



# Volunteer Handbook

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# **Gladden Community House Volunteer Handbook**

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Gladden Community House. We value the time and talents of our volunteers and look forward to having you as a part of our community. Settlement houses have been agents of social change in the United States for over 100 years. It was because of the dedicated services of volunteers like yourself that these organizations thrived and continue to be active social service organizations today!

## **Settlement House History**

In 1886, Staton Coit founded America's first settlement house, the Neighborhood Guild (later renamed University Settlement) on New York City. Over the next decade, Jane Adams founded Hull House in Chicago, and other civic leaders, including Lillian Wald, John Lovejoy Elliot, and Mary Simkhovitch, continued to expand the presence of settlement houses in the United States.

Many of these individuals had been influenced by the founders and staff of London's Toynbee Hall and other British social activists. They urged students and wealthy citizens to settle in poverty-stricken communities and form relationships with the community and to better understand the needs that existed. Workers resided in the same building in which services and activities were offered. These services included English language classes, education for immigrant families, job clubs, after school recreation, public health services, and advocacy campaigns for social reform.

Settlement Houses in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century continue to be distinguishable from community social service agencies, not by the type of services provided, but by the holistic they take to improve neighborhood life and create social change through indigenous neighborhood leaders and organizations.

## **Columbus Federation of Settlement Houses**

Gladden Community House is one of five settlement houses in the Columbus area. These five houses; Central Community House, Clintonville-Beechwold Community Resources Center, Gladden Community House, Godman Guild Association, and St. Stephen's Community House, form the Columbus Federation of Settlements (CFS). These organizations exist to help individuals and groups build upon their strengths and draw upon community resources to reach their full potential.

## **Gladden Community House History**

Gladden Community House was founded in 1905 by Reverend Washington Gladden in conjunction with the First Congregational Church of Columbus. It was originally named the First Church Settlement and retained this name until after the death of its founder in 1921. It became an independent entity in 1923, but continues to retain a relationship with the First Congregational Church. Gladden is supported by funding from the United Way of Central Ohio, local grants, and through support from individual donors and volunteers, like yourself. These entities are important to assisting Gladden in serving the Franklinton Community and the surrounding areas.

Gladden serves individuals residing in the zip codes 43222, 43223, and 43215 West of the Scioto River. Franklinton is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Columbus, but has struggled

economically since being flooded in 1913 and again in 1959 with approximately 38% of the population living below the national poverty level. Gladden addresses these needs through the services that it provides for its clients.

### **Mission Statement**

Gladden Community House is a settlement house serving Franklinton and its surrounding neighborhoods. We are a United Way affiliated non-profit agency providing education and support for individuals, families and groups.

We Do This:

- To preserve and strengthen the well being of the community and its members.
- To help and inspire community members to resolve their problems and control and shape their lives.

### **Overview of Programs and Services**

#### **2022 AGENCY SERVICES**

Gladden Community House is a “settlement house” or neighborhood-based multi-service agency in Columbus, Ohio serving:

- Franklinton, the three-square mile central-city community geographically bounded by the Scioto River on the East and North; I-70 on the West; and Greenlawn Avenue on the South;
- the Southwest community, south of Franklinton to Frank Road;
- the easternmost part of the Hilltop community west of Franklinton to Highland Avenue.

This area includes all of zip codes 43222 and 43223, plus the part of 43215 west of the Scioto River, and is home to some 30,000 residents. Gladden’s services are funded by United Way of Central Ohio with additional grants from the City of Columbus, Franklin County Children Services, Franklin County Senior Options, the Community Shelter Board, and hundreds of private supporters. Most services are free, although some, like preschool and team sports, may have small registration fees.

Gladden’s Main Office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Community Services Department is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Youth programs, Recreation, and seasonal Team Sports programs run weekdays, evenings, and weekends.

#### **ADULT & FAMILY SERVICES**

**Community Services/Neighborhood Development (614-227-1600), including:**

- Emergency material assistance with rent, utilities, prescriptions, etc.;
- Information, referral and linkage to other government and social agencies;

- Homelessness Prevention program in collaboration with the Community Shelter Board;
- Community organization & networking on issues like housing, safety, & health care
- Emergency food assistance offered twice a month plus daily free fresh produce through the **Gladden Food Pantry (614-228-2498)** at 318 South Glenwood Avenue, open Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
- Volunteer opportunities for individuals and groups wanting to donate time and services to Gladden or our community (**Lindsay Blackburn, 614-227-1619**);

**Senior Citizens Outreach (Meghan Mullins, 614-227-1631)**, including home visitation, a senior socialization group, advocacy for social services, and seniors group transportation to social and educational events.

**Family-to-Family Program**-A family centered, neighborhood-based approach to family support, offered in collaboration with Franklin County Children Services. The program's goal is to keep children engaged in our community. Gladden receives referrals directly from Franklin County Children's Services.

#### **YOUTH SERVICES**

**Preschool (Ebony Mitchell, 614-227-1624):** a **Step Up to Quality 4 Star** program offering year-round, full day classes for 3 to 5 year-olds.

**Afterschool Program (Evin Wimberly 614-227-1628):** an after-school and summer program of daily group educational and recreational activities for children from Kindergarten through 12th grade, focused on improving school attendance, performance, and graduation. Supported by the City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department.

**Team Sports (Dan Moehrman, 614-227-1608):** hundreds of community children ages 5-18 and adult volunteer coaches participate each year in summer tee ball, baseball, and softball; winter basketball; cheerleading; spring, fall, and winter soccer; volleyball; Teen Quest teen leadership program; and other special activities. Recreation also provides daily after-school and summer open gym and game room activities for school aged children.

**Youth Food Service Program.** Gladden serves free breakfast, lunch, and after school meals to children involved in our preschool through age 18 programming with CACFP and SFSP grants from the Ohio Department of Education's Office of Child Nutrition Services and support from the Mid-Ohio Foodbank.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

A variety of volunteer opportunities are available throughout the year. Homework Help and working at the food pantry are two common ways in which people can become involved. However, there are many additional ways in which people can volunteer at Gladden. These may include, but are not limited to; helping in the preschool, participating in after school programs, fundraising, helping with event planning efforts, assisting with holiday preparations, and participating in physical restoration of the building. These opportunities must be scheduled in advanced with the volunteer coordinator- contact at (614)227-1619.

## **Screening**

In order to place you in the most appropriate volunteer opportunity that matches your availability, your talents, and your skills, we ask that you participate in some initial and on-going screening procedures. Initial screening includes completing an application and talking with paid staff about what you would like to do. Additional screening may include a criminal background check, a driving records check, and reference checks. It depends on the volunteer opportunity in which you are interested.

### **Criminal Background Clearance Checks**

If your volunteer service puts you in contact with children/youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, or the financial assets of the organization, you may be asked to submit to a criminal background check.

Evidence of a criminal history will not automatically disqualify you from being accepted as a volunteer; we will work with each applicant on a case-by-case basis.

### **Driving Records**

If your service requires the transportation of agency clients and/or agency property, you will be asked to provide information necessary to allow the agency to conduct a driving records check. This will include: a copy of your driver's license, proof of automobile insurance, and current address.

If an applicant has points assessed to his/her license, this may affect their placement in a transportation position. Placement will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

The agency will periodically check driving records of transportation volunteers in order to ensure the safety of our volunteers and our clients. Additionally, certain agency oversight entities may require drug testing and screening for certain positions. Please check with your supervisor about this requirement.

## **Volunteer Training**

Training for volunteer positions at Gladden is a two-fold process. First, the volunteer will meet with the volunteer coordinator for a tour of the agency and a description of agency policies and procedures. Secondly, the volunteer will have the opportunity to meet with and/or shadow their immediate supervisor. This will give the volunteer the chance to learn about the expectations of his or her position, decide if the placement is an appropriate fit, and begin acquiring skills necessary for his or her particular job.

## **The Volunteer - Agency Relationship**

As a volunteer, your involvement with Gladden is a relationship that benefits many people—yourself, those you serve, the other paid and volunteer staff with whom you work, and the community as a whole. We want you to be satisfied with your volunteer experience, comfortable approaching us if you have a concern or an idea, and willing to learn new things.

Volunteers are a valued part of Gladden’s work and play a pivotal role in fulfilling our mission. While volunteers are encouraged to enjoy themselves and engage with clients, certain expectations of professional behavior are expected:

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is expected to protect the safety and well being of our clients. When talking with others about your volunteer experience at Gladden—which we encourage you to do—please do not include the names, addresses, situations or other sensitive information about our clients in your conversations.

### **Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

All volunteers have the right to be treated with integrity and respect and are expected to treat the clients, other workers and volunteers, and the agency as a whole likewise. If you feel that you have been treated unfairly, please address this first with your assigned supervisor.

Additionally, the agency prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, or use of illegal drugs, open containers of alcohol, firearms, weapons, explosives or other improper materials on its premises as well as at off-site service locations. The agency also prohibits the illegal use of legal drugs and other substances. Volunteers are expected to report any person known to be involved in these activities, or incidents related to these activities.

Computers, computer files, the e-mail and voicemail systems, Internet access, and software are agency property intended for business use. Please ask permission to use the computers for personal reasons. Please refrain from any inappropriate use of this resource. If you have questions about using the computer as part of your volunteer assignment, please talk with your supervisor.

### **Harassment and Violence**

All volunteers, paid staff, and clients should come to rely on Gladden as a safe and secure place to provide and receive services, gather, and build community. To this end, the agency will not tolerate harassment or violence of any kind. Harassment includes any unwelcome verbal or physical behavior that relates to a person’s race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, sex, age, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation or any other protected or unprotected attribute. Threatening or violent behavior is described as, but is not limited to: physical injury to another person or agency property, threats, behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person, and/or possession of weapons.

Incidents of harassment and/or violence as reported or witnessed by paid or volunteer staff, and clients, may, upon further investigation, result in suspension or termination of volunteer service. In some instances legal action may also be necessary.

### **Performance Evaluation—A Mutual Process**

Periodically, we will check in with you to see how you are doing. All volunteers can expect a more formal conversation about their performance, but we want it to be more than just a checklist of what you did well, and what might not have worked. We want this to be an opportunity for mutual feedback—positive and constructive—so we can both learn and grow from your experience as a volunteer.

### **Volunteer – Agency Separation**

There may be times when it is necessary for volunteers to leave the agency. We call this “separation” and it can be initiated by the agency or by the volunteer, depending on the situation.

If you initiate the separation, please take the time to let us know. If you know you are going to be leaving us, please give us time to cover any unfinished work in your assignment, and talk with you about your experience. We want to leave that door open should you be in a position to return someday. And have the opportunity to thank you again for all that you have given to the agency.

If the agency initiates the separation, it means that there was a problem that couldn’t be resolved through usual and reasonable attempts—talking with each other, revising your assignment where possible, or reassigning you to another program area. In these cases, you can expect that we will provide you with clear, honest, and respectful dialogue about the need to separate.

### **Immediate Separation**

In other circumstances, volunteers may be asked to leave immediately, due to a serious violation of agency policies, or behaviors that put the agency, our clients, and the volunteer at risk. Some of these situations/reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- Harm to clients, paid, or other volunteer staff—this includes physical, verbal, and written threats, violence, and other disrespectful behavior
- Being under the influence of alcohol or other substances while performing volunteer assignment
- Theft of property or misuse of agency funds, equipment, or materials
- Falsification of records
- Illegal, violent, or unsafe acts
- Failure to abide by agency policies or procedures
- Breach of confidentiality of client information

The nature of Settlement House work requires that we make wise choices about the service we provide and the way we interact with each other. We value your involvement and feel that open, honest communication is one of the best ways to establish and maintain positive, effective relationships between the agency and the volunteers.

## **Record-keeping**

Keeping track of your service is an important part of volunteering with Gladden for many reasons:

- It helps us stay in touch with you and keep you informed
- It shows us how many volunteers we have and what they do for/with the agency
- It lets us track your hours of service, which can help us receive grants and other financial support
- It provides you with information that you can include in employment applications, academic scholarship applications, etc.

***When you arrive for your shift or assignment, please be sure to log your arrival time on your timesheet and do not forget to sign out when you leave.***

If your assignment takes place away from our main facility, please keep track of the hours you work and call or e-mail them to your supervisor so we can add them to your records. If for some reason you are unable to attend.