

# Tacoma Rescue Mission Volunteer Handbook (2025)

Welcome! We are so happy you are considering volunteering with the Tacoma Rescue Mission. Our volunteers are a HUGE part of providing Help, Hope, and Healing to our neighbors in need. As of 2024, volunteers made up almost 20% of the work force at the Mission. This is amazing and proof that we can't do what we do without YOU!

Please read through this handbook and let us know if you have any questions.

And again, welcome!

Laura and Jami

Volunteer Department, Tacoma Rescue Mission

[Volunteer@trm.org](mailto:Volunteer@trm.org)

[www.trm.org/volunteer](http://www.trm.org/volunteer)

## What volunteer opportunities are available?

- Kitchen Shifts every day of the year (approx. 6am – 9am; 11am – 2pm & 4pm – 7pm)
- Clothing Closet Sorter/Attendant (afternoons)
- Landscaping (times vary)
- Retail at the Mission Thrift
- Donation Center
- Litter Pick Up
- Youth Department
- Search & Rescue
- Admin
- Teaching (Digital Skills +)
- Other opportunities are frequently added depending on the needs of the Mission

We also use volunteers for special events such as: Back to School Shopping; Christmas Shopping; Easter Egg Hunts; Admin work; Thanksgiving & Christmas meal prep, etc.

## Do I need to have experience in order to volunteer?

No experience needed for the above opportunities.

## How do I get started?

All volunteers are required to have a Tacoma Rescue Mission volunteer account and pass a background check. Create your account here: [www.trm.org/volunteer](http://www.trm.org/volunteer) Account approval can take up to 3 business days. \*If a prospective volunteer has a very common name, sometimes fingerprints are required (at no cost to the volunteer) in order to run the background check.

## Can I get a tour of the campus(es) before I create a volunteer account?

Yes! We love giving tours! Email us: [volunteer@trm.org](mailto:volunteer@trm.org)

### **What is the minimum age to volunteer?**

Volunteers must be at least 8 years old to volunteer. 8-13 year old children must have an adult volunteer with them. All volunteers, regardless of age, must have an approved volunteer account and everyone under 18 must have a completed Youth Waiver on file before volunteering. Some of the locations require the volunteer to be 16 or 18 for safety reasons.

### **What if I want to volunteer directly with clients?**

Consider becoming a “High Impact Volunteer”. These volunteer positions ask for a 6 month (minimum) commitment and include things such as: Mentoring clients; Tutoring Youth or Adults; Search & Rescue, assisting front desk staff, etc. Take a look at what we currently are looking for and fill out the application here: [www.trm.org/highimpact](http://www.trm.org/highimpact)

### **I have a group that would like to volunteer together, can we?**

Yes! The ideal group size is 4-8. If you have a larger group, you can either break into smaller groups to serve or volunteer outside doing landscaping/yard work/litter pick up. To get started, fill out the Group Volunteer Form here: <https://www.trm.org/group-volunteer-opportunities/>

### **I created a volunteer account... now what?**

Keep an eye on your inbox for an email from “Volunteer Manager at Volunteer Hub” letting you know that your account has been approved and activated. Check your junk/spam folder too. If you don't receive an email within 5 business days, let us know at [volunteer@trm.org](mailto:volunteer@trm.org)

Once your account has been approved, log onto your volunteer account and you'll see a calendar of all the available volunteer shifts. Sign up for this shift(s) that fit your schedule and interests.

### **Are there any volunteer orientations?**

Yes, once your volunteer account has been approved, you'll see “New Volunteer Orientations” on the calendar. Generally, they are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday and the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month. These orientations are not required. During these orientations, you will get a tour of the downtown campus, some literature about volunteer opportunities, and we'll answer your questions.

### **I didn't pass the background check, can I still volunteer?**

Maybe. The Mission abides by the DSHS List of Disqualifying Crimes, more information can be found here: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ffa/disqualifying-list-crimes-and-negative-actions> . Some of the disqualifying crimes are 5 year (from date of conviction) disqualifications and some are permanent disqualifications. The Mission does have an appeal process for potential volunteers who have not passed the background check. The appeal is a form which asks questions such as; “what happened?”, “What is different now?”; “Why do you want to volunteer at the Mission?” etc. and also requires a letter of recommendation. The appeal is reviewed by the Mission’s

Volunteer Team. For more information, email us at [volunteer@trm.org](mailto:volunteer@trm.org)

### **I have (or my group has) a special talent/skill that I'd like to share. How do I get started?**

Send us an email! [volunteer@trm.org](mailto:volunteer@trm.org)

### **What happens on my first day of volunteering?**

Check your email for address and direction details. When you arrive, please check in at the kiosk. Staff will greet you and get you started.

### **Where can I park when I volunteer?**

You can park in any open (unreserved) parking spot on campus. We encourage carpooling as there are sometimes very few available spots.

### **What should I wear when volunteering?**

Please wear casual clothes; keeping in mind that they may get a little dirty.

Closed toed shoes and long pants are required. We provide hairnets, gloves, and aprons for those volunteering in the kitchen. You may choose to bring your own hat if you’d rather not wear a hair net.

### **Can I just show up for a volunteer shift without signing up for one first?**

No. Please sign up on Volunteer Hub first as that let’s our staff know how many volunteers to expect and assures that we don’t have too many volunteers at one time.

### **The shift times do not work for me, can I just come whenever?**

No. Our volunteer shifts are pre-determined, scheduled times that best fit the needs of our programs. These are set times and we ask that all volunteers adhere to the start and end shift times and volunteer shift duration.

### **What if I can't come in for my shift?**

Log on to your Volunteer account [www.trm.org/volunteer](http://www.trm.org/volunteer) and cancel your shift so our staff knows who to expect.

### **I am a former Tacoma Rescue Mission Volunteer and I would like to start volunteering again.**

That's wonderful! Check to see if you can log on to your volunteer account here: [www.trm.org/volunteer](http://www.trm.org/volunteer) If you do not have an account, please create one. If you have an account, but can't log onto it, send us an email at [volunteer@trm.org](mailto:volunteer@trm.org) and we'll get it figured out for you.

### **Can I complete my Court-Ordered Community Service hours with the Tacoma Rescue Mission?**

Yes. More info here: <https://www.trm.org/communityservice/>

### **Will I be working directly with clients?**

Maybe. Some of our volunteer opportunities involve working directly with clients and those in our recovery programs while others are more 'behind the scenes'. Regardless of where you'll be volunteering, all volunteers need to abide by these behavior guidelines:

- a. Behavior is to be appropriate for all ages at all times. This means:
  - i. No cursing, slang, derogatory names, inappropriate jokes / comments, or gossip.
  - ii. Conversation must always be professional in nature.
- b. Always remain calm – even if the person you are interacting with is frustrated, angry, confused, or disoriented. Ask for help from a Tacoma Rescue Mission employee if needed.
- c. Treat everyone with the upmost respect and kindness.
- d. Romantic, sexual and/or personal relationships with residents, clients or interns who receive Tacoma Rescue Mission's services are not tolerated and will result in immediate termination.
- e. Do not cross the relationship line:
  - i. Do not give out your cell phone number to residents or clients.

- ii. Do not give rides to residents or clients.
- iii. Do not lend money or other personal possessions to residents or clients.
- iv. Do not add residents or clients on social media.

### **What happens if there is a problem while I volunteer?**

If you need support at any point during your volunteer shift, please immediately inform a Tacoma Rescue Mission staff.

### **I'm sick. Should I still volunteer?**

If you are not feeling well for any reason, please do not come in for your volunteer shift.

### **Do you keep a record of my volunteer hours?**

**Yes.** Volunteers are required to check-in at a kiosk at the start of each shift. The total amount of your volunteer hours can be found on your Volunteer account under "View Hours"

### **Can I promote Tacoma Rescue Mission to my friends on social media?**

Yes please!

- Our Instagram account is @TacomaMission
- Our Facebook is [Facebook.com/TacomaMission](https://www.facebook.com/TacomaMission)
- Our Twitter is @TacomaMission

Remember to **never include clients in the photo**. Make sure they are not in the background. Only photos of you, Tacoma Rescue Mission staff, and volunteers (providing they are OK with that!) are allowed.