Volunteer Handbook

Volunteering at Blanchet House
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OUR MISSION

To offer food, shelter and aid to all those in need of a safe place to be nourished and restored. Assist the transformation of each life we touch with compassion and dignity.
Welcome

We believe that all people are worthy of being served.

Volunteers, like you, are integral to carrying out our mission to alleviate suffering in the community. We believe that differences in housing, substance dependency, income, physical or mental ability do not diminish the inherent dignity of every human being.

In this handbook, you will learn about our history, who we serve, our programs, how to volunteer, and what is expected before, during, and after the hours you commit to serving.

We work to ensure an enjoyable volunteer experience for all who come through our doors.

Thank you for volunteering!

“The guests here are so grateful for our help. I like to give back. I have to give back.”
-Linda, volunteer
History of Blanchet House

The Blanchet House of Hospitality was founded by University of Portland alumni who believed that they had an obligation to help those suffering, exiled, hungry, and forsaken.

1938 to 1949
Motivated by their spiritual leaders, a group of Catholic students at Columbia Prep High School set out to offer food and clothing to those in need by forming a club. They took the name Blanchet from the first Archbishop of Oregon, Norbert Blanchet. At the end of WWII the original members partnered with a new wave of students to continue the Blanchet Club mission.

1952
Now under the direction of Fr. Francis Kennard, the newly graduated University of Portland alumni searched for a location to make a lasting impact. They found their building at the corner of NW 4th Avenue and NW Glisan. The raised money to rent the ground floor for their mission. Once they paid the first month’s rent of $35 they were ready to open their doors. On February 11, 1952, volunteers offered a free hot meal of beans, bread and coffee.

1958
The Blanchet Club members were able to purchase the building outright for $25,000. Modeled on the Catholic Workers’ Houses of Hospitality the club christened their building the Blanchet House of Hospitality. Volunteers cleaned and prepared the upper two floors into short-term housing units for men who, in exchange for room and board, would work in the kitchen and help serve.

1962
A decade after opening, Blanchet House had become an important institution in the social fabric of Portland. Word on the street spread to those in need.

The number of meals served increased, thanks in part to the addition of a full-time executive director named Al Riley. He served for 38 years without pay!

Riley and the board knew that there was a need for a place away from downtown Portland where people struggling with addiction could escape the temptations of the city. Money was raised to purchase a prune farm in Yamhill County. They built dormitories, barns for animals and a wood shop. There is now room for 22 men to live within a program designed to facilitate recovery from alcohol and drug addiction.

Today
After nearly 10 years of fundraising, the Blanchet House board was able to build and open a new, LEED platinum certified building in 2012. The capacity to feed, clothe and house those in need was greatly increased. Blanchet House is now the largest free meal provider in Oregon!
About The Volunteer Program

Who Can Volunteer?
Anyone who is at least 12 years old, able to follow directions, and able to treat everyone we serve with dignity and respect. *We do not fulfill court-mandated volunteer hours.*

What Types of Work Do Volunteers Do?
Volunteer jobs include:
- Plating food in the kitchen
- Serving plates to guests
- Busing plates
- Sorting donated clothes
- Farm work may be available

How to Schedule a Shift
Complete a profile and register online at [www.blanchethouse.org/volunteer](http://www.blanchethouse.org/volunteer). See page 11.

Registrations
You can choose a meal slot up to three months in advance.

Wait List
If you’re on a wait list do not plan on serving unless we notify you. We will let you know at least one day prior to the event date.

Groups
Email us to register! If your group is four or fewer members, sign up individually. **We can only accommodate 12 volunteers per meal.**

Other Ways to Volunteer
If you or a group are unable to volunteer during our meal services there are alternative volunteer options.
- Preparing sack lunches
- Sorting clothing donations
- Assisting with meal prep
- Ask about special projects
If you have a skill to share beyond our current volunteer opportunities, tell us about it! Email us your ideas at volunteer@blanchethouse.org.

On The Day You Serve

When to Arrive
Please arrive on time at the NW Glisan entrance. Doors are locked at all times, but a staff member will be there to greet you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BREAKFAST</td>
<td>Arrive at 6:15am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td>Arrive at 11:00am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DINNER</td>
<td>Arrive at 4:30pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What to Do When You Arrive
- Check in at the volunteer room.
- Stow your personal items in the benches. The room will be locked during service.
- Put on an apron.
- Have a seat until a staff member arrives to give you an orientation and escort you to the kitchen.

Job Assignments and Training
A staff member will be assign you a job for the meal service and provide a brief training.

End of Meal Service
- Help wipe down tables.
- Return your aprons to the hamper in the volunteer room
- Please join us for crew chow. This is a meal served to staff, volunteers and residents after serving the public.

Earning Volunteer Hours
If you need a signed confirmation of your volunteer service please notify the staff member upon arrival. We cannot verify hours after the service date.

*Blanchet House is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.*
About the People We Serve

Blanchet House serves anyone in need of a meal—no questions asked—and will continue to do so as long as the need exists.

Our mission strives to alleviate suffering and restore dignity. We want everyone to feel welcome and safe at Blanchet House. We respect the privacy of our meal guests by not asking them personal questions. Our meal guests are very thankful for our services and our volunteers.

Over the years, Old Town has maintained its reputation as a space for people living on the fringes of society. The many social service agencies in the neighborhood serve people who are in need of aid and support in some form—these folks may be homeless, live with physical and mental disabilities, have addictions to or reliance on chemical substances, or are simply figuring out how to make ends meet.

Some of our meal guests may be in the midst of a mental health crisis. We always stay positive and supportive. Our work is to meet their immediate needs of satiating hunger and feeling loved.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Blanchet House does not judge, discriminate or tolerate discriminatory behavior based on race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law. This policy applies to all Blanchet House guests, program recipients, volunteers, community members, supporters, staff and board members.
The Blanchet House of Hospitality strives to create a space that is safe and welcoming for both meal guests and volunteers.

Our guests are usually very respectful, however, you may hear or see inappropriate language and behaviors. Please immediately alert the floor supervisor if you observe anything that makes you feel unsafe.

If there is a disruption it is best to:
- Continue carrying out your job duty. Let the supervisor address the issue.
- Do not stare at or engage a guest in a mental health or behavioral crisis.
- Move into the kitchen area if a guest is acting out or if you feel uncomfortable.
- Always follow the directions of the supervisor and volunteer coordinator.

**DO’S**

**Be Welcoming!**
- Say ‘Hello’ to the guest you’re serving.
- Smile.
- You are representing Blanchet House now.

**Be Attentive!**
- Your kindness can alleviate suffering.
- Anticipate guests’ needs. Move stools for wheelchairs, offer to pour water or replace a dropped fork.
- Did a guest ask for something? Let the floor supervisor know.

**DON’T**

- clear plates before the guest has completely left their table. We do not want to rush our guests. They are welcome to sit during the entire meal service.
- ask residents or guests about their personal lives or why they are at Blanchet House. It is their right to choose to share their stories.
- argue with guests. If there is a disruption please follow the safety guidelines above.
- take pictures of meal guests. Please respect their dignity and privacy. Please put cell phones away during the meal service.
- touch people or their belongings, except for the occasional handshake or fist bump. It is difficult to know how someone might react to physical contact.
- share personal information such as your address or telephone number. Share first names only.

**Dress Code**

Please dress appropriately for working in a public kitchen. Our guests could react negatively to inappropriate or explicit clothing. It is best to dress conservatively.

**Required**
- Close-toed shoes (NO sandals or flip-flops).
- Tying back of long hair.
- Good personal hygiene.

**Not Allowed**
- Clothing that is low-cut, too revealing, too short, or excessively tight. No bare midriff or shoulders.
- NO explicit shirts or hats.
- NO drug or alcohol imagery.
Removal from Volunteering

We greatly value everyone who gives their time to volunteer at Blanchet House. However, we reserve the right to cancel scheduled volunteer dates when it is necessary to maintain smooth and effective operations.

UNREGISTERED VOLUNTEERS

We reserve the right to turn volunteers away. This will not be done lightly, and only in specific circumstances. These circumstances are:

- Arriving to volunteer without registering. This includes volunteers who are on the wait list.
- Groups who bring more volunteers than the agreed upon number. **We cannot handle more than 12 volunteers per meal service.**
- Groups or individuals under 12 years old.

VOLUNTEER SUSPENSION

In rare circumstances, the volunteer coordinator may place volunteers or groups on suspension from serving if a warning is not sufficient. These circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Exhibiting poor or inappropriate behavior during meal services.
- Unwillingness to follow directions.
- Consistent tardiness or canceling.
- Non-attendance on registered dates.

If you or your group is suspended, you or the group leader must meet with the volunteer coordinator in person to discuss reinstatement before registering for future dates.

Getting to Blanchet House

Public transportation and carpooling are the best ways to get to Blanchet House.

The Old Town/Chinatown neighborhood is serviced by the MAX (Green, Orange, Yellow, Blue, Red) and many TriMet bus lines (2, 4, 8, 9, 12, 16, 17, 19, 20, 35, 43, 44, 54, 56, 77, 291).

**DRIVING DIRECTIONS**

**From the East:** SE Grand Ave to the Morrison Bridge; I-84/US-30 W to the Steel Bridge

**From the West:** US 30 East to I-405 South to exit 2B

**From the North:** I-5 South to the Steel Bridge

**From the South:** I-5 North to exit 2B; OR-10 East to SW Naito Parkway

We do not offer or validate parking. There is ample metered street parking nearby.
Dear Valued Volunteers,

It is because of people like you that the Blanchet House of Hospitality is able to provide over 350,000 meals per year to our low-income and homeless guests and housing to over 135 men struggling with homelessness, unemployment and/or addiction.

An average of 36 individuals volunteer their time at Blanchet House’s downtown location daily, saving the organization almost $725,000 every year! That kind of savings allows us to focus our efforts on the programs and the people that we serve.

Outside of meal services, administrative volunteers assisting with filing, database entry and other office tasks ensure that Blanchet House’s employees can focus on expanding the organization’s scope to serve even more individuals in need.

For those who cannot donate their time, even seemingly small monetary contributions have a great impact. Just $10 serves 30 hot meals to those who would otherwise go without. With your commitment and passion, Blanchet House will continue to provide compassion and care to those most vulnerable in our community for generations to come.

We are exceedingly grateful to have you as an invaluable member of the Blanchet House team!

Sincerely,

Kelly Lyons
Development Director

Other Ways to Get Involved!

Student Ambassadors
Do you know a high school student who is passionate about helping their community and working to reduce homelessness? Encourage them to apply for the Blanchet House Student Ambassador program.

Ambassadors utilize their leadership, organization, project management and teamwork skills while helping their community.

Young Professionals Board
The Young Professionals Board focuses on increasing awareness of the Blanchet House mission and inspiring the community to support the House and Farm programs both now and into the future.

We are seeking young professionals under the age of 40 to help us innovate, expand, and champion restoring dignity to those in greatest need. We need your help in building a sustainable and lasting team of leaders dedicated to serving those in our shared community.

Interns
Blanchet House hosts interns for a variety of positions throughout the year.

If interested please email info@blanchethouse.org.
VOLUNTEER SIGN UP WITH CERVIS
How to Sign Up to Volunteer

Individual
1. Go to www.blanchethouse.org/volunteer/
2. Click the “New and Returning Volunteers” button.

3. Select an “event” which is a type of meal service. Choose breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

4. Select a date with volunteers needed. You will be added to a waitlist if there are no open spots.

5. Fill out your email address and name, and click “next.”

6. Fill out your volunteer profile. To complete registration, click “create volunteer profile.”
How to Sign Up to Volunteer

Group
1. Visit www.blanchethouse.org/volunteer/
2. Click the “Group Sign Up” button.
3. Fill out the group form. Be sure to include the size of your group, which meal you’d like to serve, and on what date(s). *We can ONLY accommodate up to 12 volunteers per meal service.*

Volunteer Group Request

Welcome to the Blanchet House Community Event Registration & Volunteer Information System (CERVIS). Thank you for your desire to volunteer with us. Please complete the information requested below to submit your group application for review.

In additional comments, be sure to note if there are specific dates you would like to reserve or a particular service pattern you would like (i.e. 1st Tuesday Breakfast every month) and we will do our best to accommodate requests in the order they were received.

*Please allow 5 business days to process your group request.*

We look forward to serving with you!

Group Name:* 

Group Contact Person Last Name:* 

4. Now consult the “Volunteer Calendar” to see which dates have open slots for volunteers prior to choosing a date. The calendar can be found at www.blanchethouse.org/volunteer/
Information for Groups

- The volunteer coordinator will receive the online form and get in contact with the group leader to finalize the date and details within five business days.
- Volunteer group requests made less than two weeks in advance are difficult to accommodate, so please plan ahead.
- The group leader is designated as the person who submitted the form, unless otherwise noted. This person is the point of contact for the group.
- The group leader is responsible for having each volunteer create an individual profile prior to the volunteer “event” date. See below for instructions.
- The group leader must send a final list of names to the volunteer coordinator at least two business days before the volunteer date, and confirm if the group plans to stay for crew chow.

1. To create a profile, each group member should visit [www.blanchethouse.org/volunteer](http://www.blanchethouse.org/volunteer).
2. Click “New and Returning Volunteers”

   ![New and Returning Volunteers](image1)

4. Click “Sign In” and create a profile. Unless using a reservation code, group volunteers DO NOT need to register for their volunteer date. Registration is complete following profile creation.
Share your volunteer experience!

@blanchethouse @blanchethouse
@blanchethouse @blanchethouse

#blanchethouse #portlandvolunteer #pdxvolunteer

Do you want another way to volunteer?

Invite people to eat at Blanchet House by handing out free meal invitation cards.

Pick up cards at Blanchet House or print from BlanchetHouse.org/YoureInvited