

Welcome from the Executive Director

Thank you so much for volunteering your time and talent here at St. Vincent de Paul. St. Vincent de Paul is composed primarily of volunteers, who selflessly give their time to help wherever it is needed. Partnerships between volunteers and staff are crucial to the mission that we strive to fulfill each and every day in service to our community.

Your role as a volunteer is extremely important to us. That is why we have created this handbook. Our goal is to inform you of the history, mission and values of our organization, as well as communicate our volunteer policies and procedures. If there is anything that we can do to help you, please do not hesitate to ask.

Again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all that you do for St. Vincent de Paul and our community. I hope you find volunteering with St. Vincent de Paul to be a rewarding and enriching experience.

Sincerely,

Mike Dunn

Executive Director



Our Core Values

Holiness of Life

- Growth in intimacy with Jesus is a life-long process
- Prayer is essential: personal and communal

Service of the Poor

- The dignity of the human person
- The preferential option of the poor
- The identification of Jesus with the poor

Humility

- The virtue of humility: personal and corporate
- Poverty in spirit is the primary Beatitude

Simplicity

- The virtue of simplicity
- Jesus is the evangelizer and servant of the poor
- Divine providence

Charity

- The Society is concerned with charity and justice
- The virtue of charity within and outside of the Society

Friendship

- Solidarity with our neighbors in need
- Community among Vincentians

Essential Elements of the Society

Spirituality:

To bear witness to Christ and to his church by showing that the faith of Christians inspires them to work for the good of humanity.

Friendship:

To bring together men and women of good will and to assist them by mutual example and true friendship in drawing nearer to the divine model by fulfilling his essential precept, namely, the love of God in the person of others.

Service:

To establish a personal contact between its members and those who suffer, to bring to the latter the most efficacious and charitable aid possible, and to promote self-sufficiency.

History of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul traces its origins to Paris in 1833, where six university students, spurred by the challenges of their classmates, began to meet the needs of the city's suffering poor. The students walked the streets of Paris, engaging in person-to-person ministry to the poor, confident that Christ would be revealed through their loving acts. Inspired by our founder Frederic Ozanam and patron St. Vincent de Paul, the one tiny group has grown into an international organization with members in 150 countries, helping others through neighborhood ministry.

National Council of the United States

The Society St. Vincent de Paul National Council was established in St. Louis, Missouri at the Basilica of St. Louis, King of France, popularly called "The Old Cathedral," in 1845. The first meeting of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States was held on November 20, 1845, only twelve years after its foundation in Paris. Nineteen of the most prominent Catholic laymen of St. Louis attended. The Conference was aggregated (formally recognized) by the Society's International Council in Paris on February 2, 1846.

Cincinnati District Council

The Cincinnati District Council has been working with Greater Cincinnati and Hamilton County neighbors in need since 1869. Whether offering food to a single mom, comfort to those who are alone or warm coats to children during the cold winter months, our more than 900 Conference Members put their faith in action by their service to others. The organization works personally with those in need on a person-to-person basis, regardless of race or creed, to bridge the spiritual, emotional and material gaps in their lives through neighborhood-based ministries.

Cincinnati St. Vincent de Paul Conferences

The core of our work is done by 58 St. Vincent de Paul Conferences. There are 56 parish-based conferences and 2 high school conferences. Conference members are often referred to as Vincentians. Members visit the homes of their neighbors in need to assess their situations and help however possible. This home visit is a trademark of our Society. It was initiated by our founder, Frederic Ozanam, as he assisted the poor in Paris.

“Knowledge of the poor and needy is not gained by pouring over books or in discussions with politicians, but by visiting the slums where they live, sitting by the bedside of the dying, feeling the cold they feel and learning from their lips the causes of their woes.”

– Blessed Frederic Ozanam, 1845

If you are interested in learning more about the work of our Conferences, please contact Gary Horton at 513-562-8841 x234 or ghorton@svdpcincinnati.org.

Founders of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul



Blessed Frederic Ozanam (1813-1853) was founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Frederic was a husband and father, professor and servant of the poor. He founded the Society of St. Vincent de Paul as a young student with other of the Sorbonne in Paris. Sister Rosalie Rendu, a Daughter of Charity, is considered a mentor of Frederic and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul as she taught the first members the art of helping the poor and the sick. Frederic's writings on social justice anticipated the first social encyclical of our modern times, *Rerum Novarum*.



Blessed Rosalie Rendu, DC (1786-1856) was a Daughter of Charity who served for 54 years in the Mouffetard area, the most impoverished district of Paris. Emmanuel Bailly, the President of the Society, sent the founding members of the Society to Sister Rosalie for guidance and direction. Sending them on home visits, she formed them in the spirit of St. Vincent, teaching them how to serve the poor with respect and compassion.



St. Louise de Marillac (1591-1660) a contemporary of St. Vincent, was inspired and directed by Vincent's spiritual leadership. She was Vincent's collaborator in founding the Daughters of Charity and organizing hospitals for the sick poor, asylums for the orphaned, workshops for the unemployed, championing literacy for the uneducated, and establishing standards for local charities. Louise was a wife, mother, teacher, nurse, social worker and religious foundress.



St. Vincent de Paul (1581-1660) was founder of the Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, Confraternities of Charity, and Ladies of Charity. A man of deep faith, keen intellect, and enormous creativity, he has become known as the "The Apostle of Charity," and "Father of the Poor." His contributions to the training of priests and organizing parish missions and other services for the poor shaped our Church's role in the modern world.

Our Ethical Principles

As representatives of the St. Vincent de Paul Cincinnati District Council, we have unique opportunities to help those who feel isolated experience the care of others in their community. The dynamics that exist in our meetings with them can be powerful. While the potential for good exists, the possibility of harm to those we serve is similarly always present. We should assume that every person who comes to us in need is particularly vulnerable. What follows are some rules that are meant to provide reasonable protection to clients and volunteers in carrying out our responsibilities.

Confidentiality

Keep any information you may have about those we serve **completely** confidential. Letting any person with whom you have direct contact know from the beginning that you understand that your role carries with it a sacred trust - that of safeguarding personal information about them and their family - may help to build a therapeutic relationship that can be so helpful.

Overlapping Relationships

Limit your contact with those we serve to times when you are carrying out your volunteer responsibilities. Although friendship is an essential element of the Society, there are definitely some boundaries to keep while interacting with a client. For instance, do not give away your personal contact information to a client. They should only contact you through St. Vincent de Paul channels.

Giving money to a client from your own personal funds is not allowed. If a client is eligible to receive help from any of our programs, we as an agency will be happy to assist. If they are not eligible, your role may be to help them identify other resources within the community. There are times when no help is available. At those times we must help clients understand and deal with the reality, not circumvent it.

Providing help to a person when we have previous connections with them adds a potentially confusing element to the process. For instance, a client may feel embarrassed to approach a person for financial help when they have known them in the community as friends, neighbors, teachers, police officers, etc. If you find that you are in a position to provide St Vincent de Paul services to a person with whom you have any other connection, whenever possible, talk with the volunteer coordinator or another member of the staff before meeting with the client.

Dignity and Worth of the Person

Our challenge is to always be respectful and kind to those coming to us for help. That is not difficult when the person approaches us in a similar way. It can be very difficult, however, if the person's anxiety or embarrassment is hidden by an angry or sulking demeanor. When faced with those emotional "fronts," we have strong champions and examples in St. Vincent de Paul and Frederic Ozanam. This quote from St. Vincent de Paul is a great reminder to us for the unconditional love we must provide to those we serve. He says,

“The poor are your masters, and the more difficult they will be, the more unjust and insulting, the more love you must give them. It is for your love alone that the poor will forgive you the bread you give them.”

Any type of demeaning talk about our clients hurts us all. Even if the person who overhears is not the person being discussed, even if we are only overheard speaking in generalities, all of our other efforts are sabotaged – trust is destroyed. Trust is to be earned! Because of our connection with St. Vincent de Paul we have a generous inheritance of trust. That inheritance must not be squandered.

One of our greatest challenges is to objectively assess each request for services without placing judgment on the person’s past life choices. Always begin with the presumption of honesty. Do not immediately assume that the reason you are having difficulty understanding a client’s explanation of their situation is due to their dishonesty. Do not judge. Finding and pointing out inconsistencies and gaps in situations is part of the process. Just leave out the judgment.

Volunteer Management Policies

Commitment to Volunteers

Our highest priority is to show love and respect to our volunteers and the clients we serve, and to provide the opportunity for them to grow as individuals. Achieving the goals of St. Vincent de Paul is best served by the active participation of members of the community. We strive to give volunteers meaningful assignments with full involvement and participation, to provide effective support from staff, and to recognize our volunteers for the gifts and talents they bring to our mission. In return, volunteers are asked to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain true to the values, goals and procedures of the organization.

Youth volunteers are welcome at St. Vincent de Paul. Volunteers under the age of 14 must be accompanied by their legal guardian or approved adult chaperone. SVDP is committed to helping young people serve their community and participate in our mission.

St. Vincent de Paul's Responsibilities to Volunteers

St. Vincent de Paul makes a commitment to:

- Provide volunteers with any training and assistance that is required;
- Provide regular meetings and updates with a staff support person;
- Provide volunteer experiences that respect skills, dignity and individual wishes;
- Consult with volunteers and keep them informed of possible changes;
- Provide a safe and meaningful volunteer experience.

Volunteers' Responsibilities to St. Vincent de Paul

- Be realistic and candid in accepting your volunteer role, taking into consideration your interests, skills and availability, as well as the organization's needs.
- Learn your volunteer assignment as well as you can by completing any training, asking questions, and staying in touch with your staff support person.
- Become a team member of St. Vincent de Paul by being reliable and dependable, and cooperating with staff, clients, and volunteers.
- Follow all policies and guidelines of St. Vincent de Paul, observing confidentiality when needed and engaging in appropriate behavior while working.
- Participate in the feedback process by letting us know how you feel about your volunteer experience, and giving your suggestions for improvement in any area.

Availability of Services to Volunteers

Volunteers may apply for any service regularly provided by SVDP to the general public. Volunteers cannot work in a department where they are currently receiving services. If for whatever reason your circumstances have changed and you require service in the department that you are currently working in, you will either be reassigned or taken off the volunteer list. All standard policies used to determine eligibility, frequency and amount of assistance, necessary documentation, etc. will be applied in considering and processing applications from volunteers.

Any volunteer requesting food from the choice pantry will follow the procedure used by all pantry clients. All of the rules regarding registering, documentation, frequency of use, amount of assistance and process of food selection (accompanied by another volunteer/staff member) will apply.

Volunteers requesting any other help provided by the Social Services Department should contact the Director of Programs, or in his absence, the Social Services Client Advocate Team Leader, who will provide information about the process.

Volunteers requesting assistance from the Charitable Pharmacy should contact either the Pharmacist or the Patient Advocate for more information.

Changing Roles

Our goal is to provide you with a meaningful volunteer experience. If at any time, you wish to change your volunteer role, please speak with your staff support person or the Volunteer Coordinator, and we will work with you to find a position that suits your skills and interests, as well as our needs.

Confidential Information

Confidentiality and professionalism are of the utmost importance when working with our neighbors in need. Please do not share personal client information unless it is with a relevant St. Vincent de Paul staff member, and do not share your personal information with clients.

Dress Code

Volunteers and paid staff are responsible for maintaining an image to the public that conveys a feeling of professionalism, competence and neatness. This includes all aspects of personal grooming and attire. All staff and volunteers are expected to use good judgment to avoid clothing that is inappropriate, torn or dirty. For those volunteering in the Choice Food Pantry or on the loading dock, we require that all volunteers wear sturdy, close-toed shoes. Staff support persons will provide guidelines if there are specific dress requirements associated with any other volunteer positions. Keep in mind the role you are dressing for. Please don't hesitate to ask your staff supervisor for guidance.

General Safety and Security

Volunteers should:

- Report any unsafe practices or unsafe conditions in their areas to their staff support person or other staff member.
- Report any injuries or accidents immediately to their staff support person.
- Follow all safety rules for the safety of themselves and everyone else.

Some of the best safety improvement ideas come from volunteers. Those with ideas, concerns or suggestions for improved safety and security in the workplace are encouraged to bring them to their staff support person's attention so that the safety and welfare of all volunteers can be improved. Volunteers should report any condition that they believe poses a safety, health or security risk. St. Vincent de Paul will investigate such reports promptly and thoroughly and take appropriate corrective action. Further, any comments or jokes regarding threats of violence will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately and promptly.

Handling Donations or Money

Donations are meant to be used to assist people in need. Cash or in-kind donations received while volunteering must be turned over to St. Vincent de Paul staff. Cash, checks, gift cards, goods, etc. found on Society property or on/in any item donated to the Society is the property of the Society. Failure to turn in donations will result in immediate removal from the volunteer program.

Holidays

St. Vincent de Paul is closed for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Inclement Weather Policy

St. Vincent de Paul will remain open unless the county issues a level 3 weather emergency. If you are unable to volunteer due to the weather and it is not a level 3 emergency, we completely understand and respect your decision to be safe. If you are scheduled and cannot make it, please contact either your Staff Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator at 513-562-8841x211.

Injuries While Volunteering

All volunteers must follow appropriate safety guidelines. However, even under the best circumstances, an accident may occur. If you are injured, even slightly, please immediately stop the activity that caused the injury and seek first aid or medical attention if necessary. As soon as possible, inform your staff support person about the incident and complete an incident report form. If you are unable to reach your staff support person, then you should contact another staff member. Please do not resume the activity until treatment has been provided and/or you have been given the approval from staff to continue the activity. If you become unable to continue volunteering because of an illness or injury related to your volunteer work, please inform your staff support person as soon as possible.

Parking

At the West End Outreach Center, volunteers can park in the lot to the West of the building or to the North of the building across the street, or in any available street parking. The parking spots in front of the loading dock doors are strictly for loading and unloading donations; once donations have been appropriately handled you must move your vehicle. Parking at our Winton Hills Outreach Center is limited to street parking. Parking at the Thrift Stores will vary by location.

Personal Property

The Society is not responsible for personal articles lost or stolen from a volunteer's work site or vehicle. You are discouraged from bringing large amounts of cash or valuables with you. Any loss should be reported to your staff support person.

Policy on Minors

St. Vincent de Paul welcomes volunteers of all ages. All volunteers under the age of 18 must provide consent of a parent or legal guardian. Furthermore, all documentation must be accompanied by the signature of a parent or guardian. If any volunteers under the age of 18 are volunteering with a group organized through a school, youth group or any other organization, consent is understood to be provided on behalf of the minor's affiliated organization. For certain

activities, the supervision of a parent or guardian may also be required. All volunteers under the age of 14 must be accompanied by a legal guardian or approved adult.

Policy on Hostility/Violence

Threatening or violent behavior committed by anyone against volunteers, employees, vendors or clients during work or off-duty hours will not be tolerated. Following an incident, all employees and volunteers who were involved must fill out an incident report and give it to Kevin Lab, Director of Programs. Such behavior may include but is not limited to the following:

- Physical injury to another person;
- Threats;
- Behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury in another person;
- Intentionally causing damage to St. Vincent de Paul property or property of another volunteer or employee;
- Possession of weapons (e.g. guns, knives, clubs, explosives, etc.) on St. Vincent de Paul property or while at St. Vincent de Paul-sponsored events;
- Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or violence.

Statements or gestures that in any way suggest that the employee may engage in violent or inappropriate conduct will be taken seriously by management and responded to appropriately.

Procedure: If at any time you feel uncomfortable or at risk please contact your staff support person or any available staff member.

Public Transportation

West End Outreach Center – Bus Routes 27 & 31

Winton Hills Outreach Center – Bus Routes 16 & 47

Colerain Thrift Store & Donation Center – Bus Route 19

Mt. Washington Thrift Store & Donation Center – Bus Routes 24 & 30X

Milford Thrift Store & Donation Center – Bus Route 28

Este Thrift Store & Donation Center. – Bus Routes 16 & 47

Glenway Thrift Store & Donation Center – Bus Route 32, 38 & 51

Evendale Thrift Store & Donation Center – Bus Route 43 Reading Rd & Cooper Rd.

Mason Thrift Store & Donation Center – Bus Route 71X Mason Montgomery Rd / Cedar Village

Reference and Background Checks

Some of our volunteer positions will have access to our clients' personal information. In those cases, a background check will be required. St. Vincent de Paul strives to maintain a safe and productive environment with honest, trustworthy, qualified, and reliable volunteers and employees. All background information will be kept in a confidential file.

Reimbursement of Expenses

St. Vincent de Paul may reimburse volunteers for certain expenses incurred in some volunteer jobs. Please check with your staff support person for specific information on the reimbursement policy and procedures for your department.

Representing St. Vincent de Paul

Prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate St. Vincent de Paul, volunteers should consult their staff support person. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, collaboration or joint initiatives, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. All questions by the press must be referred to the Executive Director, Mike Dunn or the Development Director, Kristen Klein.

Service at the Discretion of the Organization

St. Vincent de Paul accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of St. Vincent de Paul. Volunteers agree that the organization may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with St. Vincent de Paul or to make changes in the nature of their volunteer assignment.

Sign-In Sheets

In order to keep track of volunteer hours for grants, our board of directors and the budget, we ask that all volunteers sign in each time they come to volunteer. The sign-in book is located in the first floor lobby. Please print your name and all other information as clearly as possible. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of signing in! Don't underestimate the value of your time!

Substance Abuse and Smoking

We have a vital interest in maintaining a safe, healthy, and efficient working environment. Volunteers under the influence of drugs or alcohol present safety and health risks to themselves and those they are working with, and have a detrimental effect upon high standards of performance and conduct. Violation of these policies will result in appropriate corrective action, up to and including immediate dismissal.

Training and Orientation

All new volunteers will be given a tour and overview of the society before they begin. Any necessary training will be handled by the staff support person in the department which you are volunteering.

Use of SVDP Communication Equipment

All St. Vincent de Paul communication systems are Society property and are to be used for business purposes. Access to computers is available to volunteers based on their position responsibilities. In order to prevent systems from being infected by viruses, please do not bring any outside disks, flash drives or computer programs for use on Society equipment, or use St. Vincent de Paul computers for personal use.

Volunteer Position Charters

To assist you in understanding and learning your volunteer role, every on-going volunteer position at St. Vincent de Paul has a description summarizing the principal duties, responsibilities, qualifications and essential work functions of the volunteer assignment and will also indicate the staff support person for that position. Volunteers may speak with the Volunteer Coordinator or their staff support person regarding any concerns as they relate to the volunteer position charters.

Volunteer Records, References and Privacy

St. Vincent de Paul maintains confidential records of each volunteer to aid in communication, track volunteer service and other things. Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator of any changes in contact information (i.e., emergency contact notification, information, home address, telephone number(s), email address) and to report any additional educational and skill training acquired after joining St. Vincent de Paul.

Directory and Contact List

<i>Staff Contacts</i>			
Name	Department	E-Mail	Extension
Volunteer Coordinator	Volunteers	513-562-8841	211
Bob Kamp	Carl & Edyth Lindner Choice Food Pantry	bkamp@svdpcincinnati.org	12
Gary Horton	Conferences	ghorton@svdpcincinnati.org	234
Andrew Levers	Social Services	alevers@svdpcincinnati.org	227
Kristen Klein	Development/Media Relations	kklein@svdpcincinnati.org	225
LaMonica Sherman	Winton Hills	lsherman@svdpcincinnati.org	237
Linda Feely	Donation-Call Center	lfeely@svdpcincinnati.org	242
Mike Espel	Pharmacy	mespel@svdpcincinnati.org	266

Outreach Centers and Thrift Store Locations

Location	Address	Phone/Fax	Hours
<i>West End Outreach Center</i>	1125 Bank Street Cincinnati, OH 45214	513-562-8841 513-562-8843 fax	Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:30pm Sat. 8:30am-12pm
<i>Winton Hills Outreach Center</i>	4848 Winneste Avenue Cincinnati, OH 45246	513-641-0382 513-641-0244 fax	Mon-Thur 9:00am-1:00pm
<i>Colerain Thrift Store & Donation Center</i>	8269 Colerain Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45239	513-741-1641	Mon-Sat. 9:00am-7:00pm Sun 10:00am-6:00pm
<i>Este Superstore, Donation Center & Warehouse</i>	4530 Este Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45232	513-681-9838	Mon-Sat. 9:00am-8:00pm Sun 10:00am-6:00pm
<i>Evendale Thrift Store & Donation Center</i>	9864 Reading Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45241	513-563-2949	Mon-Sat. 9:00am-8:00pm Sun 10:00am-6:00pm
<i>Glenway Thrift Store & Donation Center</i>	5555 Glenway Crossing Cincinnati, OH 45239	513-741-1641	Mon-Sat. 9:00am-9:00pm Sun 10:00am-6:00pm
<i>Mason Thrift Store & Donation Center</i>	1065 Reading Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45040	513-492-7940	Mon-Sat. 9:00am-8:00pm Sun 10:00am-6:00pm
<i>Milford Thrift Store & Donation Center</i>	813 Main St. Milford, OH 45150	513-248-2664	Mon-Sat. 9:00am-8:00pm Sun 12:00pm-6:00pm
<i>Mt. Washington Thrift Store & Donation Center</i>	2300 Beechmont Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45230	513-231-1239	Mon-Sat. 9:00am-8:30pm Sun 12:00pm-6:00pm

General Contact Information

Website	www.SVDPCincinnati.org
Financial Donations	513-421-HOPE (4673) or www.SVDPCincinnati.org
Thrift Store and Vehicle Donations	513-421-CARE (2273) or www.SVDPCincinnati.org
Facebook	www.facebook.com/SVDPCincinnati
Twitter	www.twitter.com/SVDPCincinnati