



Monticello Help Center

Volunteer Handbook

*Thank you for
volunteering!*

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GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE MONTICELLO HELP CENTER

Monticello Help Center

224 W 3rd Street

P O Box 1220

Monticello MN 55362

Phone: 763-295-4031

Email: monticellohelpcenter@gmail.com

Website: monticellohelpcenter.org

HOURS OF OPERATION

FOOD SHELF and CLOTHING CENTER IS OPEN:

Monday: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Tuesday: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Wednesday: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

4:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Thursday: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Friday: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

HOLIDAY POLICY

MHC observes the following holidays each year:

New Year's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day and the day after

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

INCLEMENT WEATHER/CLOSURE OF THE HELP CENTER

Should adverse weather conditions arise or be anticipated that would make it inadvisable to operate the Help Center, the Director may, at his/her discretion, close the facility. IN GENERAL: the Monticello Help Center will follow the Monticello School District regarding closure due to weather conditions. If the Monticello School District is closed, the Help Center will be closed. If there is a "late start" for Monticello schools, MHC will still operate with its normal hours.

REOPENING OF THE HELP CENTER

The Help Center will reopen at the discretion of the Director as soon as it is safe to do so.

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Thank you for your interest in volunteering! We believe that the work done here at MHC makes our community and neighbors stronger. It is a blessing to be here on a daily basis and to interact with volunteers and clients alike. Some giving help and hope, and some receiving much needed help and hope. Every day is different and has its challenges and rewards. I am grateful to be part of it.

We could not do it without the kind hearts of volunteers. My door is always open, as am I, to new ideas and ways to serve our community better and more effectively. Please stop by anytime.

Thank you,

Mary Gardner

Director

WELCOME TO MHC

The Monticello Help Center (MHC) is a local non-profit, community based organization serving individuals and families that receive limited financial assistance or are going through a crisis and need help providing basic needs for their families. Our goal is restoring hope by providing a bridge to obtain food, hygiene items and clothing to those in our community who are struggling. Our food shelf strives to coordinate the efforts of many community donors by providing a welcoming environment where clients feel comfortable visiting and receiving items at no cost or obligation.

The work accomplished at MHC can only happen with the help of amazing volunteers. Every day the staff and many volunteers make food, clothing, and resource referrals available to MHC's clients. Over 400 households receive assistance from MHC per month. **The need is great, and you are playing a key role in providing this greatly needed assistance to people in our local community who are in need. Thank you!**

MHC has served the community of Monticello since 1974. **We deeply value equal respect for one another as well as effective partnerships to get the work done. As such, we hold our volunteers to this same standard: expecting that they will treat clients with the utmost respect as well as work alongside one another and the MHC staff as a team, in partnership with one another.** This will go a long way in keeping the various aspects of MHC's work firing on all cylinders to reach the goal of serving clients as well as we possibly can.

We are an intentionally strategic and professional organization that values innovation and regular evaluation and improvement. Our agency, Monticello Christian Social Services Inc., is governed by a Board of Directors made up of dedicated volunteers appointed by community churches or members at large with a heart for the mission and vision of the Help Center. Under their direction, we scrutinize our spending and strive to manage our resources, time, and finances to achieve narrowly-focused, community-driven goals. We take very seriously our role in the community to provide for our neighbors in need; knowing that we can and are making a tangible impact every day.

Our Mission

We reduce hunger in our community and restore hope to the people we serve.

Our Vision

As people of faith our vision is to eliminate hunger through community partnerships

IMPORTANT NOTES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR MHC VOLUNTEERS

- **Confidentiality is a right guaranteed to clients and to volunteers. Treat every client, every time, as though it's the first time they have come to MHC.** This gives them a fresh chance to interact in a pleasant manner. It is our goal and responsibility to serve AND show our clients kindness, respect and consideration each time they come.

- **A spirit of teamwork and positive attitudes are very important.** They help tremendously when working with other volunteers, staff, and clients. MHC encourages volunteers to bring this mentality when volunteering, while also encouraging others to do the same.
- **Flexibility is central to MHC's culture.** MHC hopes and expects that all staff and volunteers will value and maintain an attitude of flexibility.
- **Keep conversations positive and avoid talking about clients.** MHC wants to keep a positive culture among each other and the clients. Clients may be listening.
- **Accidents:** report any accidents involving clients, staff or yourself to the Director immediately.
- **If a volunteer wants to be a client,** they **MUST** register as a client, set up an appointment at the food center, be assisted by another volunteer while shopping in the food center and be treated as a client. This should be done during times/hours the center is open for all clients.
- **MHC** cannot grant any special privileges to volunteers interested in using our program services.
- **If you are interested in volunteer opportunities at MHC,** whether other regular shifts or perhaps a special project or event, please contact the Director or Volunteer Manager.

FOOD AND CLOTHING CENTER NOTES

- Volunteers will generally be trained in all areas of Food and/or Clothing center operations. While you may prefer doing certain activities, **it is crucial that volunteers be flexible to help with all activities needed for smooth operation of the center.**
- MHC is a busy place. Please be aware of the surroundings. If a safety issued is noticed, please report it immediately to a staff member.
- Food and non-food items are primarily intended for the clients. MHC does, however, offer selected items for volunteers during shifts and are thankful that it can be used for breaks as a source of energy and fun while on-site.
- Volunteers may choose to shop for clothing items. Volunteers need to follow the same guidelines as every client and follow the suggested donation guidelines. Volunteers should not take items as they sort. See Appendix D Clothing Center Guidelines for more information.
- MHC strives to keep both the food and the clothing center *clean and organized* to make the shopping experience positive for those in need.
- Volunteers who need documentation for school, youth programs or if fulfilling a court ordered community service, will need to have this completed and verified by the Director or the Volunteer Manager.

SCHEDULING GUIDELINES

Our goal is that scheduling your time as a volunteer at MHC will be a process that works well for everyone involved.

- 1)** Please communicate directly with staff about your schedule changes or conflicts as soon as possible. You may contact by phone (763-295-4031) or email: monticellohelpcenter@gmail.com.
- 2)** If you are no longer able to volunteer at MHC, whether temporarily or permanently, please let staff know as soon as you are able so that plans can be made for a smooth transition.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

- **Connections with Others** - Volunteers get to enjoy time spent with many amazing people from all over the area. Each shift of volunteers makes a tangible impact by working together toward the common goal of serving our clients. Some of these connections lead to life-changing relationships with others.

- **Life Fulfillment** - Volunteering provides an opportunity to escape day-to-day routines and energizes one for the other commitments in life. It allows volunteers to use strengths and abilities to change the community; knowing that what they have done will make a difference.
- **Shift Down Time** - Volunteers can enjoy snacks and drinks during his/her shift to help their energy level! This also provides an opportunity to spend a few minutes of down time with other volunteers.
- **Personal Satisfaction** - The smiles on client faces will give volunteers a sense of doing something worthwhile and meaningful to help those in need within the community. Self-esteem and self-confidence increase being part of the valued team of volunteers.
- A MHC volunteer represents an organization that is reputable and respected in the community.
- MHC will make sure all volunteers feel recognized in a variety of ways; whether through a letter of recommendation, or an invitation to various recognition events, or a simple thank you.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of this section is to provide information and specify expectations while creating a culture of respect and accountability between staff, volunteers and clients. Any volunteer who violates this Code of Conduct is subject to discipline, up to and including removal from volunteering at MHC. The following behaviors are prohibited: Discrimination against an individual based on age, race, color, religion, gender, marital status, military status, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. The following is also prohibited:

- Abusive language or rudeness towards a staff member, another volunteer, or a client.
- Verbal, physical, or visual harassment (subjective discrimination) of staff, other volunteers, or clients or directed towards a member of a group.
- Inappropriate conduct or behavior which is harmful to MHC's mission or goals.
- Failure to cooperate with MHC staff or other volunteers.
- Removing food or non-food items intended for clients (unless directed otherwise by an MHC staff member).
- Performing assignments under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or substances which impair the ability to complete tasks.

In addition to upholding the mission of offering dignity and respect for all individuals, MHC is required by the partners to uphold Civil Rights Laws, regulations and rules in compliance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) standards.

CIVIL RIGHTS TRAINING CHECKLIST FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Directions - *Civil Rights Training must be provided to all staff and front-line volunteers on an annual basis. It is recommended that all staff and volunteers read this entire training checklist, however page 1 only is acceptable for one-time volunteers of produce distributions and programs that do not receive federal assistance such as TEFAP. After reviewing this checklist, please have all individuals sign and date to document their training.*

Goals of Civil Rights – fairness and equality, elimination of barriers, and knowledge of rights

Legal Prohibitions – discrimination is prohibited on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistant program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the USDA.

Staff and Volunteer Requirements

- Treat all people with dignity and respect.
- Maintain confidentiality. It is not appropriate to talk about who is receiving benefits and to make remarks about them. Never share information with others regardless of an expression of good intentions. Refer all requests for information to managers. What happens at the site stays at the site. The exception, of course, is any illegal or inappropriate behavior that should be reported to local, state or federal officials.
- Make sure personal data is kept confidential. This includes names, dates of birth and addresses.
- Sexual harassment is prohibited. Do not engage in or tolerate unwanted or unwelcome sexual behavior including jokes, touching, requests for sexual favors, etc. Report violations to management or to state or federal officials.
- Everyone has a right to file a complaint. Contact your supervisor immediately if anyone says they feel discriminated against and refer to your program's grievance procedure.
- If conflicts occur, remain calm. Call for assistance immediately if you feel threatened.
- Follow the platinum rule – treat people the way they would like to be treated!

Special Circumstances

- Accommodate people with disabilities. Sites should be accessible to people with all types of disabilities (e.g., mobility, sight, hearing, other). Ask your supervisor about alternate means of service if needed.
- Provide language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency if needed. Ask your supervisor for assistance.

CIVIL RIGHTS TRAINING CHECKLIST FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS (continued)

When do Civil Rights rules apply – Civil rights rules apply any time there is any federal financial assistance. Federal financial assistance is receiving anything of value from the federal government – not just cash. It can include commodities, training, equipment, and other goods and services.

Types of Discrimination –

- Disparate treatment (intentional);
- Disparate impact (neutral rule impacts disproportionately on a group);
- Reprisal/retaliation against complainant or his/her family, associates or others involved in complaint process or exercising civil rights.

Program Requirements

- Conduct outreach to ensure that potentially eligible persons and households are aware of the program and have information on how to apply. Provide suggestions about how to make more people aware of the program and how to receive benefits.
- Display the USDA “And Justice for All...” non-discrimination poster in a place where it can be seen by all who visit the premises.
- Include the USDA non-discrimination statement on all materials that mention USDA funded programs and make sure the statement is also on web sites that mention USDA funded programs.
- Cooperate with State and Federal reviewers. They are required to conduct periodic compliance reviews to help ensure that program and civil rights rules are being obeyed.
- If there is non-compliance, correction of problems and voluntary compliance is sought. Failure to abide by civil rights rules can lead to loss of Federal financial assistance.
- Advise people who allege discrimination about how to file a complaint: If they wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, they may complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. They may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send the completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.
Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Call (800) 845-6136 for Spanish.
- Make sure people with disabilities are accommodated. Sites should be accessible to people with all types of disabilities (e.g., mobility, sight, hearing, other) or alternate means of service delivery should be advertised and provided.

Provide other language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency who could not gain meaningful access to the program without other language assistance. Assistance must always be provided to LEP households, but the level or type of assistance can vary based on circumstances.

UNDERSTANDING CIVIL RIGHTS: GUIDELINES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- Goals of Civil Rights – that everyone be treated with fairness and equality while receiving help.
- Legal Prohibitions – discrimination is prohibited based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, and disability in programs funded by the USDA and TEFAP, which includes programs at MHC.
- Types of Discrimination: intentionally treating someone different because of their differences, making a rule that affects a protected class group negatively; and/or retaliation against complainant of his/her family, associated with or otherwise involved in complaint process or exercising civil rights.
- Civil Rights apply any time there is Federal financial assistance. Federal financial assistance is receiving anything of value from the federal government. Because MHC receives federal commodities, the rules apply.
- Special circumstances – make sure people with disabilities and limited English are accommodated.
- Treat all people with respect and dignity.
- Maintain confidentiality. It is not appropriate to talk about who is receiving benefits and to make remarks about them.

STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL PROBLEM SOLVING

- When a group of people work and volunteer together, problems may arise. It is important to everyone that such problems are resolved as quickly as possible. Occasionally, it may be necessary to investigate certain problems in greater detail. This problem-solving procedure provides each volunteer with an opportunity to have a review of any problem or misunderstanding that might arise during volunteering.
- **STEP 1:** Submit a problem and/or complaint, in writing, to the Volunteer Manager within three (3) working days after the problem/complaint becomes known. The Volunteer Manager is interested in the resolution of any MHC problem. If unable to resolve the problem/complaint or reach a mutually agreed upon settlement, request a Step 2 meeting.
- **STEP 2:** This step consists of submitting, in writing, the problem/complaint to the Director. The Director will schedule a meeting with the complainant and the Volunteer Manager as soon as practicable. At this meeting the Director will attempt to resolve the problem. If necessary, the Director will provide a written resolution within three (3) working days. This will be the final determination.

MANAGING CHALLENGING CLIENTS

- It is NOT okay for clients to mistreat or abuse volunteers. Most manage their feelings well. Some sulk and may appear unappreciative. However, occasionally, a client will release their anger on MHC volunteers or staff.
- **What do you do when a person is verbally aggressive?**
Listen to them. Try to stay calm. Try not to take what they are saying personally. Try not to escalate emotionally with them.
 - Set limits and expectations: for example, a volunteer might say,
 - “Please calm down so I can help you” or
 - “I understand you’re upset but please treat me with respect” or if needed,
 - “I’m going to hang up now” and then hang up.
- **If they do not calm down, seek help from staff.**

POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT

MHC is committed to maintaining a volunteer work environment free of unlawful harassment. The MHC policy prohibits harassment based on sex, (including sexual harassment, gender harassment and harassment due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions) and harassment based on race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation or any other status protected by federal or state law or local ordinance or regulation. All such harassment is unlawful. The MHC policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of the Help Center (both staff and volunteers).

CONFIDENTIALITY: SAFEGUARDING CLIENT'S INFORMATION

- **As volunteers, anything heard or seen at MHC, as related to clients, donors, or personnel, needs to remain confidential. Safeguarding confidential information is essential to the integrity of this organization. Volunteers will not disclose any information to anyone.** Volunteers should exercise care not to disclose confidential information acquired in connection with his/her role at MHC.

If a volunteer becomes aware of confidential and/or sensitive information regarding clients, donors, or personnel, that information is to remain confidential. This includes providing the names of MHC clients to any other person or organization. Such information may include, but is not limited to:

- Client names and personal stories
- Organizational data, records, and reports
- Financial information
- Contact lists
- Personnel and compensation information
- Contracts
- Litigation and other legal matters, whether or not it is labeled "confidential"
- Proprietary software; licensed programs, documentation, research, developmental materials and/or confidential reports
- ***Note: If a client begins sharing information that causes discomfort, please feel free to stop them and pass them off to a staff member.***

DISMISSAL POLICY

Dismissal of a volunteer is a serious consideration. Before a volunteer is dismissed, attempts to reconcile the solution will be made. This includes a meeting between staff and volunteer(s) involved and the Volunteer Manager and, if appropriate, the Director. Dismissal of a volunteer may take place if a volunteer is unreliable, irresponsible, disruptive, demonstrates inappropriate behavior, or fails to adhere to the policies and procedures as set forth in this handbook.

PARKING GUIDELINES

MHC appreciates cooperation regarding the limited number of available parking spaces. **Please leave the parking spots closest to the front door available to our clients.** Volunteers with medical necessity are welcome to park near the front door.

ARE THERE OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED AT MHC?

Special Projects

- MHC has a variety of fun and upbeat projects throughout the community. **These projects provide significant in-kind services for MHC, helping to make our work possible. The projects require many volunteers.** If you are interested in learning more about these opportunities and/or volunteering to help make them happen, please contact the Director.
- **Examples of special project opportunities include:**
 - Holiday food distribution
 - Summer festivals
 - Representing MHC at events
 - Creating promotional materials
 - And more!

Donate to MHC

- Because of the MHC network and relationships within the food supply industry, every dollar donated to MHC is stretched from two to ten times as far as the dollar would go in a grocery store! Thank you!

Do a Food or Hygiene Drive

- Individuals, families, neighborhoods, clubs, organizations and many others have a blast putting on food or hygiene drives in their local community. Consider doing one!

How to Become a Volunteer

- Those interested in volunteer opportunities at MHC may visit the website at monticellohelpcenter.org and click on the VOLUNTEER BUTTON.
- There is a link to the online application: SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER.
- Fill out the online application providing information about yourself, your availability and which opportunity best fits your needs. The Volunteer Manager will make contact as soon as practicable.

Thanks again for donating your time to MHC!

APPENDIX A - UNDERSTANDING THE PEOPLE MHC SERVES

Understanding Poverty

Generational Poverty

- Generational poverty: A community where there is poverty level of income from generation to generation (from grandparents to parents to children).
- Potential impacts of generational poverty: Limitations imposed on single parents to support their children's education (include homework, communication with teachers, and frequent moves to find affordable housing), low graduation rates, high unemployment, chronic health concerns (for example, asthma and diabetes).
- Those outside communities with concentrations of poverty tend to be fearful to enter, resulting in impoverished communities becoming isolated and self-contained. This then results in people struggling to move out of poverty.
- The focus in these communities or families is on survival basics such as shelter, food, and transportation.
 - Often their poverty is not something they ever expect to move beyond.
 - Parents within families in poverty will often work several jobs, often do not have medical insurance, and have difficulty monitoring their kids after school.
 - Adults in poverty often also care for extended family. This is often cultural.
 - Rates of illness are also higher among those in chronic poverty.

New Poverty

- New poverty, in a nutshell, is caused by extended unemployment.
- With the recent recession, the suburbs experience "new poverty" at surprisingly high levels. In a recession, even those who are high-functioning often struggle to find employment.
- Financial impact: Bankruptcy, foreclosure, difficulty finding housing due to poor credit ratings and high rental costs.
- Health impact: Loss of health insurance, resulting in increased health problems, including mental illness, resulting in higher rates of divorce and isolation.

Generational VS New Poverty

- Those in new poverty have a much greater chance of rebounding. They have a better foundation on which they can stand to help with recovery. They generally have a better education, better social networks and resources, and higher level of employment prior to financial struggle.
- Those in generational poverty have lower skill sets and limited resources; therefore, struggle much more to move out of poverty. Most within their social network are in the same situation.

Understanding the Various Cultures We Serve

- Clients from various cultures will often respond to situations differently than we anticipate. The most important thing we can do to help people from different cultures is to listen. If we are open, listen, and are respectful of those from other cultures, suspending our judgment, we will learn from them and about them, and they will respond much better.
- When we have misunderstandings or conflicts with clients from other cultures, it can often be our different cultural backgrounds that are causing the problem. We need to be patient and give the benefit of the doubt. Many individuals who have immigrated to the U.S. have come due to distress in their home country. They are generally well-educated by their own country's standards, but the struggle is to learn English and U.S. culture. They have the capability to be high-functioning, but have hit difficult barriers.

How People Might Be Feeling When They Come To MHC

- First and foremost, do not take it personally when someone displays anger, irritability, or other negative emotions towards you. It truly has nothing to do with you!
- Those coming in may be feeling fear, sadness, shame, anger, helplessness, hopelessness, or loneliness. This is especially true for those in new poverty.
- Shame, anger, and irritability - Irritability occurs as people are experiencing “too much” and respond negatively. Shame is what some clients may feel because of the unwanted turns in their lives. Shame often turns to anger, to protect oneself against vulnerability. Underneath this anger is everything else they are feeling, like shame and fear, and it is important to realize that.
- Appreciation and relief - On the flip side, clients often feel appreciation, relief, and hope because of the help they receive from MHC. For people who are struggling and feel low about themselves, to be welcomed with a smile and to be treated with respect is a powerful and meaningful experience.

APPENDIX B - VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY JOB DESCRIPTIONS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front Entry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Staff will pre-screen volunteers for this position</i> ○ Greeting and checking in clients ○ Assist client with Intake form ○ Referral as needed ○ Completing Frozen/Other choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Shelf Client Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client end of the food center ○ Greet clients ○ Explain the process to clients ○ Package and record food and non-food items for the client order ○ Weigh and record food received at the end of service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data entry ○ Receptionist ○ Assisting staff with copying, filing and general office work ○ Knowledge of office equipment helpful ○ General computer knowledge helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Shelf Stock Room <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Receive, weigh and record donations and deliveries ○ Provide donation receipt (if requested) ○ Sort and check expiration dates for perishable, non-perishable and non-food items ○ Organize, stock and pre-package food and non-food items ○ Clean as needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Rescue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must have a reliable, insured vehicle or willing/able to drive Mobile Food Shelf Van ○ Check-in at retail locations and pick up food donations ○ Return donations to MHC ○ Unload, weigh, and record donations ○ Put donations away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Food Shelf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must have a reliable, insured vehicle or willing/able to drive Mobile Food Shelf Van ○ Pick up food orders in the Food Shelf and deliver them to the clients ○ Bring groceries into client home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greet and assist clients ○ Receive donations ○ Provide donation receipt (if requested) ○ Sort clothing and other donations ○ Manage inventory ○ Organize and create pleasant shopping environment ○ Clean, vacuum, dust 	

APPENDIX C- GRIEVANCE POLICY

MHC aims to resolve problems and grievances promptly and as close to the source as possible with steps for further discussion and resolution at higher levels of authority as necessary. Ongoing communication remains the most effective way to develop and enhance favorable working relationships. However, during everyday work experiences, some questions, concerns, misunderstandings, and/or personal problems may arise. If a person experiences a problem at the Help Center and he/she cannot resolve it independently, he/she is encouraged to discuss the situation openly and honestly with the parties involved using the four-level process as described below.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

- Complaints must be fully described by the person with the grievance.
- The person(s) should be given the full details of the allegation(s) against them.
- The person(s) against whom the grievance/complaint is made should have the opportunity to be given a reasonable time to state their side of the story before any attempt at resolution is made.
- All proceedings should be conducted fairly and honestly and should not be unduly delayed.

PROCEDURES: *the following is a four-level process:*

1. The Employee/Volunteer/Client attempts to resolve the grievance/complaint as close to the source as possible. This level is informal and verbal.
2. If not resolved, the Employee/Volunteer/Client notifies the Director, in writing, as to the nature of the grievance/complaint and states the desired remedy. A discussion should be held between the Employee/Volunteer/Client and any other relevant party. This level will usually be informal, but either party may request a written statement or written agreement. This level should not exceed one week.

If the problem is not resolved:

3. The Director should refer the matter to the Board of Directors. A grievance/complaint taken to this level must be in writing from the Employee/Volunteer/Client. The Director will provide a written response to the Employee/Volunteer/Client. The Director also communicates with any other parties involved or deemed relevant. This level should not exceed one week.

If the problem is not resolved:

4. The Employee/Volunteer/Client will be advised of his/her rights to pursue the matter with external authorities if they so wish.

All such grievances will be held in the strictest confidence and will involve only those affected. These procedures are entirely voluntary, optional and discretionary.

APPENDIX D – CLOTHING CENTER OPERATIONS

Objective: To provide clothing and household items to those in need.

Main Goals: To greet customers with a smile and a servant's heart. Volunteers are asked to help get clothing and household items to people who need them.

Volunteers ensure the Clothing Center remains clean and organized. They help provide a pleasant shopping experience for those in need as well as a pleasant environment for volunteers to work in.

There are **NO PRICES** – there is only a **SUGGESTED DONATION** for items. Refer to the posted policy in the Clothing Center for details. No one should be turned away due to inability to pay. Make people feel welcomed and comfortable.

All NEW CLOTHING DONATED BY local stores (Oshkosh, Carters, Gymboree, Crazy 8, and/or others): please limit each customer to 3 new items per child/person in the family so that everyone may benefit from these wonderful donations. Volunteers should use his/her judgement if there are special circumstances.

Volunteers Shopping *At the end of his/her shift:* volunteers may choose to shop for items.

Volunteers will need to follow the same guidelines as every client. Please follow suggested donation guides if possible, however, this is not a requirement. As with all clients, this is just a **suggested donation** and MHC is happy to help for those unable to offer a donation. Please DO NOT take items or "cherry pick" as you sort. Items must be put out onto the floor and be available for clients to choose before volunteers can take them. MHC donors want to know that their donations are being offered fairly to all, and that preference is not given to volunteers and staff.

Shift Open/Closing

OPEN: Unlock doors, turn on lights, turn signs to OPEN. Get money out and count to be sure there is correct amount in the bank bag.

CLOSE: At the end of each shift, complete the log book (money received, number of clients, number of free items given). Place donated money into envelope, sign, date, and write the amount on the envelope. Place envelope in Director's office. Please vacuum, turn signs to CLOSED, turn lights out.

SORTING: donated clothing – Volunteers are asked to *use his/her best judgment for all donated items and try to remember that each volunteer has a different view on what to keep and what to send. Please be patient and respectful of all volunteers and opinions. The goal here is to serve!*

How to decide what to keep? Guideline: is this item something you and/or your family would wear or use? Is it something you would purchase at a thrift store or garage sale? (Check zippers, armpits, pockets, necks, buttons, look for tears/rips/stains.) If so, keep the item. If not, send the item.

Suggested items to keep:

Keep: NEW Bras/underwear

Keep: Current Season items. Be aware of storage space and how much we can store. Please keep what is "in style".

Keep: NEW items, even if they are out of season. You may also keep some "EXCEPTIONAL" items – almost new, name brand items – based on amount of storage space available.

Keep: Current season Coats/jackets – please check pockets and make sure zippers work.

Keep: If in working condition and all pieces are there: Small toys, books, household items, small household appliances

How to handle SEND BOXES: Box up good condition out of season clothing and **mark the box SEND**. Please **do not** use over-size boxes as they are difficult to handle.

Large yard bags: Place ripped, torn, stained, outdated clothing in large black trash bag. Tie off bag before it is too heavy.

Garbage: When sorting, almost nothing will need to go in the garbage. MHC can send/recycle almost all clothing/shoes/household items. Garbage will be only for daily waste items.

ITEMS NOT ACCEPTABLE: (Because of disposal costs and/or liability) **Electronics**, televisions, computers, baby equipment, car seats, furniture, large items. Refer people to Faith in Action for large items 763-263-4277.

City Rules: The city requires that shelving be attached to the walls.

The Fire Marshall requires that the entrances be kept clear:
boxes/bags should not be stacked anywhere near the doors.

General Maintenance: As time allows, dust the shelves, tops of circular racks, household shelving, window ledges, etc. Straighten up in all areas, remove empty hangers from racks, refold clothing as needed, fill racks with appropriate sized clothing, check sizes on racks and move items to the correct size, area, etc. Periodically remove items that have been there for an extended time and put them in a send box.

*Thank you so much for giving of your time!
You are an important member of this team!
We are so glad you are here.....*

**WE ARE THE BRIDGE BETWEEN THE CRISIS OF
THE MOMENT AND THE SOLUTION OF THE
FUTURE.**