



**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK:  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **WELCOME!**

Welcome to Building Hope in the City (BHITC). We consider you to be a gift from God and are grateful for the gifts and talents you are contributing to this ministry. This volunteer handbook is intended to provide guidelines and information about our ministry’s policies and procedures to help you be effective in your role as a volunteer and representative of the ministry. Please read and familiarize yourself with the contents so that you can comply with the established standards. It is not possible to anticipate every situation that you may encounter as a volunteer or to answer every potential question. BHITC therefore reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind, or revise any policy as it deems necessary or appropriate. Any questions can be directed to our Director of Ministry Engagement.

### **Table of Contents**

I.	Mission and Overview.....	3
II.	Volunteer Onboarding .....	4
III.	Professionalism & Ethics.....	4
IV.	Safety.....	5
V.	Service Standards.....	6
VI.	Volunteer Separation & Dismissal.....	6

## I. MISSION AND OVERVIEW

### Mission

Advance the good of the city. Magnify the mission of Jesus. Unleash the capability of underestimated people.

### Vision

A vibrant Church in the city, sharing the hope of Christ with all people.

### Values

- Abiding with Jesus
- Collaborating with Purpose
- Innovating with Risk
- Nourishing with Compassion
- Rejoicing with Perseverance

Building Hope in the City (BHITC) was established as a faith-based organization in 2003, after identifying a need for urban ministry training in communities across the Greater Cleveland area. Since its foundation, BHITC has expanded and now includes the following ministry areas:

#### Equip City Ministry Leaders

Indigenous, homegrown leadership can change the face of ministry in Cleveland! Through our Transform216 and LIFT initiatives, we equip city missionaries and neighborhood catalysts and small business entrepreneurs as they lead new and renewed churches, ministries and enterprises. We also train local volunteers to serve well in urban, poverty and cross-cultural environments.



#### Strengthen Neighbors and Neighborhoods

Restored homes lead to renewed lives which transform communities! We strengthen challenged neighborhoods by restoring blighted properties and creating affordable housing for those we serve; leading asset-based community development initiatives that tap into the skills and contributions of neighbors to improve their neighborhood. Good Neighbors & Co. is BHITC's property rehab and management arm.



#### Engage in Business Ventures

Social enterprise merges business and ministry to the glory of God! We engage the marketplace through new business ventures that provide second-chance employment or workforce development for those we serve, as well as an excellent witness to the public. Hope Works is the social enterprise arm of BHITC that seeks to provide employment opportunities, promote entrepreneurship and improve BHITC's sustainability. Common Threads, upscale thrift stores, is its first venture. Peripeti Home, a boutique candle and scent-making enterprise, provides employment to refugee women.



#### Partner with Refugees and Immigrants

The nations are our neighbors in Cleveland, bringing with them needed talents, diversity and so much more! We partner with refugees and migrants toward vibrant integration and participation in our community; providing a welcome place for building community for and by Cleveland's newest residents.



## II. VOLUNTEER ONBOARDING

**Definition of Volunteer:** A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of BHITC. A volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled by BHITC prior to performance of the task.

All BHITC volunteers must attend a Building Hope 101 session and complete a Volunteer Application.

- **Building Hope 101:** This introduction to the organization's mission and ministries is the first step to becoming a volunteer. This class is offered once a month on varying days of the week to make it convenient for most schedules. The schedule of classes can be found at: [www.buildinghopeinthecity.org](http://www.buildinghopeinthecity.org).
- **Volunteer Application:** The link for the volunteer application will be given out at the Building Hope 101 class. Once this is submitted, the Director of Ministry Engagement will contact volunteer for placement.

All volunteers are required to submit a confidential Background Check, and if working with the Refugee/Immigrant community and/or with Children, to complete an online Child Safety Training module. Background Checks are re-submitted every three years, with permission of the volunteer. Any alerts on original or re-submitted Background Checks will be dealt with on a case by case basis and convictions are not an automatic bar from volunteer service.

*Additional training may be required for specific volunteer roles.*

## III. PROFESSIONALISM & ETHICS

**Our Faith-Based Purpose:** Faith in Jesus Christ is an integral part of BHITC and drives our organization's decision making and ministry development. We also recognize that not all our volunteers hold to these beliefs, nor do we expect or require them to do so. Volunteers of all or no religious belief are welcome and needed at BHITC. We ask that the actions and words of all our volunteers not contradict BHITC's faith-based values and purpose.

**Job Performance\*:** As representatives of BHITC, volunteers are expected to meet the organization's job performance standards, including arriving on time with a positive and cooperative attitude, completing tasks with effort and integrity, and complying with BHITC policies and procedures, as outlined in this handbook.

*\*see Common Threads Volunteer Handbook for CT Volunteer specifics.*

**Dress Code\*:** BHITC has a casual dress code, but it is important to project a professional image to our visitors and coworkers. All volunteers are expected to dress in a manner consistent with good hygiene, safety, and good taste. Hope Center volunteers should wear long pants or skirts. *\*see Common Threads Volunteer Handbook for CT Volunteer specifics.*

**Conflict of Interest Policy:** Volunteers should avoid external business, financial, personal or employment interests that would interfere with their ability to perform volunteer duties. If a situation arises where there is a potential conflict of interest, the volunteer should discuss this with the Director of Ministry Engagement.

**Code of Ethical Conduct:** Volunteers should not solicit or accept anything of value for personal gain from any person or organization with which BHITC has a current ministry relationship. Volunteers may accept items of incidental value (generally no more than \$25.00) from customers, suppliers, or others as long as the gift is not given in response to a solicitation on the part of the volunteer or as long as it does not imply any exchange of favors or the like.

**Tardiness & Absence\*:** It is important that volunteers work their assigned schedules as consistently as possible. However, if you are unable to report on time for any reason, volunteers should give notice to their program area director as soon as possible. *\*See Common Threads Volunteer Handbook for CT Volunteer specifics.*

**Impartiality:** Volunteers are expected to acknowledge and respect every person as an individual and endeavor to be responsive, courteous, and helpful to all service users, professionals, employees and volunteers.

**Appropriate Use of Resources:** All BHITC resources, including network and electronic devices, are the property of BHITC and should therefore be used for organizational purposes only. Network and electronic resources are subject to review or access by BHITC at any time and for any reason.

#### IV. SAFETY

**Commitment to Safety:** Protecting the safety of our employees, volunteers and visitors is very important to us. All volunteers have the opportunity and responsibility to contribute to a safe work environment by using commonsense rules and safe practices and by notifying management in cases of accident or injury, or when any health or safety issues are present. In the event of an emergency, notify the appropriate emergency personnel by dialing # for an outside line, then dial 911 to activate the medical emergency services.

**Workplace Violence Prevention:** Volunteers are discouraged from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual or from behaving in a threatening or violent manner. Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any volunteer will not be tolerated. A threat may include verbal or physical harassment or abuse, attempts to intimidate others, menacing gestures, stalking, or any other hostile, aggressive, or destructive actions taken for the purposes of intimidation.

All BHITC volunteers bear the responsibility of keeping our work environment free from violence or potential violence. Any volunteer who witnesses or is the recipient of violent behavior or threats should promptly inform their supervisor, manager, or the Executive Director. All threats will be promptly investigated. No volunteer will be subject to retaliation, intimidation, or discipline as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this guideline. Any individual engaging in violence against the agency, its employees, or its property will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. All acts will be investigated, and the appropriate action will be taken.

BHITC prohibits the possession of weapons on its property at all times, including agency vehicles. Additionally, while on duty, volunteers may not carry a weapon of any type. BHITC reserves the right to inspect all belongings of volunteers on its premises.

**Suspected Abuse or Illegal Activity:** Suspicions of abuse, neglect, or illegal activity should be brought to the attention of volunteers' program area director. Volunteers will not be subject to retaliation, intimidation, or discipline as a result of reporting suspicions.

**Policy Against Harassment:** BHITC is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, BHITC maintains a strict policy prohibiting unlawful

harassment, including sexual harassment. It is important for you to understand that jokes, stories, cartoons, nicknames, and comments about appearance may be offensive to others. Sexual harassment of volunteers by supervisors, staff, other volunteers, or vendors is prohibited. Unlawful sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when the harassment has the purpose or effect of interfering with a volunteer's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. If you believe that you are being, or have been, harassed in any way, please report the facts of the incident or incidents to your supervisor or the Executive Director immediately. No reprisal, retaliation, or other adverse action will be taken against a volunteer for making a complaint or report of discrimination or harassment or for assisting in the investigation of any such complaint or report. All complaints will be investigated promptly and, to the extent possible, with regard for confidentiality. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes unlawful harassment, the totality of the circumstances, such as the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged incident occurred, will be investigated.

**Alcohol, Drugs, & Controlled Substances:** It is the policy of BHITC to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free environment that is safe and productive. The unauthorized use, sale, transfer, possession, or being "under the influence" of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances when on duty, on organizational property, or in organization vehicles is prohibited. "Under the influence" for the purpose of this policy, is defined as being unable to perform volunteer work in a safe or productive manner, and/or being in a physical or mental condition which creates a risk to the safety and well-being of the affected volunteer, other co-workers, the public, or BHITC property.

**Smoke-Free Workplace:** Smoking is not allowed in agency buildings or work areas at any time. "Smoking" includes the use of any tobacco products, electronic smoking devices, and e-cigarettes containing nicotine cartridges. Smoking is only permitted in designated outdoor areas. Volunteers using these areas are expected to dispose of any smoking debris safely and properly.

## V. SERVICE STANDARDS

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Reasonable Accommodations:** BHITC will reasonably accommodate the known physical or mental disabilities of qualified volunteers to allow them to perform essential job duties, unless those accommodations will cause undue hardship to the agency. A volunteer who requires an accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of his or her job should contact the Director of Ministry Engagement to identify possible accommodations.

**Confidentiality:** The protection of confidential information is vital to the interests and success of BHITC. Confidential information is any and all information disclosed to or known by you because of volunteering with BHITC that is not generally known to people outside the company about its business. All inquiries from the media must be referred to the Director of Ministry Engagement. Volunteer and employee files are also considered confidential. Managers and supervisors may only have access to personnel file information on a need-to-know basis.

**Grievances and Complaints:** BHITC seeks to maintain positive relationships between personnel and volunteers and takes grievances seriously. Volunteers are encouraged to share any grievances or complaints with their program area director or site-specific Volunteer Coordinator in order to resolve conflicts and restore relationships. If resolution is not reached, the Director of Ministry Engagement can be involved as an impartial third party.

**Performance Feedback:** Volunteers will receive occasional performance feedback from their program area director and/or the Manager of Ministry Engagement. The purpose of the feedback is to let you know how well

you are doing. Volunteers are encouraged to ask when they have questions about tasks and their personal performance.

## VI. VOLUNTEER SEPARATION & DISMISSAL

**Resignation & Termination:** Both volunteers and BHITC have the right to terminate the volunteer relationship with BHITC at any time, with or without cause or advance notice.

**Reasons for Disciplinary Action or Dismissal:** A volunteer's failure to adhere to BHITC policies and procedures as presented in this handbook may result in termination. Volunteers will face immediate dismissal for misconduct. Some examples of misconduct are as follows:

- abuse, misuse, theft, or the unauthorized possession or removal of BHITC property or the personal property of others
- falsifying or making a material omission on BHITC records, reports, or other documents
- divulging confidential organizational information to unauthorized persons
- disorderly conduct on organizational property, including fighting or attempted bodily injury, or the use of profane, abusive, or threatening language toward others, or possession of a weapon
- violation of any law adversely affecting BHITC, or conviction in court of any crime which may cause the volunteer to be regarded as unsuitable for continued service
- violation of BHITC's alcohol, drugs, and controlled substances policy

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT\*

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the BHITC volunteer policies and procedures handbook. I understand that it provides guidelines and summary information about BHITC volunteer policies, procedures, and rules of conduct. I also understand that it is my responsibility to read, understand, become familiar with, and comply with the standards that have been established. I further understand that BHITC reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind, or revise any policy from time-to-time, with or without notice, as it deems necessary or appropriate. I also acknowledge that both BHITC and I have the right to terminate the volunteer relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice.

---

Volunteer's Name (please print)

---

Volunteer's Signature

---

Date

\*\*Checking the box on the online volunteer application is sufficient for Acknowledgement of Receipt.

