



# Volunteer Handbook

Revised 5/24/18

# Welcome to SafeCenter! You're Part of Our Team!

The Board of Directors, staff and volunteers of SafeCenter are happy you have decided to join us in helping to eliminate domestic and sexual violence in our communities. You have joined a committed and caring team of professionals and volunteers who have dedicated themselves to this cause to help prevent violence and help survivors overcome trauma.

We will provide you with training and information about the programs, services, policies and procedures of the agency. We will ask for your ideas, thoughts and suggestions. You will be challenged and supported.

The work you will do during your time with us is one part of the overall process of accomplishing the mission and purposes of this agency. You will read about our purpose and mission in the following pages. Your work will touch many lives and impact the lives of individuals in a positive way.

Welcome,



Shelly Safi  
Executive Director

- \* The purpose of the Volunteer Handbook is to establish a uniform system for volunteer administration that will continuously improve the quality and efficiency of services.
- \* The following policies are authorized by the Board of Directors of SafeCenter and shall apply to all volunteer positions.
- \* **Volunteers understand that the location of the SafeCenter safehouse and/or client homes; the individuals that I may come in contact with; staff information and any information they receive may not be revealed to anyone outside of the organization at any time.**

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## **VOLUNTEER PURPOSE**

The purpose of the SafeCenter Volunteer Program is to empower and support survivors of domestic and sexual violence through the efforts of volunteers.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

SafeCenter builds comprehensive and sustainable community strategies to eliminate domestic and sexual violence in Clinton and Shiawassee Counties.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

SafeCenter supports a community where all individuals experience the right to be safe from domestic and sexual violence.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

SafeCenter advocates the right for every person, adult or child, to live in a non-violent environment where individuality and equality are recognized and respected. We seek to maintain a supportive atmosphere wherein victims are able to obtain information, explore options and ultimately make their own choices. We understand that the scope of domestic and sexual violence transcends our local community. Work against societal violence must be achieved through networking at the local, state and national levels. Heightened awareness can lead to changes in society's attitudes about victims and the conditions which lead to violence. Domestic and sexual violence are crimes that not only affect the victims and their families but society as a whole. Interventions must support survivors and hold abusers accountable through coordinated community responses

## **SafeCenter provides the following programs and services:**

- Emergency shelter 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.
- 24 hour crisis and information and referral services for victims of domestic and sexual violence and stalking.
- Individual Counseling and Advocacy.
- Food, clothing and personal care items.
- Housing assistance.
- Legal advocacy (including court advocacy, PPO assistance, and referrals to legal services).
- Supportive services, including support groups for adults and children, both on-site and at various locations.
- Transitional Supportive Housing Program (supportive housing for a maximum of two years and referrals).
- Prevention, education, and awareness programs.

## **HISTORY**

The concept of SafeCenter's existence began in 1983 by Janet Holden who recognized the need for an agency in Clinton County to help victims of domestic violence. By 1985, with the help of volunteers and the Clinton County Sheriff's Department, the 24-hour crisis line was up and running.

SafeCenter's first shelter opened in 1987 with a generous donation of a 17-bedroom convent from a local church. By October of 1993, SafeCenter's services were expanded into Shiawassee County and in 1996 SafeCenter's services were extended to victims of sexual violence.

SafeCenter continues to focus on providing effective and efficient service, outreach, and education in response to emerging and continuing needs of survivors.

## **CIVIL RIGHTS**

SafeCenter is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) (PDF), found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



## **VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS**

All volunteers go through an application and interview process to discuss interests and determine best fit within the agency. Volunteers are asked to make a commitment of one year to SafeCenter for a scheduled amount of hours per month.

Age: The minimum age of a SafeCenter volunteer is 16, unless specified otherwise.

Background Investigation: Due to the nature of our work and for the safety of staff, clients and volunteers, SafeCenter completes a criminal background check on each volunteer. In addition, each volunteer obtains a Central Registry background check at their local Department of Health and Human Services Office.

## **ACCEPTANCE AND APPOINTMENT**

Volunteers will receive official notification of acceptance or denial as a SafeCenter volunteer after all background checks are cleared.

## **TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS**

Service Volunteer: Provides services on a regular and/or on-going basis.

Special Projects: One-time, episodic or special events volunteers.

Student Intern: Students who are completing college requirements. These students are under the direct supervision of a professional staff person appropriate to their field of study.

## **ORIENTATION**

All volunteers are required to complete orientation prior to volunteering. Orientation includes:

- Mission, Vision and Philosophy of SafeCenter
- Core Values
- History of SafeCenter
- Services of SafeCenter
- Dynamics of Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Confidentiality
- Boundaries
- Tour of Shelter and Introduction to Staff
- Volunteer Record Keeping

## **TRAINING**

Volunteers who work directly with clients will be provided additional training. Training will include detailed information about domestic and sexual violence, crisis intervention, empathy training and SafeCenter policies and procedures.

## **RECORDING OF HOURS**

Monthly volunteer logs are provided to volunteers for documenting volunteer hours and tasks completed.

## **ABSENCE**

Volunteers who are scheduled to provide service and unable to do so should let their supervisor know as soon as possible so alternative arrangements can be made.

## **VOLUNTEER/CLIENT CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

- Volunteers are prohibited from borrowing money or anything of value from clients.
- Volunteers are prohibited from loaning money to clients.
- Volunteers are prohibited from sexual contact and exploitation of clients, including romantic relationships with clients.
- Volunteers are prohibited from accepting gifts from clients.
- Volunteers are prohibited from connecting on social media with clients.

A Code of Professional Practice Policy is supplied to volunteers upon acceptance. Volunteers are responsible for strict adherence to this policy. Any violations of this policy may result in immediate disciplinary action or discharge.

## **INSURANCE/DRIVER'S LICENSE**

Any volunteer, who provides transportation for clients and/or provides donation pick-up and delivery, must provide a current driver's license and proof of insurance to the Program Director. The Program Director will be responsible for maintaining the records and will notify volunteers when they are due to expire.

## **PAID MILEAGE**

Transporters wishing to be reimbursed for mileage can complete a Mileage Form at the end of each month. Mileage rates are reviewed and set annually.

## **MISCELLANEOUS SECTION**

### Volunteer Policies

A copy of SafeCenter policies is available to all volunteers. Volunteers are responsible for reading and following SafeCenter Policies. Any questions should be directed to their supervisor.

### Volunteer Records

Volunteer records are maintained for each volunteer by SafeCenter. Each volunteer record contains the application, signed release of information, references, criminal history checks, correspondence and performance evaluations. Volunteer files will be maintained in the Administrative Office.

Volunteers shall have the right, upon request to the Executive Director, to review their own file.

### Media Policy

All media inquiries are directed to the Executive Director. The Executive Director is the spokesperson for the Agency.

### Dress Code

Professional appearance creates a favorable image of the organization to the clients, public and fellow employee/volunteers. All volunteers are expected to present a professional appearance appropriate to the duties they are performing on any particular day.

Primary dress guidelines for volunteers in the counseling and administrative office are business casual attire. Employees providing direct care or having no public contact may be allowed to wear blue jeans in good repair, t-shirts (no inappropriate messages), sweatshirts and athletic shoes. All clothing choices must be clean and appropriate for the workplace.

### Release of Information

SafeCenter will not give information to unauthorized persons seeking information relating to volunteers other than position title and length of service.

### Open Door Policy

It is SafeCenter's desire to provide good working conditions and maintain harmonious working relationships among employees and volunteers. In order to address any work-related problems, SafeCenter's management must be fully informed about them. To facilitate open communication, SafeCenter has an "open door" problem-solving policy. Volunteers are encouraged to discuss concerns or suggestions with their supervisor. Volunteers who believe that the supervisor has not addressed or cannot adequately address the situation are encouraged to discuss the problem with the Executive Director.

### Former SafeCenter Clients

Former clients wishing to volunteer must have a closed file for a period of one year prior to acceptance as a volunteer.

### Former SafeCenter Employees

Former employees wishing to volunteer must be out of the employment of SafeCenter for a period of six months prior to acceptance as a volunteer.



## Supervision

Volunteers fall under the direct supervision of the Program Director or designee. Any problems should be reported to the Executive Director immediately.

## **VOLUNTEER TERMINATION**

SafeCenter is an at-will agency. Volunteers have the right to terminate without cause and SafeCenter has the right to terminate a volunteer without cause, but will always consider the cause leading to the termination.

## **VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Rights

- To find opportunities for meaningful volunteer work that best matches skills and interests, when possible;
- To receive the orientation, training, and supervision necessary to do the work assigned;
- To have safe, healthy working conditions;
- To be kept informed of relevant matters within the organization that may impact work;
- To receive feedback on the work performed;
- To be given the opportunity to provide feedback and input;
- To expect that volunteer time will be used effectively.

### Responsibilities

- To be honest about background, skills, goals, limitations and motivations;
- To meet time commitments or provide notice in accordance with the policies of the organization so alternative arrangements can be made;
- To perform the work assigned to the best of the volunteers ability;
- To maintain confidentiality;
- To follow organizational policies and procedures;
- To notify SafeCenter if you choose to terminate your volunteer relationship.

## Awareness Job Description

**Brief Description:** Attend community events and share SafeCenter information. Ensure that brochures are in various locations.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Attend community events/ meetings
- Speak at designated events about SafeCenter services
- Assist in creation and distribution of brochures

### **Qualifications:**

1. Mode of transportation
2. Ability to stay informed of SafeCenter services/groups/events
3. Ability to stay informed of current information about domestic/sexual abuse
4. Good listening and communication skills
5. Good organizational skills
6. Must be able to maintain confidentiality
7. Background checks
8. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Program Director or assigned Advocate

**Timeframe:** Days, weekends, or evenings as needed

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner
- Must be comfortable speaking in public
- Maintain confidentiality

## Childcare Assistant Job Description

**Brief Description:** The Childcare Assistant is available for childcare, assists with engaging the children in group activities and may assist with group outings. The Childcare Assistant either cares for children at the shelter or assists with child care at support groups in Clinton or Shiawassee Counties.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Provide child care in the shelter or other outreach location;
- Discuss child care with mothers prior to assigned time to gain understanding of specific child's needs;
- Assist with small group activities;
- Plan child focused activities;

### **Qualifications:**

1. Background in child care, teaching or parenting helpful;
2. Basic understanding of child development;
3. Empathy skills;
4. Must be able to maintain confidentiality;
5. Willing to attend CPR and First Aid training provided by SafeCenter
6. Criminal background check.
7. Complete SafeCenter Training

**Direct Supervisor:** Program Director; or advocate as assigned

**Timeframe:** On-Call as needed

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress.
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner.
- Maintain confidentiality

## **On- Call Crisis Intervention Volunteer Job Description**

**Brief Description:** The On- Call Volunteer Advocate is available to provide support and referrals to victims at the hospital or other safe locations. May provide transportation to shelter.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Provide support and referrals to victims at hospital or other safe location
- Record client contact on appropriate forms
- Transportation of client
- Follow-up with SafeCenter Staff to debrief
- Provide advocacy during SANE exams

### **Qualifications:**

1. Good empathy and listening skills
2. Safe, reliable transportation
3. Cell phone access when on-call
4. Good communication and problem solving skills
5. Ability to work independently
6. Good organizational skills
7. Must be able to maintain confidentiality
8. Criminal background check
9. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Program Director and/or assigned advocate

**Timeframe:** On-call schedule (one week rotation)

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter.
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress.
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner.
- Maintain confidentiality

## Donation Pick-Up and Delivery Job Description

**Brief Description:** The Donation Pick-Up and Delivery volunteer works with the Shelter and Facilities Manager to pick-up donations and deliver to the shelter/client housing. This volunteer also helps clients move into/out of housing.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Pick-up and delivery of household items;
- Assist with client moves;
- Sort donations as needed.

### **Qualifications:**

1. Ability to lift 50+ pounds
2. Ability to lift household items up a flight of stairs
3. Valid driver's license and proof of insurance
4. Safe and reliable transportation (truck/van and trailer preferred)
5. Empathy skills
6. Must be able to maintain confidentiality
7. Criminal background check
8. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Shelter and Facilities Manager; or assigned advocate

**Timeframe:** On-Call as needed

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter.
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress.
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner.
- Maintain confidentiality

## Maintenance/Repair Job Description

**Brief Description:** The Maintenance/Repair volunteer will be responsible for general maintenance and minor repairs at the facility.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Light household maintenance;
- Minor repairs as needed;

### **Qualifications:**

1. Have knowledge of basic household maintenance/repair;
2. Have basic maintenance/repair tools (hammer, screwdriver, etc.);
3. Must be able to maintain confidentiality;
4. Criminal background check.
5. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Shelter and Facilities Manager; or assigned advocate

**Timeframe:** This work can be done days, evening or weekends as needed.

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter.
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress.
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner.
- Maintain confidentiality

## Newsletter Job Description

**Brief Description:** The focus of this position is to create and distribute a monthly Newsletter for SafeCenter.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Format and design a newsletter using current computer programs
- Provide accurate, up to date information about SafeCenter programs and events
- Provide accurate, up to date information/stories about domestic and sexual violence, as well as prevention
- Distribution of the newsletter

### **Qualifications:**

1. Ability to use current computer programs (Microsoft Publisher, Microsoft Word)
2. Ability to stay informed of services and events provided by SafeCenter
3. Ability to work with deadlines
4. Good organizational skills
5. Must be able to maintain confidentiality
6. Criminal background check
7. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Program Director

**Timeframe:** Days

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner
- Maintain confidentiality

## Office Assistant Job Description

**Brief Description:** The Office Assistant works in the St. Johns or Owosso office and performs tasks such as answering phones, copying, data entry and assists with mailings and computer work.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Greets and assists incoming patrons and clients
- Assist in providing telephone coverage, including taking and delivering messages and scheduling appointments; crisis call intervention and referrals
- Assist staff with day to day work responsibilities, including filing, copying and other assigned tasks
- Data entry
- Receive and document donations
- Assists with fund development activities, including research
- Assists with mailings
- Encourages clients to complete surveys while in waiting area
- General office cleaning

### **Qualifications:**

1. Knowledge of office machines, including computers, fax and copy machine
2. Ability to work independently
3. Good organizational skills
4. Must be able to maintain confidentiality
5. Criminal background check
6. Complete SafeCenter training

**Supervisor:** Program Director; or advocate as assigned

**Timeframe:** Regularly scheduled time for a minimum of two hours per week.

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter.
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress.
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner.
- Maintain confidentiality



## Shelter Assistant Job Description

**Brief Description:** The Shelter Assistant works in the shelter offering a safe and comfortable environment for clients. The Shelter Assistant is also available to provide empathetic listening, assist with household tasks and provide agency phone coverage.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Assists with client needs
- Develops and implements activities for adults and children
- Assist with maintaining cleanliness of facility including organizing pantry and other areas
- Answer crisis line
- Assist in receiving incoming clients
- Assist in receiving, sorting and organizing donations
- Support established routines and resident responsibilities

### **Qualifications:**

1. Good empathy and listening skills;
2. Good communication and problem solving skills;
3. Ability to work independently;
4. Good organizational skills;
5. Must be able to maintain confidentiality;
6. Criminal background check.
7. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Shelter and Facilities Manager; or assigned advocate

**Timeframe:** Regularly scheduled time for a scheduled shift

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter.
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress.
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner.
- Maintain confidentiality

## **Special Events Job Description**

**Brief Description:** The Special Events volunteer works closely with the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors on fundraising projects.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Assist in planning fundraising events
- Assist with set up and tear down of fundraising events
- Assist with soliciting sponsorships and/or donations

### **Qualifications:**

1. Ability to work in a team setting
2. Public speaking experience helpful
3. Must be able to maintain confidentiality
4. Criminal background check
5. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Executive Director

**Timeframe:** A weekly commitment during event planning and at other times as needed.

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter.
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress.
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner.
- Maintain confidentiality

## Transporter Job Description

**Brief Description:** The Transporter provides transportation for clients.

**Duties (tasks):**

- Be available on an on-call basis to transport client to the shelter/appointments;

**Qualifications:**

1. Valid driver's license and proof of insurance;
2. Safe and reliable transportation;
3. Cell phone access during transport
4. Flexibility and ability to respond to last minute emergency transports;
5. Must have empathy and listening skills;
6. Must be able to maintain confidentiality;
7. Criminal background check.
8. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Shelter and Facilities Manager; or assigned advocate

**Timeframe:** On-Call as needed

**Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress.
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner.
- Maintain confidentiality

## Volunteer Manager Job Description

**Brief Description:** A volunteer manager will be in charge of organizing and training for volunteer activities and events at the office, shelter, and in the community.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Promote SafeCenter volunteer program
- Assess the need for more volunteers
- Train new volunteers; assess their interests and skill set
- Organize and supervise volunteer activities and events

### **Qualifications:**

1. Effective listening and communication skills
2. Good organizational skills
3. Problem solving skills
4. Ability to effectively supervise others
5. Must be able to maintain confidentiality
6. Criminal background check
7. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Program Director

**Timeframe:** Days and weekends as needed

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner
- Maintain confidentiality

## Yard/Garden Work Job Description

**Brief Description:** The position of yard/garden work encompasses general yard work at the facility, as well as any gardening/ landscaping that needs to be done.

### **Duties (tasks):**

- Lawn Mowing
- Keeping yard free of debris (litter, raking leaves, etc.)
- Planting/maintaining flowers and shrubbery
- Keeping track of yard/garden tools
- Other assigned yardwork

### **Qualifications:**

1. Ability to lift 25+ pounds
2. Ability to use a push lawn mower
3. Ability to remove snow (shovel, plow)
4. Must be able to maintain confidentiality
5. Criminal background check
6. Complete SafeCenter training

**Direct Supervisor:** Shelter and Facilities Manager; or assigned advocate

**Timeframe:** Weekdays

### **Performance Standards:**

- Must support the mission and vision of SafeCenter
- Must be able to relate to persons experiencing emotional and physical stress
- Must be able to listen and support persons in a non-judgmental manner
- Maintain confidentiality

## Contact Information

Clinton County  
323 N. Clinton Avenue  
St. Johns, MI 48879  
*P: (989) 723-9716*  
*F: (989) 224-6947*

Shiawassee County  
1300 N. Hickory Street  
Owosso, MI 48867  
*P: (989) 723-9716*  
*F: (989) 723-3822*

Mailing Address  
PO Box 472  
St. Johns, MI 48879

24-Hour Crisis Line: (877) 952-7283  
TTY Operator 711

[www.thesafecenter.org](http://www.thesafecenter.org)