

### **Code of Ethics for Out of the Cold Volunteers**

- Guests are to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- Other volunteers are to be treated with respect.
- No guest is to be given preferential treatment.
- Personal boundaries must be respected.
- Clothing must be appropriate, seasonal and modest. For example, no bare midriffs or undergarments exposed, gang colours, etc..
- Do not share your last name, phone number or address with guests.
- Interaction with guests should always happen within view of other volunteers.
- Any concerns about the behavior of other volunteers should be brought either to that volunteer personally or to the shift supervisor and/or site coordinator in private.
- Information and opinions shared with you by a guest or volunteer should remain confidential unless it either poses a threat to someone or permission is given to share it.
- Volunteers should arrive before their shift begins and remain for the entire shift unless other arrangements can be made.
- If you cannot make a shift, the coordinator or designate should be notified as soon as possible.
- Volunteers should not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Decisions of other volunteers must be supported in front of the guests.
- Where possible, decisions on evicting guests should be done in consultation with other volunteers.

### **Process for Dealing with Complaints**

- We will not interfere with the work of other sites or agencies unless we feel there is criminal activity, at which time the Police will be called.
- If we receive a serious complaint about another site or agency we will share it with that site coordinator or agency.
- When we have a complaint from either a volunteer or a guest we will speak to that volunteer, other volunteers that were present, and other guests that may have witnessed the event.
- If a complaint about a volunteer is substantiated by the stories of others we will do one or more of the following:
  - Inform volunteer about the complaint but not necessarily the complainant.
  - Allow the volunteer to explain his/her actions.
  - Ask that the behavior be modified.
  - Have that volunteer be monitored in his or her work.
  - Change the responsibilities for the volunteer to remove them from direct contact with the guests or the problem area.
  - Not schedule the volunteer at all.
  - Involve the police if we feel a criminal act has taken place.

- If a complaint about a guest is substantiated we will do one or more of the following:
  - Inform guest about the complaint but not necessarily the complainant.
  - Allow the guest to explain his/her actions.
  - Ask that the behavior be modified.
  - Have the guest monitored by volunteers.
  - Remove the guest from the immediate vicinity of the problem.
  - Ask that the guest leave for a time.
  - Ask that the guest leave for the night.
  - Ban the guest for a limited number of weeks.
  - Ban the guest from the program.
  - Involve the police if a criminal act has taken place.
- **All decisions or complaint resolutions are the responsibility of the site and will be communicated with other sites where appropriate.**

### **Chain of Responsibility at First United**

Volunteer  
Shift Supervisor  
Coordinator  
Outreach Committee Chair or designate  
Board Chair

- All complaints are to be shared by the volunteer with the shift supervisor.
- The Shift Supervisor is to write the complaint in the communications book and bring it to the attention of one of the coordinators.
- Complaints are often dealt with by the volunteer in consultation with the shift supervisor. When they are not, the coordinators decide on the action to be taken.
- The Coordinators consult with the Outreach Chair or designate when needed.
- If further consultation is needed, the chair of the board is also consulted.

*Currently Catherine is the chair of the Outreach committee, so another member of the committee serves when matters of Out of the Cold need to be dealt with.*

We also share our concerns with the minister who gives us spiritual and emotional support, as well as the prayer group of our church which is a small group that must keep all concerns confidential.