunteers may not store or transport property in St Vincent de Paul trucks or vehicles without prior permission of the Store General Manager.

Personal Appearance

Our policy for the Store is that each volunteer's dress, grooming and personal hygiene should be appropriate to the work situation. Common sense should dictate. Different styles will be appropriate depending on the season, degree of customer contact, hours worked, nature of the work, safety of the work and medical conditions. Name tags are to be worn at all times. These can be left at the Store at the end of a shift.

Inappropriate dress includes:

Short skirts or short shorts

Cropped, tank tops or low cut tops

Any clothing with inappropriate wording or symbols

Any clothing deemed inappropriate for safety reasons such as sandals or flip-flops.

Volunteer and Employee Code

A volunteer is subject to the same code of ethics that govern members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society staff and employees.

- To uphold the spirit of the Thrift Store Mission Statement
- To regard all information as confidential
- To be professional and pleasant at all times
- To follow the instructions of the person under whom you are working
- To foster an environment of friendship and camaraderie.

A volunteer represents the organization to the public. Your actions and attitudes should always reflect well upon the society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Personal Conduct

Confidentiality

The nature and sensitivity of the services and work performed by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, whether it be in the Store or throughout our service area requires that all matters of information dealing with persons or parts of the operation, especially information of those we serve, must remain confidential and can not be shared with others.

Substance Abuse

The Store must maintains an environment that is free from drugs and alcohol and the effects of drugs and alcohol. Volunteers are prohibited from the use, sale, dispensing, distribution, possession, or manufacturing of illegal drugs, controlled substances, narcotics or alcoholic beverages on Store premises.

Theft and Fraud

All items donated to the organization, whether at the Store, inside Store trucks or vehicles, or still at donation sites awaiting pick-up, are property of the Society. Tips, money or items found with or in donated material are to be turned over to Store management. Removal of money or articles without payment or the approval of management will be considered theft.

This Volunteer Handbook contains a section on "Volunteer and Employee Purchases." It is imperative that this section be read, understood and followed. Our reputation in the community as a thrift store serving the poor can not be tarnished. It would be detrimental to our image to allow the perception that employees and volunteers have "first-pick." Any theft or violations of the employee purchase rules may result in suspension or termination.

Harassment, Abuse or Violence in the Workplace

The St Vincent de Paul Cabrini Conference Thrift Store is committed to maintain more than just a professional business workplace. Our members and staff are utterly committed to fostering an "inviting" environment for all customers, employees and volunteers. It is this spirit of friendship and goodwill that is the secret of our success both; to attract customers and to retain our volunteers.

The Store will not tolerate any threats of violence, physical or verbal, any forms of harassment, any displays of abusive or aggressive behavior, nor any purposeful destruction of Store or co-worker's property. Please report all complaints to Store General Manager.

Grievance Procedure

A volunteer may seek an answer to any complaint by bringing the complaint to the immediate Supervisor, unless the complaint concerns that supervisor. In this case, it should be brought directly to the next level of supervision, the Assistant Manager then the General Manager. If the matter is very serious and the General Manager cannot resolve the concern, it should be brought to the Conference President who may seek the advice of the Conference Board.

Dismissal

Volunteers are subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal for the same reasons any employee would be.

- Breach of confidentiality
- Theft or dishonesty
- Failure to follow policies or procedures
- Improper conduct

Volunteer and Employee Purchase Policy

There are many underlying reasons for the purchase policy below. First and foremost is the reputation of the St Vincent de Paul Thrift Store in the greater Wausau community. It is vital that we value each donation and respect the wish of the donor that the proceeds from the sale of their items are directed for the good of the community. It is also important that our customers have the first opportunity to purchase donated items. Our staff, employees and volunteers can not appear to have "first-pick." rights over customers. This could seriously damage our market appeal, not to mention our integrity in the community.

WE CAN NOT STRESS THIS CONCEPT ENOUGH.

Purchase Rules

- We can not allow for items to be "set-aside" or "specially priced."
- All saleable items must be on the sales floor for 24 hours before an employee or volunteer may purchase them.
- All shopping must be done after your completed work time.
- All purchases must be made through the service desk with a supervisor.
- The General Manager is authorized to inspect all packages on Store premises.
- Resale of purchases is not permitted.

The St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store Cabrini Conference reserves the right to interpret practices, rules and policies herein described. The Store may make changes to these policies and practices if and when deemed appropriate. These policies will be reviewed regularly and approved by the Board of Directors. Volunteers who wish to recommend changes may do so presenting them to the General Manager.

Tax Benefits

When you perform services as a volunteer for charity you may be able to deduct some of your costs such as mileage, as a charitable contribution. IRS publication #526 concerning charitable contributions is available by calling 1-800-829-3676 or on line at (www.irs.gov)

Volunteers, making a difference!