



San Jose
Christian Reformed Church

Village House at San Jose Christian Reformed Church Operating Manual

Mission of the center

To bring renewal to guests of Village House through love, compassion and fellowship.

Vision for the center

The primary purpose of Village House at San Jose Christian Reformed Church is to provide daytime shelter for up to 15 medically fragile women who are part of the Village House shelter program.

San Jose Christian Reformed Church (SJCRC) will work in conjunction with St. Timothy's Lutheran Church (SLTC) to provide our daytime guests a place to rest and socialize, as well as companionship, light refreshments, lunch, crafts, and some form of entertainment (games, cards, etc.).

The VHSJCRC /STLC committee will coordinate with existing county and social agencies to provide access to other services as needs become known. This could include, but is not limited to, medical, dental, and shower/laundry vans. Assistance will be coordinated with the referring agencies to ensure that services are not duplicated.

VHSJCRC /STLC will provide an opportunity for SJCRC, STLC and outside volunteers to provide caring support for houseless people in need, and in so doing, support a key mission of the church.

Preamble (What our faith calls us to do)

We agree that something needs to be done to alleviate suffering and provide better paths forward for these vulnerable members of our society.

God calls His people to care for the widow, the orphan, and the alien (or to care for the poor). It is our responsibility and privilege as His people to respond to this need in San Jose.

We admit that we do not know the best ways and will make mistakes. We can only do our best and seek to rectify any errors in honest, respectful and loving ways.

We believe that taking on this shared project will provide an enhanced sense of purpose and mission to our church. Despite the hardships, the gifts of grace given will be multiplied and returned in ways we cannot yet imagine.

We beseech our and all surrounding church communities to share the work joyfully and participate with the strength of faith that is befitting of believers in a loving and grace-filled God.

Center management

Management committee

The center is overseen by a management committee consisting of (at a minimum) a director and a volunteer coordinator. Members of the committee will be in regular communication and ensure day-to-day readiness of the center to receive guests.



Center rules (as provided to guests)

1. Shelter will operate Monday through Friday, excluding weekends.
2. VHSJCRC /STLC opens at 7:00 AM.
3. Please enter from designated door (see map of campus). Do not congregate in the area prior to 15 minutes before the opening of the center.
4. The possession or use of alcohol, drugs, and drug paraphernalia is not permitted on site. Violation of this rule will result in you being asked to leave the center.
5. Weapons are not permitted at VHSJCRC /STLC. If you're in possession of a weapon, you may be asked to leave the center. If you have a pocket knife please turn it in to the warming center shift supervisor and we will return it to you upon leaving the center.
6. Smoking is permitted in designated areas and times only.
7. Showers will not be provided.
8. Verbal or physical abuse, including violence, threats of violence, cursing or racist language, is prohibited and will result in a guest being asked to exit the center.
9. If you are asked to leave the center for violation of a rule and you do not do so, the police will be called.
10. Sexual activity is not permitted at VHSJCRC /STLC. This includes holding hands, kissing, hugging, etc.
11. Please report all maintenance problems to shelter monitors.
12. Pets are not allowed (with exception of qualified service animals)
13. The Warming Center closes at 6:00 pm.
14. Do not linger in the area more than 15 minutes after closing.

Issue Resolution

On a daily basis, the shift supervisor (see volunteer section) is responsible to take actions necessary to resolve issues. They will be guided by an emergency handbook providing necessary phone numbers and procedures for issues requiring urgent professional attention.

Written and email feedback from guests, volunteers and SJCRC/STLC community members will be accepted and responded to by the center management committee.

Guest profile and management of guest invitation process

Invitations

Guests are only eligible to stay at VHSJCRC /STLC by invitation. The management committee will maintain and publish a list of eligible guests. To become eligible, guests must be screened according to the criteria below by a qualified social worker. The case manager contact information for each guest will be maintained with the site emergency documentation.

Screening criteria

1. No drug or alcohol problems
2. Mentally stable



3. No history of violent offense, and checked against Megan's Law database
4. Actively receiving case management from a social worker

Additional priority will be given to guests for whom the following apply

1. Homeless while they wait on shelters or transitional housing openings
2. Medically vulnerable or elderly, and whose health would be further compromised by remaining outdoors through the winter
3. Not or no longer eligible for medical respite (in hospital stay)

Volunteer profile and management of volunteer process

Volunteer profile

1. Volunteers must be 18 years old or have approval of the center director and participation consent from a legal guardian.
2. Shift supervisors are encouraged to attend an off-site training in order to fill this role. This training can be set up through VHSJCRC /STLC.
3. Daily volunteers will be given an on-site orientation and asked to review the volunteer handbook.

Minimum volunteers needed

The center must always be staffed by two volunteers: one shift supervisor and at least one daily volunteer. The warming center cannot open without at least one shift supervisor. Signups will be done through our volunteer management software (www.signup.com). Volunteers under 18 will not be counted towards the two-volunteer minimum.

If we do not have enough volunteers to open on a given day, this will be communicated to St. Timothy's Lutheran Church no later than 10:00 pm the night before. If we will need to close the warming center early due to a lack of volunteers, that will also be communicated to St. Timothy's Lutheran Church by 10:00 pm the night before.

Daily shifts for shift supervisors/volunteers

Morning: 7:00 – 11:00, 1 supervisor, 1 volunteer

Mid-day: 11:00 – 3:00, 1 supervisor, 1 volunteer

Afternoon: 3:00 – 6:00, 1 supervisor, 1 volunteer

Daily volunteer shifts will run in 4-hour increments beginning at 7 AM and ending at 6 PM.

Volunteer sign up

We will be using Signup (www.signup.com) to manage volunteer signups, reminders and communication.

We will place a link on the SJCRC and STL church websites. Additional volunteer requests will be placed on the Village House Facebook page and website. We will assist our partner organizations in finding volunteers, and will ask them to reciprocate.



Volunteers are free to trade shifts if something comes up and they cannot make their original shift.

Training of Shift Supervisors

All Shift Supervisors are required to undergo training in the following areas. Training can be arranged through the VHSJCRC /STLC.

1. Homeless 101 Presentation by Libby Escheverria

Hospitality and site organization

Normal day location

The center occupies the “tri-rooms” in the social hall and adjacent restrooms. Only screened Village House guests and volunteers will occupy this area during hosting.

Special considerations

Center guests will also have access to designated smoking areas on campus.

Guests may park in any available parking spaces.

Center foot traffic will be escorted by representatives of STLC.

Activities of the center

Guests will enter the shelter at 7:00 a.m., or later. A volunteer will record their names on a log. The shift supervisor will introduce self and welcome the guests. Guests and all volunteers will wear name tags so we can be in discussion with each other using names. Shelter guidelines/rules will be reviewed with guests. Guests will sign the “Participant Acknowledgement of Rules and Policies” on their first visit. If it is the same consistent guests each time the rules don’t need to be reviewed every time, just posted for reference.

Guests and volunteers will set up/arrange tables and chairs as needed. Warm beverages and light snacks will be available. As resources (donations) are available, activities such as cards, table games, puzzles, and books will be provided. A television without cable to show DVDs and movies, one or two laptops, and an area to charge electronics will be available. A quiet area where guests may lie down and rest/sleep will be available.

A volunteer will be available to answer questions or provide assistance but will not pry or hover. The privacy of the guests will be respected at all times. Bag lunches will be provided by STLC from the evening before. Guests will be invited to help with lunch clean up as they are able.

Guests will be invited to help with clean-up of the facilities before leaving no later than 6:00p.m. Clean-up may consist moving some of the tables and chairs, storing the cots, and emptying the trash.



Management of supplies

Warming center supplies will include coffee, assorted teas, sugar, creamer, individual packages of hot chocolate, an assortment of snack bars, cheese and crackers, and individual packaged fruit, napkins, plastic tablecloths, and name tags. Selection of food and beverage items may vary depending on donations.

Responsibilities

Shift supervisors will report any needs for supplies to the Director, who will be responsible for making sure that items are ordered or donations found.

Supporting Documents

- Volunteer Handbook
- Emergency Handbook
- Hospitality Handbook
- Budget

Forms

- Map of campus
- Guest acknowledgement
- Volunteer acknowledgement
- Sign in
- Daily log
- Incident report
- Suggestions, concerns and comments