



Volunteer Handbook



About New Life Center

Our History

New Life Center is proud to have sprung from the passion and commitment of the West Valley community. Founded by members of the Soroptimists International of Estrella with strong support from area churches, service clubs and the Wigwam Resort, New Life Center opened its doors in 1991 in an abandoned dormitory in Litchfield Park. That humble building served as the home for New Life for ten years. In April 2001, we moved to a newly constructed, safe and professional facility in Goodyear. Today, New Life Center provides services to 1300 women and children each year. In addition to a safe place to stay, we provide advocacy, employment services, legal assistance, comprehensive children's services, transportation and outreach to women and children survivors of domestic violence.

Services

New Life Center has a structured, comprehensive 120-day program to empower women to choose independent, violence-free lives. Our individualized program meets the particular needs of each family residing at the Center.

Mission

“Saving Lives, Building Futures ... Empowering Women and Children Escaping Domestic Violence.”

Why Volunteer?

Domestic Violence Facts

- On an average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the country every day
- Every 39 minutes a child witnesses domestic violence
- In Arizona, over 100 women are killed each year in domestic violence incidents
- In Arizona, every 5 minutes a law enforcement officer responds to a domestic violence call
- In Maricopa County, last year over 16,000 women contacted area domestic violence providers seeking shelter
- Approximately 10% of domestic violence-related deaths in the state occur in the West Valley

“Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation’s compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another.”

~ Erma Bombeck

Volunteer Guidelines

Accidents/Injuries

Volunteers are required to report any injury that occurs during their volunteer shift to a staff member.

Age Requirement

The minimum age requirement to volunteer on-site at New Life Center is 18. Other opportunities are available for individuals under the age of 18. Please see a Community Development staff member for further details.

Attire

Generally, volunteers are required to dress in casual business attire. However, this may vary depending on position. Please consult with supervisors for appropriate volunteer attire.

Commitment

Frequency of volunteer visits and number of hours spent in service varies for each of the different volunteer positions. For more information on specific volunteer positions, time commitment and qualifications refer to the Volunteer Position Descriptions.

Conduct

While working in a volunteer capacity, individuals must reflect the mission and principles of New Life Center, regardless of their own personal views.

Current/Former Residents

We are unable to offer former residents or individuals receiving services from New Life Center volunteer opportunities. However, Community Development staff will be happy to provide interested individuals with information on other possible volunteer opportunities.

Guests

Volunteers are encouraged to invite friends and family members to the Center for scheduled tours. Volunteers may not bring friends or family members to the Center during their scheduled volunteer shift unless special arrangements have been made with Community Development Volunteer Coordinator.

Liability

Each volunteer is required to complete a Volunteer Service Application and sign the waiver of liability prior to volunteer appointment.

Name Badge

New Life Center asks all volunteers to wear a volunteer identification name badge. Badges will be issued upon volunteer appointment and should remain at New Life Center.

Public Relations

Volunteers are expected to project a courteous and professional demeanor when dealing with the public. We ask that volunteers refrain from speaking publicly about policy issues and redirect questions or concerns to the Community Development Volunteer Coordinator.

Religious Activities

The involvement of both churches and individuals can provide valuable connections for our residents. Out of respect for our residents and families, participation in any religious activity is voluntary and requires the utmost sensitivity. Religious organizations may promote their activities by providing printed informational material to New Life Center staff.

While volunteering, individuals will have occasion to interact with residents. Because our programs receive governmental funding, promoting specific religious beliefs is not allowed. The donation of Bibles and other religious materials will be allowed and should be coordinated through the Community Development Volunteer Coordinator. Door-to-door solicitation of any kind (religious or not) is not permitted.

Resignation Procedure

Upon leaving the New Life Center Volunteers Program, we ask that volunteers contact the Community Development Volunteer Coordinator. This allows us to keep our records up-to-date and further improve the Volunteer Program.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed in the kitchen, dining room, or common areas. The designated smoking area will be behind the storage area, which is located on the southwest corner of the campus.

Scheduling

Volunteers will schedule their shifts with their respective supervisors. In the event that a volunteer is unable to work a scheduled shift, volunteers should contact their respective supervisors in advance. This can be done by phone or email.

Termination Policy

New Life Center reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's service if it appears to be in the best interest in New Life Center and/or the volunteer.

Time Sheet

Volunteers will sign-in and out for each shift worked. These time sheets are used to track the status of volunteer hours. The statistics not only help us to reward volunteers for their time and dedication, but are essential for reporting purposes.

Training

Training is required for all volunteers. The number of required training hours varies for each volunteer position. In some instances, training may be waived if an individual has received equivalent training elsewhere. Training waivers are given at the discretion of the Community Development Volunteer Coordinator.

Transporting Residents

Volunteers are prohibited from transporting residents. If transportation is requested, please redirect resident to New Life Center staff for further assistance. * unless the volunteer has been approved to transport as part of the Transportation Program.



Professional Boundaries

What are boundaries?

- Limit or line over which you will not allow anyone to cross.
- Established set of limits over your physical, sexual, emotional, and professional well-being which you expect others to respect in their relationship with you
- Healthy emotional and physical distance you can maintain between you and another so that you do not become overly enmeshed (entangled) and/or dependent.
- Space between you and someone else. This can be physical, emotional, and professional space.
- Point where you end and another begins and where you begin and another ends.

In a personal relationship, both parties are responsible for maintaining their own set of boundaries. As NLC staff, our relationships with residents should always be professional, not personal. Within the confines of our professional relationships with residents, we as staff take on the primary responsibility for ensuring that appropriate boundaries are established and maintained between staff members and residents. The professional has the responsibility of separating and containing his/her needs from the residents.

In a personal relationship where healthy boundaries are established, the focus of the relationship is on both parties. In our professional interactions with residents, the focus of the professional relationship is always on the resident. When we as staff violate a boundary, we risk doing harm to the resident.

7 Categories of Boundary Violations:

1. Role boundaries: doing things for the resident outside the realm of our professional responsibilities
2. Time boundaries: spending unusually more time with one particular resident
3. Place and space boundaries: providing services in settings other than normal
4. Money boundaries: actions other than normal agency procedures such as loaning money to or borrowing money from a resident
5. Gifts and service boundaries: accepting gifts from a resident
6. Self-disclosure boundaries: disclosing personal information that lacks therapeutic value
7. Physical contact boundaries



Professional Boundaries

Things to keep in mind:

- Many residents have trouble with boundaries themselves
- Residents may sometimes behave in ways that make maintaining boundaries more challenging (for example, requesting special favors or asking personal questions)
- Remaining in an abusive relationship can be the result of poor boundaries as well as the source of poor boundaries

Some of the boundary issues often seen in victims of domestic violence:

- “His/her behavior is my fault.”
- “I can never say no to others.”
- “It is my responsibility to fix him/her and his/her problems.”
- “I can never trust anyone again.”
- “It doesn’t matter what they are doing to me. As long as I keep quiet and don’t complain, they will eventually leave me alone.”
- “As long as I am seen and not heard, I won’t be violated or hurt.”
- “I can never tell where to draw the line with others.”
- “I don’t have the right to my own physical or emotional space.”

Some of the symptoms of poor boundaries:

- Over enmeshment with others
- Excessive detachment
- Victimhood or martyrdom (sacrificing self for others)
- Chip on the shoulder
- Shyness
- Cold and distant
- Smothering
- No concept of privacy



Professional Boundaries

Examples of violations of professional boundaries:

- Securing resident's credit cards or personal items in your office
- Discussing a resident or former resident with or in the presence of another resident
- Disclosing excess information regarding your personal life (The resident should not be involved in or witness discussions regarding staff's personal problems.)
- Introducing your family members to residents and/or residents to your family members
- Encouraging (even in remaining silent) violations of NLC policy/guidelines (For example, sitting silently in the presence of residents who are gossiping about other residents.)
- Consistently spending noticeably more time with one resident than others.
- Bending the rules.
- Telling a resident she is your favorite
- Asking a resident to join you in your break; accepting an offer from a resident to "take a break"

Is it possible to violate a co-worker, staff member or other volunteer's professional boundaries?

Example: A resident asks a staff member or volunteer, "Where is Dawn from?" The person answers simply, "She's from Virginia." *Were Dawn's professional boundaries violated?*

Yes. Dawn should make the decision to disclose or not to disclose personal information to residents with whom she works with on a *professional* basis.



Professional Boundaries

Additional examples of ways we can violate the professional boundaries that have established:

- Disclosing marital status
- Disclosing whether or not a coworker has children or grandchildren
- Disclosing where a coworker went on vacation
- Disclosing the reason a coworker is absent from work (sick, car trouble, death in the family, etc.)
- Disclosing *any* personal information regarding a coworker

Examples:

- “Jane doesn’t like confined spaces.”
- “Jim is allergic to tomatoes.”
- “Jane lives in Glendale.”
- “Jim has 4 dogs, a cat, and 3 camels.”
- “Jane’s trying to quit smoking.”
- “Jim’s always late for work.”

Asking a personal question or making reference to his/her personal life in the presence of a resident also constitutes violation of boundaries.....

- “How are your grandchildren?”
- “Are you feeling better?”
- “Did you go to the doctor?”
- “How many children do you have?”
- “Did you get your car fixed?”

If you have any questions or concerns about professional boundaries, please communicate with your supervisor or a supervisor on staff.

Thank You.



I _____ have read and agree to the policies in the New Life Center Volunteer Handbook on _____.