



THE

Delores Project

TRANSFORMING LIVES
THROUGH CREATIVE
HOUSING SOLUTIONS

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Thank you for volunteering with The Delores Project!

The staff and guests of The Delores Project welcome you and appreciate that you have chosen to volunteer your time with us. We understand that there are many opportunities for volunteers, and we want you to know how much we value your decision to volunteer with us.

On any given night, over 70 people depend on the staff and volunteers of The Delores Project to provide for their needs in our housing-focused shelter and permanent supportive housing community. As a volunteer, you are a part of that vital link, and we couldn't accomplish what we do without our volunteers. We are grateful for your support.

The Delores Project has a long and unique history, which you can learn more about in this handbook. Also included are additional volunteer opportunities which might interest you or a friend. We encourage you to communicate with others about your volunteering experience to promote The Delores Project!

Thank you so much for your contribution and service to support the guests and residents who call The Delores Project *HOME*.

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About the Handbook

This handbook is designed to introduce you to The Delores Project and provide a basic overview of our policies and procedures for your guidance and direction. Much of the information contained here is identical to the information contained in our Employee Handbook. As policies, practices, and other information described in this Handbook evolve, you will be notified by an announcement or update. It is your responsibility to keep your handbook current and to be informed about policies and changes that affect you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT](#)

[ABOUT THE DELORES PROJECT](#)

[Mission](#)

[Vision](#)

[Values](#)

[Delores Big Boy](#)

[History](#)

[PROGRAMS AT THE DELORES PROJECT](#)

[Shelter](#)

[Rehousing & Continued Care](#)

[The Delores Apartments](#)

[Behavioral Health](#)

[PHILOSOPHIES](#)

[Respect, Dignity, and Hospitality](#)

[Equity & Inclusion](#)

[Healing-Centered Approach](#)

[Advice for Volunteers](#)

[Housing First](#)

[VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES](#)

[Individual Opportunities](#)

[Meal Program](#)

[Service Provider](#)

[Life Skills](#)

[Group Opportunities](#)

[Special Projects](#)

[Donation Drive/Freezer Meals](#)

[More Ways to Get Involved](#)

[HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES](#)

[Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\)](#)

[Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#)

[Service Animals](#)

[Non-Discrimination/Non-Harrassment Policy](#)

[VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES](#)

[Professional Conduct](#)

[Code of Ethics](#)

[Political, Spiritual, or Religious Activities](#)

[Confidentiality](#)

[Representing the Organization](#)

[Working with Vulnerable Individuals](#)

[Crisis Situations](#)

[Disciplinary Action](#)

[VOLUNTEER LOGISTICS](#)

[Become a Volunteer](#)

[Sign Up](#)

[Dress Code](#)

[Address](#)

[Parking](#)

[Entry](#)

[Personal Items](#)

[Restroom](#)

[Volunteer Shift](#)

[Feedback](#)

[STAFF LIST](#)

[Volunteer Program Manager](#)

[Shelter Assistants](#)

[Leadership Team](#)

[FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS](#)

[Can only women volunteer?](#)

[How old do I have to be to volunteer?](#)

[Do you accept volunteers who need to fulfill community service requirements?](#)

[What do I do if something comes up and I can't make my shift at the last minute?](#)

[Can I bring a friend to volunteer with me?](#)

[How do I sign up for more volunteer shifts?](#)

[I am a former guest or resident. Can I volunteer?](#)

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We honor and acknowledge that the land on which we reside is the traditional territory of the Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Peoples. We also recognize the 48 contemporary tribal nations that are historically tied to the lands that make up the state of Colorado. We honor Elders past, present, and future, and those who have stewarded this land throughout generations. We also recognize that government, academic, and cultural institutions were founded upon and continue to enact exclusions and erasures of Indigenous Peoples. May this acknowledgement demonstrate a commitment to working to dismantle ongoing legacies of oppression and inequities and recognize the current and future contributions of Indigenous communities in Denver. Learn more at native-land.ca

ABOUT THE DELORES PROJECT

Mission

The Delores Project provides safe, comfortable shelter and personalized services for unaccompanied women and transgender individuals experiencing homelessness. We also work to end homelessness by advocating for housing solutions.

Vision

All individuals have the community of support and housing stability they need to reach their potential.

Values

- Our model of service is one of respect, hospitality, and dignity for each guest.
- We support those we serve without judgment.
- We believe in the potential of each individual and their right to self-determination.
- We are good stewards of our financial and human resources.
- We value the diversity of our guests, staff, board, and volunteers, and we are a model of inclusiveness.
- We believe the community is strengthened when it cares for those with the fewest resources.

Delores Big Boy

The Delores Project is named in honor of Delores Big Boy, a Lakota woman who spent most of her adult life in Denver. She experienced chronic homelessness complicated by chronic health issues and physical and sexual violence.

Delores was known in the Denver community for her big heart. When she was housed, she often opened her doors for many who had no warm place to sleep. Although she sought aid from various Denver agencies, Delores passed away in the summer of 1999 while unhoused due to complications from diabetes.

History

In the winter of 1999, Brothers Redevelopment, Inc. offered use of a building to the homeless service provider community. Recognizing the shortage of emergency shelter space for adult unaccompanied women who are homeless, a collaborative effort of service providers including Denver Human Services, The Empowerment Program, The Gathering Place, and St. Francis Center, organized to open the building as a shelter of last resort for this vulnerable population. The Delores Project opened its doors to homeless women on January 10, 2000.

For six years, the shelter operated seasonally from October through April to house 34 individuals a night. During that time, we also began serving transgender individuals, consistent with our model of hospitality and our intention to provide shelter with as few barriers as possible for those with the fewest resources.

In response to the ongoing need for The Delores Project program, the organization secured its own facility at our current address from which to operate an expanded year-round overnight shelter. With significant support from the local foundation community and Denver's Road Home, The Delores Project officially opened its new doors in December 2006.

In 2015, the Delores Project entered into a partnership with our neighbor, affordable housing provider Rocky Mountain Communities (RMC), to redevelop the city block in order to help address Denver's low-income and affordable housing crisis.

In May 2016, the project was awarded state and federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits. In June 2017, The Delores Project temporarily moved its shelter to leased spaces, and construction of Arroyo Village began in September 2017. Arroyo Village opened in March 2019 and was fully occupied in August 2019.

Then the pandemic happened, which accelerated plans to transition to 24/7 operations. Delores Project eliminated the 1-week stays, so our guests now keep their bed as long as they need to, which we call extended stay.

Arroyo Village offers a full continuum of housing options under one roof including a 60-bed extended-stay shelter and 35 units of low-income permanent supportive housing, both operated by The Delores Project, and 95 units of affordable housing for individuals and families in the workforce operated by Rocky Mountain Communities.

PROGRAMS AT THE DELORES PROJECT

Shelter

The Delores Shelter at Arroyo Village is a low-barrier shelter serving unaccompanied women and transgender individuals over the age of 18 experiencing homelessness. The shelter operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

While with us, each shelter guest is provided an assigned bed, locked storage for their belongings, 24-7 access to showers and hygiene, on-site laundry facilities, transportation assistance, and three meals and two snacks each day. We have at least two staff members working at all times to help maintain a safe, inclusive, and trauma-informed shelter environment. All guests are also offered on-site behavioral healthcare which includes 1-on-1 counseling as well as processing and art therapy groups.

Rehousing & Continued Care

The Rehousing team helps shelter guests find safe, appropriate, and affordable housing. This team embraces a Housing First model of care, working to get individuals out of the shelter system and into housing as quickly and safely as possible while providing the necessary support before, during, and after the transition into housing.

The Delores Apartments

The Delores Apartments (TDA) at Arroyo Village include 35 one-bedroom fully-furnished units of permanent supportive housing. These are occupied by single individuals, couples, or individuals with a child who make less than 30% of the area median income, have some type of disability, and are transitioning out of chronic homelessness.

A team of on-site Case Managers are dedicated to connecting residents to benefits and community-based resources, including access to healthcare and substance use services, continuing education, job training, employment, and LGBTQ supportive services. Housing Assistants are available 24-7 to provide a sense of safety and community for residents. The goal of this program is to keep residents permanently housed in their own apartment with a traditional lease for as long as they meet their lease agreement and to increase each resident's self-sufficiency.

Behavioral Health

Our Behavioral Health Counselor works collaboratively with all other program team staff members, offering on-site individual and group counseling to shelter guests and supportive housing residents. Behavioral Health also assists in managing our relationship with Colorado Access, helping guests and residents enroll in teletherapy and psychiatry, and facilitates Mental Health 101 in the shelter Life Skills Workshop Series.

PHILOSOPHIES

Respect, Dignity, and Hospitality

The Delores Project was founded with the intention of offering true hospitality first and foremost – making sure that our guests feel welcomed when they typically aren't in other parts of the community.

Delores Big Boy's values of hospitality and acceptance of others were the foundation for the shelter when it opened. Hospitality and dignity continue to be core values at The Delores Project and the way that Delores's spirit lives on.

We believe that in extending true hospitality, our guests will begin to believe that they are worthy of care and regard. Our meal program is one way for volunteers to provide invaluable hospitality to our guests.

Equity & Inclusion

The Delores Project is a community where we strive to create an environment that is sensitive and inclusive for all persons. It is important to us that everyone who enters our doors has a welcoming, positive, and safe experience. These ideals apply to everyone at The Delores Project – including guests, residents, staff, and volunteers.

When participating in our community, it is important to be nonjudgmental in the following areas, and treat everyone with dignity and respect regardless of identity, including but not limited to:

- Gender identity or expression
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Age
- Class
- Belief system
- Nationality
- First language
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Citizenship status
- Political affiliation
- Education
- Military status
- Family status
- Size/appearance
- Substance use

Our philosophy is to respect the identity of each person as they self-identify. You don't have to understand someone's identity to respect it. For example, if someone says she is a woman, she is a woman. Help us to create a community where everyone feels like they belong.

Gender

The Delores Project takes the responsibility of sheltering and housing transgender and gender-expansive individuals seriously. This means that while volunteering with us, you may interact with individuals who express themselves as feminine, masculine, or non-binary.

We don't expect expertise or complete understanding of gender identities and expressions. The respectful treatment of transgender and gender-expansive individuals within our walls is expected. Hate speech and disrespect will not be tolerated and are grounds for dismissal.

Healing-Centered Approach

We approach our work from a person-centered, strength-based, and trauma-informed perspective. We work to focus on the strengths that our community members bring to the table and help them to identify and capitalize on their skills and resources. We work to meet people where they are without judgment and assist them in getting to where they want to be. Guests and residents come with gifts and strengths that can help them become more stable and independent, give them hope and perspective, and support them meet their goals and become or stay housed.

A trauma-informed perspective promotes resilience among our community. This perspective acknowledges 100% of people walking through our doors have experienced trauma in their lives, and not just because they have experienced homelessness. Trauma-informed care has five basic principles we work to put into practice in our engagement with guests and residents:

Definition from SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)	How we apply it at TDP
1. Safety - Throughout the organization, staff and the people they serve feel physically and psychologically safe.	This is the most important focus for our staff at all times. Please make sure you are on the volunteer schedule to contribute to our safe community. Please also make sure you check in so we know who was in our building and when. Please also keep our address confidential for the safety of our community.
2. Trustworthiness and transparency - Organizational operations and decisions are conducted with transparency and the goal of building and maintaining trust among staff, the people they serve, and family members of those receiving services.	We aim to be open and honest in our communication with guests and residents, set clear behavioral expectations for our community, and follow through so we can build trust.
3. Peer support and mutual self-help - These are integral to the organizational and service delivery approach and are understood as a key vehicle for building trust, establishing safety, and empowerment.	We trust our guests and residents to be their own best experts in their lives and that they know better than we do what they want and need. Our guests and residents set and work towards their own defined goals. Utilizing and sharing lived experiences and building trust with peers promotes healing and recovery among those we serve.

<p>4. Collaboration and mutuality - There is true partnering and leveling of power differences between staff and the people they serve and among organizational staff from direct care staff to administrators. There is recognition that healing happens in relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making. The organization recognizes that everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed approach. One does not have to be a therapist to be therapeutic.</p>	<p>We work to involve our guests and residents in decision making around any changes to policies and procedures and operate as a community with all members (staff, guests and residents, and volunteers) being important elements, rather than staff being the only people within the community to have a say about how it operates.</p>
<p>5. Empowerment, voice, and choice - Throughout the organization and among the people served, individuals' strengths are recognized, built on, and validated and new skills developed as necessary. The organization aims to strengthen the staff's, guests', and resident's experience of choice and recognize that every person's experience is unique and requires an individualized approach. This includes a belief in resilience and in the ability of individuals, organizations, and communities to heal and promote recovery from trauma. This builds on what clients, staff, and communities have to offer, rather than responding to perceived deficits.</p>	<p>We believe that all our guests already have what they need to accomplish their goals and work to empower, acknowledge, and encourage our guests and residents to build upon the gifts and skills they already possess. We believe we are all resilient and believe in the power of our community and each other, staff and guests, to heal and promote recovery from trauma.</p> <p>As a meal server volunteer, ask each guest what they would like on their plate to empower guests to make their own nutritional choices.</p>

Advice for Volunteers

We encourage volunteers to get to know our shelter guests and permanent supportive housing residents. As you do, remember that they have varied personal histories that can be deeply moving, and most are living with trauma. Guests or residents may choose to share a part or all of their story with you, but please do not ask directly about their personal background or current life situation.

Housing First

Research has proven that supportive housing is a cost-effective solution to homelessness, particularly for people experiencing chronic homelessness. Study after study has shown that supportive housing not only resolves homelessness and increases housing stability, but also improves health and lowers public costs by reducing the use of publicly-funded crisis services, including shelters, hospitals, psychiatric centers, jails, and prisons.

What is Housing First?

Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach is guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues. Additionally, Housing First is based on the theory that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life.

How is Housing First different from other approaches?

Housing First does not require people experiencing homelessness to address all of their problems, including behavioral health problems, or to graduate through a series of services programs before they can access housing. Housing First does not mandate participation in services either before obtaining housing or in order to retain housing. The Housing First approach views housing as the foundation for life improvement and enables access to permanent housing without prerequisites or conditions beyond those of a typical renter. Supportive services are offered to support people with housing stability and individual well-being, but participation is not required as services have been found to be more effective when a person chooses to engage. Other approaches do make such requirements in order for a person to obtain and retain housing.

What are the elements of a Housing First program?

Housing First programs often provide rental assistance that varies in duration depending on the household's needs. Consumers sign a standard lease and are able to access supports as necessary to help them do so. A variety of voluntary services may be used to promote housing stability and well-being during and following housing placement.

Two common program models follow the Housing First approach but differ in implementation. Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is targeted to individuals and families with chronic illnesses, disabilities, mental health issues, or substance use disorders who have experienced long-term or repeated homelessness. It provides long-term rental assistance and supportive services.

A second program model, rapid re-housing, is employed for a wide variety of individuals and families. It provides short-term rental assistance and services. The goals are to help people obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency, and remain housed. The Core Components of rapid re-housing—housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management and services — operationalize Housing First principles.

Does Housing First work?

There is a large and growing evidence base demonstrating that Housing First is an effective solution to homelessness. Consumers in a Housing First model access housing faster and are more likely to remain stably housed. This is true for both PSH and rapid re-housing programs. PSH has a long-term housing retention rate of up to 98 percent. Studies have shown that rapid re-housing helps people exit homelessness quickly—in one study, an average of two months—and remain housed. A variety of studies have shown that between 75 percent and 91 percent of households remain housed a year after being rapidly re-housed.

More extensive studies have been completed on PSH finding that clients report an increase in perceived levels of autonomy, choice, and control in Housing First programs. A majority of clients are found to participate in the optional supportive services provided, often resulting in greater housing stability. Clients using supportive services are more likely to participate in job training programs, attend school, discontinue substance use, have fewer instances of domestic violence, and spend fewer days hospitalized than those not participating.

Finally, permanent supportive housing has been found to be cost efficient. Providing access to housing generally results in cost savings for communities because housed people are less likely to use emergency services, including hospitals, jails, and emergency shelter, than those who are homeless. One study found an average cost savings on emergency services of \$31,545 per person housed in a Housing First program over the course of two years. Another study showed that a Housing First program could cost up to \$23,000 less per consumer per year than a shelter program.

Source: National Alliance To End Homelessness

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Delores Project offers many meaningful ways for individuals, families, friends, and groups to volunteer.

Individual Opportunities

Meal Program

Are you looking for a fun activity to do with your family, friends, colleagues, or faith community? Does your child need service learning hours? The Delores Project is seeking individuals and groups to provide and serve meals for our guests seven days a week.

To support our meal program you can serve a meal, provide a meal, or provide and serve a meal - whatever works best for you! You're also welcome to sign up once or as many times as you would like.

This is a great opportunity for small groups. If you plan to volunteer on-site at the shelter, please limit your group to 6 volunteers due to the size of our kitchen. We ask group leaders to share all appropriate information with each member of your group.

Meal Server – Serving a meal and joining our guests to eat is where many volunteers get their start and requires no financial contribution. We are looking for caring individuals and groups to assist with meal service at The Delores Project. As a meal server, you will play a key role in raising the level of hospitality that we provide our guests each day. This is approximately a 2 hour time commitment (11am-1pm or 6-8pm).

Meal Provider – Help us to nourish our guests by donating a healthy, balanced meal. You are welcome to cook a meal in our commercial kitchen at the shelter, cook a meal in your home, or order a meal from a restaurant to be delivered to the shelter. If you are dropping off a meal, we are happy to finish the meal on site.

Service Provider

Our guests and residents have little money and access to transportation to access services, so you can help our community by volunteering your services on-site. Do you cut hair? Are you a massage therapist? Offer your services to our guests and residents. Services that are most frequently requested:

- Hair cuts
- Employment services, including writing resumes and mock job interviews
- Massage

Life Skills

In both our shelter and supportive housing apartments, The Delores Project offers meaningful life skills workshops. These workshops are diverse – from time management to meal planning.

Group Opportunities

Special Projects

Our spaces occasionally need special attention, including sorting/organizing donations, deep cleaning, painting, or seasonal yard work. This is a great way to get involved with a group of 6-10 from your faith organization, school, or workplace. Reach out to the Volunteer Program Manager to schedule a project/date for a large group.

Donation Drive/Freezer Meals

Another great option for folks who have less predictable schedules is to host a donation drive or freezer meal party! Collect items on our [Current Needs](#) list, or create and drop off easy freezer meals for staff to heat up when we do not have a scheduled meal provider.

More Ways to Get Involved

The Delores Project has additional volunteer opportunities including but not limited to:

- Finance Committee
- Outreach & Events Committee
- Board Membership

In addition, you can become a financial donor to The Delores Project. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit and rely on the generosity of donors like you for funding.

- You can host a fundraiser with your community group, friends, and family;
- You can attend a fundraising event;
- You can order something from our Amazon Wish List and have it delivered to our door;
- Or visit our website to make an immediate donation.

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The Delores Project is dedicated to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity. Unlawful discrimination against volunteers on the basis of an individual's race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender variance, age (40 and over), national origin, marital or veteran status, disability, genetic information or any other applicable status or class protected under federal, state, or local law is prohibited.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Delores Project provides equal opportunities for all and does not discriminate against any volunteer because of such individual's disability or perceived disability in accordance with the ADA and the ADAAA (ADA Amendments Act of 2008) so long as the volunteer can perform the essential functions of the role. Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, The Delores Project provides reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with disability, as defined by the ADA and the ADAAA, who has made The Delores Project aware of a disability, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on The Delores Project.

Service Animals

The Delores Project prohibits bringing a pet (a domestic animal kept for pleasure or companionship) to volunteer with the exception of service animals for a person with disabilities. See the Business & Finance Director for detailed policy regarding Service Animals.

Non-Discrimination/Non-Harrassment Policy

The Delores Project has a zero tolerance policy for discrimination, intimidation, threats or hostile behaviors, verbal or physical violence, harassment, bullying, or hate speech.

Volunteers are expected to treat every individual at The Delores Project, including shelter guests, permanent supportive housing residents, staff, and other volunteers, with dignity and respect regardless of identity, including but not limited to an individual's: race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender variance, age, national origin, marital or veteran status, disability, genetic information or any other status protected by applicable laws.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Professional Conduct

Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the core values and principles of the organization at all times, as well as in accordance with standards of integrity, honesty, and fair dealings. Avoid any conflict between your personal interests and those of The Delores Project.

Failure to follow the policies and additional non-negotiable standards listed below while volunteering at The Delores Project is prohibited.

Additional actions that are not permitted:

- Theft or unauthorized removal of property.
- Falsifying records, including:
 - A material omission on a volunteer application or on any The Delores Project record including client files.
 - Failure to disclose criminal history to The Delores Project, including conviction for a felony or misdemeanor covered by state licensing regulations governing The Delores Project.
- Insubordination, including failure to follow directions of staff members.

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics provides guidance and assistance to The Delores Project employees, volunteers, and vendors in carrying out daily activities within appropriate ethical and legal standards. These obligations apply to relationships with guests and residents, staff members, other volunteers, other social service agencies, funding sources, and regulatory bodies. The code is based on the organization's philosophy of professionalism and a commitment to serve guests and residents in a compassionate, dignified, caring way.

Boundaries help us act ethically in our roles and protect us as volunteers, those we serve, and TDP as an organization. In order to maintain professional boundaries, the following actions are not allowed by any volunteer:

- Giving or lending gifts, money, or goods to an individual guest or resident.
- Receiving cash gifts or donations from a guest or resident. You may, at your discretion, accept a nominal gift from guests or residents on behalf of the entire organization. Examples include snack food or small decorative items.
- Transporting a guest or resident in one's personal vehicle.
- Sharing personal and confidential information about a guest, resident, staff member, or volunteer with another guest or resident.
- Giving out one's personal information including phone number, address, or any other identifying information.
- Being friends with or followers of guests or residents on social media.
- Having personal contact with guests or residents outside of the TDP premises in any non-professional setting, including inviting a guest or resident to one's own home. If a guest is encountered outside the shelter, respect their privacy and allow them to acknowledge you first.

- Hiring a guest or resident for any work outside The Delores Project.
- Engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship with a guest or resident.
- Using drugs or alcohol with a guest or resident.
- Volunteering under the influence of any alcohol or drugs. Volunteers are advised to abstain from even a glass of wine at home prior to a dinner meal shift, for example, as the alcohol can be noted on one's breath by guests and staff.

Some additional examples of unhealthy professional boundaries to avoid:

- Being particularly warm-natured and enjoying physical connectedness with guests, such as hugging or embracing upon contact, rubbing the shoulder, hands, or face to provide comfort and support to the guest;
- Spending an inordinate amount of time with one guest or resident in comparison with other guests or residents during a volunteer shift;
- Freely and frequently sharing and discussing your own personal experiences with a guest or resident.

If you have additional questions or concerns around boundaries, or something happens which feels like it may be in the gray area and you want clarification, please reach out to the Volunteer Program Manager to discuss further.

Political, Spiritual, or Religious Activities

The Delores Project prohibits discrimination based on political, religious, or spiritual beliefs and strives to provide an environment that is sensitive to all persons regardless of political, religious, or spiritual beliefs. The Delores Project volunteers are expected to uphold these values. At no time are volunteers obligated or expected to discuss their own political, religious, or spiritual beliefs or background with volunteers, staff members, or guests or residents. The following policies are specific to issues regarding spiritual or religious activities:

- Do not initiate spiritual or religious activities, including, but not limited to praying, hymn singing, or reading political, spiritual, or religious books or literature with a guest or resident.
- Do not distribute political, spiritual, or religious materials.
- Do not advocate for personal beliefs or invite a guest or resident to attend religious/spiritual services or political events with you.
- If a guest or resident initiates a conversation in regards to political, spiritual, or religious beliefs or background, volunteers may discuss these topics. If asked, volunteers may inform a guest or resident of service times and location for a spiritual or religious institution (i.e., church, synagogue, mosque, etc.).

Confidentiality

Please refrain from photographing or interviewing guests or residents.

Volunteers are expected to protect the privacy of The Delores Project, shelter guests, permanent supportive housing residents, staff, volunteers, and current and prospective donors. Volunteers are prohibited from disclosing any information considered confidential in public areas and in your private life.

The following information is considered confidential:

- the location of The Delores Project
- guest/resident information
- personal contact information for volunteers and staff
- financial information
- strategic business plans
- company-privileged information, including copyrighted information or company-issued documents.

Volunteers must never disclose confidential information that violates the privacy rights of guests or residents to other guests or residents, current or former, or to third parties, including family members of guests or residents. No volunteer has a right to any client information other than that necessary to perform volunteer functions. Volunteers are asked to hold any conversations regarding guests or residents with staff in private.

Representing the Organization

Volunteers are only authorized to act as a representative of The Delores Project if specifically tasked with this responsibility in your volunteer job description.

All media inquiries should be directed to the CEO. In the event the CEO is not available, inquiries should be directed to the Director of Development and Communication.

The Delores Project encourages open communication both internally and externally, including on the internet. It is expected that such communication does not disparage TDP, its work environment, employees, guests, residents, or other constituents.

Working with Vulnerable Individuals

The Delores Project will do everything in our power to prevent abuse and neglect among vulnerable individuals involved in TDP operations and with any events sponsored by The Delores Project and to adhere to all internal policies in place when working with vulnerable individuals. This includes:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Physical neglect

TDP is aware of its legal responsibilities and complies with those responsibilities and goes beyond those responsibilities when necessary to act justly in the best interest of those who have been abused or those who are most vulnerable to abuse. Employees are required to obey the laws and report any suspected abuse or neglect of a vulnerable individual whether on or off TDP property, whether perpetrated by TDP or others, to the appropriate authorities.

As a volunteer, you are required to report to The Delores Project staff any time you suspect abuse (as defined above), as quickly as possible.

Safety Concerns

Given the nature of the population we serve, a guest or resident may become volatile. If you witness any injuries, hazards, threats or acts of violence, or individuals who could be a danger to themselves or others, please do the following:

- Stay calm.
- Report the situation to a staff member immediately.
- Follow all instructions of staff members.
- In the absence of instructions, remove yourself from the incident or area.
- If you feel in immediate danger, you are empowered to call 911 yourself without being directed to do so by staff.

Staff are trained to de-escalate while maintaining the safety of all community members. Staff may involve mental health or law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

If a guest or resident says or makes an inappropriate, rude, or profane statement to you or any member of your group, please report that to staff immediately. Volunteers should directly contact proper law enforcement authorities if they believe there is imminent danger to the safety and health of themselves or others.

Disciplinary Action

Occasionally performance or other behavior falls short of our standards and/or expectations. Disciplinary action may include verbal counseling, reprimand, suspension, or dismissal at the sole discretion of The Delores Project.

The Delores Project reserves the right to disengage with any volunteer at any time who does not adhere to the Volunteer Handbook or whose actions may not be appropriate for, nor aligned with, the mission of The Delores Project.

Feedback

Your feedback is always welcome! Please share your kudos, ideas, suggestions, frustrations, concerns, or other thoughts about your experience with us.

In turn, we ask volunteers to be receptive to feedback from the Volunteer Program Manager and other staff members.

VOLUNTEER LOGISTICS

Registration

Volunteers are required to register for all volunteer shifts on our Event Calendar. Signing up is important for community safety so that staff knows who to expect and when. Additionally for meal program volunteers, the kitchen can only accommodate a certain number of people, so spots are limited.

Dress Code

Keep in mind the activities you will be participating in and dress accordingly in a way that is non-revealing and comfortable for you. Please refrain from wearing clothing with logos/messages that relate or pertain to drugs, alcohol, religion, or politics.

Address

The Delores Project's address is unpublished for the safety of our guests, and we ask that you help us to keep it confidential.

The nearest major intersection is Colfax and Federal. Our street address will be emailed to you once your volunteer shift is confirmed.

Parking

There is a small parking lot at the shelter entrance, and parking passes are available for volunteers. Please return your borrowed parking pass before you leave.

There is also street parking in the surrounding neighborhood. Pay attention to street sweeping signs April-November to avoid a parking ticket.

Entry

Ring the bell at the entrance and a staff member will unlock the door. If you are dropping off a meal, please request the gray cart if you need it.

Personal Items

There are coat hooks and cubbies in the hallway behind the kitchen for your personal items. This hallway is only accessible via key card. You can get a volunteer key card from the shelter assistant office while you're onsite.

Restroom

There is an all-gender restroom in the hallway behind the kitchen available for volunteers and staff members.

Volunteer Shift

- Check in with staff when you arrive to grab the volunteer keys (and a parking pass if needed).
- Make yourself a name tag.
- Use the tablet to check in. This helps us to track the impact you make!
- Please remain in your volunteer area (eg, the kitchen) unless given permission by staff to be in another area. We respectfully ask that you are mindful of the

guests' living quarters and respect their privacy. Ask staff to make announcements on your behalf in the dorms, if necessary.

- Complete the tasks as part of your volunteer shift.
- If the volunteer Program Manager is not on-site, there are always two (2) shelter assistants working who are wonderful resources for questions and support.
- Leave the space how you find it. Clean up and make sure all doors are closed.
- Return all borrowed keys and/or parking passes before you leave.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can only women volunteer?

We welcome volunteers of all gender identities and gender expressions, including women, men, transgender individuals, and nonbinary individuals. We ask that you are sensitive to our community of unaccompanied women and transgender individuals and respect the dignity of everyone while you volunteer.

How old do I have to be to volunteer?

We welcome volunteers of all ages. Serving a meal is a wonderful opportunity for families to volunteer together. For volunteers who are under 18, please complete our Volunteer Agreement with a parent or guardian. If you are 16 or older, you are welcome to volunteer independently. We ask that a parent or guardian accompany any volunteers who are younger than 16 years old and that the adult assign their young person(s) age-appropriate tasks.

Do you accept volunteers who need to fulfill community service requirements?

Yes! All volunteers are welcome.

What do I do if something comes up and I can't make my shift at the last minute?

Call (303) 534-5411 to let a staff member know.

Can I bring a friend to volunteer with me?

Yes, we encourage you to volunteer with friends and family once you have completed at least two volunteer shifts. Please let the Volunteer Program Manager know in advance and have your friend fill out a Volunteer Application.

How do I sign up for more volunteer shifts?

The Event Calendar is available on the [Volunteer](#) page of our website. To schedule other volunteer opportunities, contact the Volunteer Program Manager.

I am a former guest or resident. Can I volunteer?

Yes, we'd love to welcome you back to our community as a volunteer! Please wait 12 months from the last time you stayed with us before volunteering.

Where can I learn more about the issue of homelessness?

Listen to our podcast, Welcome Home, wherever you get your podcasts. There are many great organizations working to end homelessness in the Denver community. Some organizations to check out:

- Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (mdhi.org)
- Colorado Coalition for the Homeless (www.coloradocoalition.org)
- Colorado Village Collaborative (www.coloradovillagecollaborative.org)
- National Low-Income Housing Coalition (nlihc.org)
- National Alliance to End Homelessness (endhomelessness.org)
- National Coalition for the Homeless (<https://nationalhomeless.org/>)
- Corporation for Supportive Housing (<https://www.csh.org/>)