Synapse House
Volunteer Packet - Form 5.01.F

Welcome to Synapse House! This packet is designed to provide guidelines for volunteers.

Contact Information: Deborah Giesler, Director, deborah@synapsehouse.org, 312-217-8778 (cell)
Telephone: 630-297-8002
Website: www.synapsehouse.org

Hours of Operation: Doors open 8:00am-4:00pm, Monday through Friday however the Clubhouse Day Program hours are 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. The organization is closed on the weekends and on all major holidays. During extreme weather conditions, we will be closed if the schools are closed, or you may confirm via text. Please enter the Director's cell phone number listed above and send a text with your name so that we may have your contact details readily available.

IMPORTANT POINTS:

- **No photos or videos of our members can be taken on your personal cell phone or camera.**
- **No posts on social media containing any photos or videos of our members are allowed.**
- **Please keep in mind the confidentiality and privacy of our members. No full names can be utilized outside the facility. Please do not ask the members to share their story or any of their personal contact information with you.**
- **No sleeveless shirts or open toe shoes can be in the kitchen. Hair net, apron & gloves must be worn. Be aware that we have a restaurant license and all food preparation must follow the regulations as set by the Dept of Public Health of DuPage County.**
- **Please do not touch your cell phone when in the kitchen, during any serving of food items or when handling any food related supplies as most phones are germ ridden. Gross.**

Opportunities:

- Member Assistant – Work side by side with members.
- Board of Directors
- Special Events – Volunteer to work our Gala, Bingo or Golf Outing.
- Art & Creativity – Lead an art class.
- Music – Lead a music class.
- Exercise – Yoga seated or exercise is always welcome!
- Outing chaperone – Join us for an outing into the community to assist.
- Office & Data Entry
- Special Events Committee or Volunteer at Event

Philosophy: We ask that all volunteers utilize the term "member" to describe any person at the program. Our philosophy is that all persons, regardless of their disability, contribute to the organization in a meaningful way and are equal, without discrimination. The Clubhouse Model states that everyone works SIDE BY SIDE to accomplish the tasks.

For those engaged in direct care, the goal is to assist by working together or to teach a skill by leading an activity. As with learning to drive a car or tying their shoe, the person must do the actual work to learn the skill. Learning is enhanced by providing instructions, breaking it into smaller steps and simply practice. Please do not do the activity for the person. This will not aid in their recovery but simply make them more dependent. Positive feedback is always good!

Rules and Regulations:

Supervision: An associate(s) will be assigned to be your contact person, direct your responsibilities, and provide orientation. You are required to follow all policies of the organization. We strive to provide excellent care and maintain a safe and positive work environment. If you have questions about any procedures, please do not hesitate to ask.

Confidentiality: All associates, volunteers, and members are asked to always maintain confidentiality. We discourage discussion of a person's injury or medical issues and ask that you re-direct to the task at hand. You may offer a brief sympathetic remark. All materials or information about the organization is considered confidential and is the property of the organization. It cannot be removed or shared with any outside parties without prior permission. Because of HIPAA rules, violations of this policy may result in termination from service and result in legal action including fines.

Evaluation & Survey: We routinely ask for volunteers to provide feedback on their experience to continue to improve our organization.

Attendance: All volunteers are asked to sign in and report the total number of hours served each day. Please call or email if you are unable to make a scheduled appointment. When reporting your hours, please round up to the nearest quarter hour. This makes it much easier to add up all the total hours.

Smoking: No smoking is allowed within the facility or near the front door. Please inquire about the appropriate location for smoking.

Professionalism: This is a business environment, and it is our mission to provide a therapeutic learning environment for our members. We ask that you model appropriate professional behavior. We also strive to provide positive experience for our members, our associates, and volunteers. Many of our members have been through very difficult experiences and we want the Clubhouse and other programs to be a place where they can make mistakes with a safety net but without criticism or negativity. While difficult situations may arise, please remain supportive. If you feel uncomfortable with a member's behavior or would like more direction on how to respond, please ask a staff person in private.

Attire: All associates, volunteers and members are required to wear business casual attire and observe proper hygiene. Please dress appropriately for the activity for which you are volunteering for example if you will be on an outing, make sure to wear clothes and shoes comfortable for lifting and walking or if in the kitchen, please wear nonslip shoes and short sleeves. Long hair should be tied back and jewelry removed.

Family: Family members cannot volunteer with any direct care to promote independence. We welcome families to volunteer through our Board or fundraising opportunities.

Personal or Medical Care: Do not provide any assistance with personal care unless you are qualified. No volunteer is ever allowed to administer medications. Contact a staff person if someone needs assistance standing or with toileting unless you have been trained or have knowledge in this area. 911 is to be called for any medical emergencies.

Emergencies: All have an emergency information sheet that is in front of the facility in a red binder. This information should be provided to any emergency personnel and taken during evacuations. For all medical emergencies, 911 should be called. First aid kits are available. The AED is in front of the facility by the reception desk.

Weather: In case of severe weather, the facility will be closed or closed early. In most cases, we will be closed if the local schools are closed. Please use your best judgement.

Programs:
Clubhouse Day Program: This is a day program for adults with brain injury and stroke. The Clubhouse Model is based on the idea that work is healing for people and that everyone needs a purpose and productive activity. All associates work together and are responsible for the daily operations through Work Units. All are recognized for their contribution, no matter how big or small. Work Units & Activities of the Clubhouse include Business Unit, Culinary Unit, Maintenance Unit, Community Outings, Exercise, and Wellness Programs.

Employment Program: This program assists individuals in preparing to return to work and on the job coaching. It may include updating a resume, practicing interviewing, practicing soft skills or job searching.

Culinary Unit: The Unit provides valuable life skills experience. **Food service sanitation guidelines and recipes must be followed.**

- Nails must be short and clean. No nail polish may be worn.
- No facial hair unless beard net is to be worn which must be provided by you.
- Hair must be clean and pulled back off face if applicable.
- Hair net must always be worn. An approved hat can be worn if it is for the Culinary Unit only and not worn outside the facility.
- Clothes must be clean and be appropriate to wear in a warm kitchen.
- Shirts should be short sleeve and not too loose fitting.
- Pants, leggings or long shorts (to the knee, not preferred due to risk of burns) can be worn.
- Clothes should be checked for loose hair and the use of a lint roller should be used to remove any stray hairs prior to entering the kitchen.
- Non-slip closed toe shoes and socks must be worn.
- Must wash hands thoroughly in the hand washing sinks. Put on a clean apron, hair net and gloves.
- Gloves must be changed whenever they are compromised (i.e. touching raw eggs, touching face or dirty garbage can). NEVER TOUCH YOUR CELL PHONE! If you must, please re-wash hands

- Hand must always be washed after eating, smoking, using your cell phone or using restroom. Upon re-entering the kitchen area, it is expected that each person washes hands, put on hair net, apron and gloves last.
  - It is expected that everyone follows the processes and procedures set by the DuPage Health Department and Synapse House. This includes following all food service sanitation guidelines, following the chosen recipe, and following the processes set for the Culinary Unit to create a quality product safely and efficiently. For the BAKERY (CURRENTLY ON HOLD) - We welcome suggestions on improving our processes and product, but these suggestions should not be implemented without obtaining permission from the Culinary Unit Coordinator as it may affect legal issues such as labeling and food ingredients.
  - Any errors must be reported to the Culinary Unit Coordinator immediately to determine if a batch can be utilized. When in doubt, the batch will not be served.
  - Any compromises to the batch must be reported immediately to the Culinary Unit Coordinator and disposed of. This includes but is not limited to; use of expired food products, contamination of food (i.e. sneezing or coughing on food, using a dirty bowl), use of wrong ingredient or amount, using food products that have not been kept at proper temperature (i.e. eggs left out too long, milk improperly stored) or finding a bug or foreign object in mixture or supplies.
  - **PRIOR TO STARTING!** Each work surface must be cleaned with a CLEAN soapy dish cloth, then use the blue sanitizer solution (it's in a bottle premixed) to spray down the table. Wait 5 minutes and then you can use the table to prepare any food. Return the bottle to the glove cart.
  - Take special care when handling hot pans. Long sleeve hot pads are available.
  - **DISHWASHING:** We must adhere to the 3-sink compartment cleaning process. Members should have gloves and aprons on. All plates, pans or dishes should be wiped off as clean as possible prior to starting. Any access liquid should be put in the 1st compartment of the sink prior to filling it with hot (not scalding) water with dishwashing soap. Take a clean dishcloth to wash dishes. The 2nd sink should be filled with warm clean water as well. This is for rinsing only. This water should remain clear! If it is not, then the dishes are not getting cleaned well enough. The 3rd sink is for sanitizing. See the sign on how many inches to fill and how many tablets to place. Again, use as warm water as possible. ***The dishes MUST be fully immersed in the blue water for 5 minutes to sanitize***. If the item is too big, do one side first, then flip it over to sanitize the 2nd side. The items are then placed on the rack to air dry. You should NEVER towel dry unless you must have it immediately. Empty the sinks one at a time.
  - Take special care when using or washing knives or sharp objects such as the food processor blade. We keep knives to wash separately and wash them individually. Do not put them fully immersed in the water but hold on to the handle to wash. They should be placed to dry on the drain board of the sink near the sanitizing sink.
  - All clean utensils should be put HANDLE UP in the blue basket to dry. This is so you do not touch the part people put in their mouth when putting them away.
  - Liquids must be measured in glass measuring cups for liquids NOT a dry measure cup.
  - Make sure to even off ALL dry measure using a knife to ensure the amount is correct.
  - Double check all ingredients and quantities on orders always.

- When not actively engaged in baking activities, individuals should **NOT** be in the Culinary Unit area. This is for safety and sanitation. Minimize interruptions to the workers and Synapse House staff to ensure that everyone can attend fully to their tasks.
- The Culinary Unit Coordinator or Executive Director must be notified immediately of any change in status such as illness or medical condition that would pose a threat to persons or to the food sanitation process. This includes but is not limited to: flu, colds, pneumonia, TB, Hepatitis, HIV or changes in condition of stroke or brain injury such as seizure activity, high blood pressure, or changes in medication that could affect work performance.

- The Executive Director must be notified IMMEDIATELY of any cuts, burns or injuries that occur to ensure everyone's safety and well-being and an Incident Report must be completed. Any broken equipment MUST be reported to the Director as well.

Family Services: Synapse House strives to provide support to our families. We provide Family Meet-Ups which are recreational-based activities for the family and members to enjoy and have guest speakers to provide information on valuable topics. We also have a virtual book club.

Impairments following a Brain Injury or Stroke

Cognitive – difficulty with memory, attention, problem solving or judgment.
Language - Aphasia – difficulty reading, understanding, writing or finding words.
Speech - Dysarthria – slurred speech.
Physical – difficulty with balance, weakness on one or both sides of the body, tremors.
Visual – blurred vision or reduced perception to the right or left side.
Dysphagia – difficulty with swallowing food or liquids. May have thickened liquids, soft, pre-cut or pureed food.
Behavioral – difficulties may include low frustration tolerance, over-stimulation to noise, inappropriate comments, slow processing, difficulty initiating or stopping an activity.

Behavioral Interventions

- Prevent behavior from occurring in the first place! Members may need assistance in locating productive things to do. This will prevent much of the behavior that can occur during down time. We also just simply want the members to be engaged to aid in their recovery. If you are unsure of any activity, please ask a member of staff as there is always something to do.
- Observe for signs of overstimulation and remove person or portions of task to reduce increasing agitation.
- Take frequent breaks & work in a quiet area.
- Model the behavior you want – speak in soft voice, act calm.
- Provide distraction when the behavior is unwanted – ask about family, pet.
- Use humor but be respectful.
- Provide honest but kind feedback.
- Report behaviors by alerting an associate.

Seizure Intervention

As a result or cause of a brain injury, seizures can occur.

- Protect the person from additional harm by helping to the floor or a chair.
- Protect the head or body from striking any object.

- Roll on side to prevent choking when able.
- Contact 911 for prolonged seizure activity or problems breathing.
- Alert an associate even if the seizure was minor (i.e. staring blankly).
- NEVER put any item in a person's mouth.

Outings: Outings into the community are a great way for volunteers to get involved. These outings do have reason for extra caution to be taken. Please follow these rules when joining our outings.

- Emergency Information Forms – a copy of the emergency information form for each participant on the trip must be included. In case of an emergency, this is used to contact family and to be given to the emergency room or paramedics.
- Cell Phones – Associates are required to have a cell phone with the number of the facility programmed in and copies of the emergency forms in their possession. ***Volunteer cell phones should NOT be utilized to take any photos or videos.*** We have some members that do not consent to having their photo taken.
- Supervision – **At no time can anyone leave the group including volunteers.** If a person must use the restroom, please monitor by standing directly outside the restrooms to ensure their safety.
- Behavior – If a significant behavioral incident occurs, contact the facility to see if the person can be removed from the outing by someone at the facility. Again, they cannot be put into an Uber or walk back by themselves. If the behavior is so severe that a person is a threat to themselves or others, 911 should be called.
- Transportation –Everyone must wear their seat belts. Everyone must have a responsible person in their vehicle. If you, as a volunteer, are driving, the Volunteer Driver Form must be completed.
- Cost – Please inquire about the cost and method of payment. Working on money management is an important task. Assist in determining what are appropriate purchases, amount needed, adequate tip and tax cost.
- Alcohol – No one can consume any alcohol on outings.

Many of our members may utilize devices such as their cell phones, tablets or assistive equipment and this should be encouraged to obtain the best performance possible. The goal is to use this time to fine tune their abilities and skills, overcome barriers, adapt to address any deficits and develop habits to make them as successful and efficient as possible. Keep in mind that what works for one person, may not work for another. This is about developing the best plan for EACH MEMBER!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact an Associate for more information. Deborah Giesler, Executive Director, deborah@synapsehouse.org

Thank you so much for your time. We cannot fulfill our mission without your help.