

La Posada Providencia

Volunteer Program Policies Handbook

30094 Marydale Road

San Benito, TX 78586

956-399-3826

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

Revised 2021

To our volunteers:

Thank you so much for choosing to volunteer with La Posada Providencia! Over the past thirty years, hundreds of volunteers have generously given their time and provided their talents. They have offered their support and have reached out to thousands of indigent immigrants, asylees, and asylum seekers that walk through the doors of our shelter. By committing to this work you have become a part of a great, long-standing tradition of service. Our volunteer program is one of our organization’s greatest assets because you are the connection between our clients and the rest of the community who genuinely care about their wellbeing and are willing to offer them support. It is also through you, that our community learns of the very real obstacles and difficulties facing the least fortunate and vulnerable among us. Our hope is that this will prove to be a fulfilling experience for you. However, if you ever find that you have any suggestions, questions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are more than willing to offer our support in any way that we can.

Thank you!

Magda Bolland. Volunteer Coordinator

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**WELCOME TO LA POSADA PROVIDENCIA**

La Posada Providencia provides temporary shelter to persons fleeing from countries with oppressive regimes, famine, or natural disaster who are in the legal process of seeking asylum or other legal residency in the United States. They often arrive wearing their sole possessions after enduring emotional and physical abuse while on their journeys. La Posada’s clients have come from some of the poorest nations in the world (more than 74 countries in Central and South America, Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Russia).

Since 1989, La Posada has developed an extensive list of service offerings. These include:

* *Shelter:*  24-hours a day, 365 days a year, in a residential setting
* *Communal meals: (*preparation and dining)
* *Simple recreation:* (basketball games, soccer games, videos)
* *Communication resources*: access to phone, fax, email, postal services
* *Emotional support*: compassionate listening, guidance and mentoring, access to faith groups
* *Local transportation*: to health care, legal-aid, and social services offices, bus station, etc.
* *English as Second Language (ESL) assistance*: video and audiocassette instruction, written exercises, training in computer basics, plus individual and group conversation practice
* *Cultural integration*: assistance and practice in budgeting, shopping, travel and communications, filling out paperwork, and dealing with government agencies, medical offices and businesses;
* *Financial basics and health-and-nutrition education*: guiding and mentoring ~~and~~
* *Experience in a self-sustainable lifestyle*: organic gardening, gray-water irrigation, recycling, residential energy-efficiency measures, and well-water application.

La Posada helps clients to strive for self-sufficiency and to more easily integrate into U.S. culture by sharing knowledge, experience and resources in a welcoming atmosphere. These actions manifest in La Posada’s mission statement.

**Mission Statement**

*La Posada Providencia*, founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Divine Providence, is a ministry for people in crisis from around the world, who are seeking legal refuge in this country. The shelter staff provides a safe and welcoming home, mentors to promote self-sufficiency and cultural integration and imparts values which witness God’s Providence in our world.

**History**

The Sisters of Divine Providence (CDPs) began their sponsorship of La Posada Providencia in 1989, when a member of the Community answered an invitation to become Executive Director for *Proyecto Libertad,* a pro-bono agency in Harlingen, Texas that promotes and defends human rights in the Rio Grande Valley. This experience demonstrated to the Sisters the need to provide temporary shelter for homeless clients of *Proyecto* and *ProBAR*, a pro-bono legal services agency for asylum seekers detained by U.S. Immigration in South Texas. Before then, there was no place for foreign indigent and homeless persons seeking legal residency to receive basic living assistance until resettlement was arranged. It was not unusual for these clients to sleep on an office floor or at a paralegal’s home.

For 5½ years, La Posada Providencia (The Inn of Providence) moved from one temporary location to another. Then, in 1995, the shelter program settled into its fifth address, one that has become a permanent home. It is situated on ten acres at 30094 Marydale Road, in San Benito, Texas. The site includes five buildings: *Casa Carolina*, a women’s dorm and on-site director’s quarters; *Casa Belen*, the commons building; *Casa Guillermo*, a men’s dorm; a classroom; and a fifth building that is leased. Food (vegetables and fruit) is grown on the property and is nourished by rainwater/gray-water that is collected and recycled for irrigation.

**Organization**

La Posada Providencia is a ministry for people in crisis from around the world who are seeking legal refuge in the United States. Located in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of South Texas, La Posada’s clients are referred to us by immigration attorneys and U.S. Immigration officials. We have aided more than 11,000 immigrants and asylum-seekers from more than 88 countries since opening our doors in 1989.

Most of La Posada’s clients arrive on our doorstep destitute and exhausted, following a long and often dangerous journey. They have fled political and religious persecution, extreme poverty, famine, and natural disasters. Many have endured severe hardships, including violence, forced separation from family members, unjust imprisonment, and even torture.

La Posada provides immediate and tangible support in the form of food, shelter, clothing, medical supplies and care. Equally important, we provide case management with an individualized resettlement preparation process that includes needs assessment, goal-setting and facilitation of services to meet identified needs. Such supportive services include local transportation to off-site agencies (health care, legal-aid, and social services), access to on-site communication resources, paperwork/translation assistance, English literacy, employment preparation, and life skills education.

Until clients are granted appropriate work authorizations, can secure employment and/or have appropriate recourse to resettle, La Posada provides their sole means of support. The La Posada living experience offers safety, hope, and a way forward.

**Volunteer Program**

La Posada Providencia’s Volunteer Program is diverse with many exciting opportunities for both individuals and groups. Tutoring adults in learning English, working with clients to help them learn computer literacy, and working with our garden projects are just a few of the exciting onsite volunteer opportunities available at La Posada. In addition, La Posada offers more flexible areas of service such as assisting with driving clients to and from appointments, completing data entry, and or by helping with special events.

**Volunteer Policies**

The ***Volunteer Coordinator*** is responsible for the overall management of volunteer services to support La Posada Providencia. This can include, local shelter transportation, ESL and life-skills tutoring, and shelter building and grounds maintenance. The Volunteer Coordinator will enlarge La Posada Providencia’s volunteer base to expand needed services for its clients. This person will recruit, train, schedule, and supervise volunteers to perform tasks as needed. This position works closely with the staff and reports directly to the Development Coordinator.

**Episodic Volunteer**

Volunteers who do not plan to serve on a regular, long-term basis need only have a volunteer contact form and confidentiality agreement on file. Any interaction that they have with clients must be supervised by a staff member or an active volunteer. Individuals must communicate directly with the Volunteer Coordinator before being able to volunteer.

**Active Volunteers**

Volunteers are designated as ‘active’ if he/she volunteers at least once per month for a least three consecutive months. Our screening process for active volunteers is typically more stringent than that for episodic volunteers. Like episodic volunteers, they must submit a volunteer contact form and confidentiality agreement. In addition, individuals must complete an interview with the Volunteer Coordinator.

**Young Volunteers**

Our volunteer program has a long history of including young volunteers. Involving youth can give our clients a unique opportunity to connect with people their own age. However, we do recognize that there are some risks that exist in our work, and as a result, we require that all volunteers in High School or under the age of 18 sign a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian. Groups of young volunteers should be supervised by enough adults to ensure a safe, helpful and meaningful experience.

**Confidentiality**

Staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to the guidelines of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPAA). Information gained concerning clients of La Posada Providencia must be held confidential unless there is a danger to the client or to surrounding people and property. Such information includes, but is not limited to: clients’ names, addresses, employers, relatives, dates of birth, social security numbers, telephone numbers, occupations, diagnoses, legal case status, treatment services and procedures prescribed.

* Any recounting of a volunteer’s experience at La Posada should not include clients’ names or any other details by which a client could be identified.
* No photos or videos should be taken of the clients.
* Confidentiality agreements should be signed by all volunteers before the individual’s first day volunteering.

**Working with Clients**

Serving the clients at La Posada Providencia is an incredible privilege and honor. It is necessary that our clients are treated with the upmost respect and dignity. We do everything we can to cultivate a healthy, safe, and thriving environment for the clients staying at La Posada Providencia. The roles of visitors and volunteers at La Posada are crucial in maintaining such an environment.

**La Posada Providencia’s Commitment to Educating, Empowering, and Protecting Clients**

La Posada Providencia is committed to educating, empowering, and protecting clients in every way possible. La Posada Providencia will offer education to clients about how to recognize and protect themselves from different forms of abuse and exploitation. We are committed to helping them recognize risk factors leading to abuse and educating them on their rights protecting them from abuse.

La Posada Providencia will protect the clients by requiring visitors and volunteers to undergo a criminal background check. In addition to this, visitors and volunteers are contractually obligated to work together with La Posada Providencia to educate, empower, and protect clients.

1. **Definition of Terms**

A) **Abuse**refers to any harm intentionally inflicted on another person.

B) **Sexual abuse**, according to the American Psychological Association, refers to any “unwanted sexual activity, with perpetrators using force, making threats or taking advantage of victims not able to give consent”.

C) **Physical abuse** refers to any intentional act that causes physical harm to the other individual, including but not limited to bruises, cuts, burns, marks, cuts, welts, scrapes, broken bones, etc.

D) **Children**refers to any client that is from 0-17 years of age. In addition, “children” refers to individuals who are not able to make decisions for themselves or protect themselves against abuse, neglect, or violence of any kind.

E) C**hild abuse and neglect,**according to The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), is "any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caregiver that results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, or an act or failure to act that presents an imminent risk of serious harm”.

**Behavioral protocols when working with Clients**

* Visitors and volunteers must not take any pictures of clients under any circumstance.
* Visitors and volunteers must be aware of the diversity in cultures at La Posada Providencia among the clients. In order to fully respect and empower the clients, it is important to be **culturally competent** and **culturally humble**.

A. **Cultural competence** means being aware of and knowledgeable of another culture. This includes their practices, behaviors, and social norms.

B.  **Cultural humility** means having a respectful, open, and humble attitude toward different cultures. It is embodying the attitude that no culture is “better” than another, and we can all learn from one another.

* Visitors and volunteers must not inappropriately touch or talk to a client. This includes foul or inappropriate language being spoken to or around a client.
* Visitors and volunteers must not be alone in an enclosed area with any client, nor should they manipulate a client into spending alone time with them outside of regular volunteer activities.
* Visitors and volunteers must not encourage any client to talk about their story or how they came to the United States. If the client freely and openly talks about their experiences, the visitor/volunteer can listen, be respectful, and avoid disclosing the client’s information to anybody else. This includes refraining from posting their story or any identifying information on social media. If the client discloses any experiences of abuse, please inform a member of La Posada Providencia’s case management or supervision staff.
* Visitors and volunteers must not cause any harm to the clients in any way.
* Visitors and volunteers must not encourage the clients to participate in risky or dangerous behavior, such as drinking, smoking, or going to parties. If a volunteer is involved in this behavior, they will be immediately restricted from contact with the clients.
* Volunteers should treat clients with respect, dignity, and warmth.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**Policy**

All volunteers of La Posada Providencia are obligated to carry out their job duties for the sole benefit of the organization. Volunteers should avoid relationships where their personal interests may be in conflict with the interests of La Posada Providencia and its clients or may impair their independence or judgment.

**Procedure**

A conflict of interest exists when the actions of a volunteer could involve (but are not limited to) an improper personal gain or advantage to the volunteer or if the actions have an adverse effect on the organization’s interests.

General areas of conflict include, but are not limited to:

1. **Financial Interest**

Ownership by a volunteer of a financial interest in a business from which La Posada Providencia obtains goods or services or which is a competitor of La Posada Providencia.

Competition by a volunteer with La Posada Providencia in the purchase or sale of property or any property right or interest.

Representation of La Posada Providencia by a volunteer in any transaction or activity in which the volunteer has a financial interest.

1. **Confidential Information**

Volunteers should not disclose or use confidential information about La Posada Providencia, its activities, intentions or clients.

C. **Outside Activity**

Volunteers should not represent themselves as director, officer, agent, employee or member of another company, institution, agency or organization in any activity, which involves La Posada Providencia as an adverse party.

1. **Gifts and Favors**

Gifts or favors are not to be accepted from any business or individual, who does or seeks to do business with, or is a competitor of La Posada Providencia if such action is intended to influence the volunteer in the performance of La Posada Providencia duties. This does not include items of nominal value, as defined by state or federal laws and regulations, given for friendship or other reasons not related to a particular transaction of La Posada Providencia.

E. **Nepotism**

Volunteerism with La Posada Providencia is prohibited if the person is related within the second degree by affinity or third degree by consanguinity to any member of La Posada Providencia’s governing body or to any officer or employee who would directly supervise such person. This prohibition shall not prohibit the continued volunteering of a person who has been continuously volunteering for a period of two years prior to the election or appointment of the officer, employee, or governing body member related to such person in the prohibited degree.

**Working with Young Clients**

Caring for and working with the children and youth being served at La Posada Providencia can be among the most rewarding aspects of this program. With that, it is our responsibility and privilege to protect, empower, and cultivate a safe environment for our clients. Our actions must give them a voice and give them dignity. To better protect all of the children in our program, we require that all volunteers and visitors adhere to the following guidelines:

**Behavioral protocols when working with Young Clients**

* Visitors and volunteers are not to take pictures of any children or clients in La Posada Providencia’s care in order to ensure their safety.
* Visitors and volunteers should not accompany a child into the restroom.
* Visitors and volunteers will not touch a child inappropriately or attempt to have any sexual relations with them. Physical touch should be limited as much as possible in order to ensure the safety and dignity of our clients. Visitors and volunteers should use caution regarding physical displays of affection (e.g., hugging, social rough-housing, etc.). At no time are any forms of physical touch appropriate if they could not also be comfortably, and with approval, carried out in the presence of the minor’s parent.
  + In the case of unavoidable contact, such as playing a sports game, the visitor/volunteer must be aware of the possibility of a client misinterpreting the physical contact and avoid as much contact as possible.
* Visitors and volunteers should not ask the young clients about their stories or how they came to the United States.
* Visitors and volunteers should always be in an open, public place with clients. Nobody should be left alone with a child at any time in a closed area.
* Visitors and volunteers will avoid any interaction or behavior that may harm or exploit the client at all.
* Visitors and volunteers should act appropriately according to the guidelines. One should ask a staff member if they are unsure of the boundaries.
* Visitors and volunteers may not use any inappropriate language with or around young clients.
* Visitors and volunteers may not physically or verbally punish any young clients for any reason. Visitors and volunteers should instead inform the staff of La Posada Providencia of any misbehavior and allow them to handle the situation.
* Parents are responsible for the care of their own children and should know where their children are at all times.
* If the volunteer is working with or taking care of a child, the parent should be reasonably close at hand.
* Staff members are required by law to report all instances of abuse (physical or otherwise). For recommendations of appropriate disciplinary methods, clients are encouraged to speak with the staff. If volunteers witness any behavior that they feel might be considered abusive, we ask that you please notify a staff member immediately.

**Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) abuse at La Posada Providencia:**

All paid and unpaid workers at La Posada Providencia are required to report any seen or suspected cases of abuse immediately to the staff, preferably a supervisor. The parents of any child involved should be informed of the abuse immediately, unless it is the parent or guardian that is suspected of the abuse. If a supervisor is suspected of the abuse, then the reporter must go to the next higher staff member. Any allegations of abuse will be kept confidential.

We take all allegations of abuse seriously. No form of abuse, manipulation, or exploitation will be tolerated at La Posada Providencia. Our clients’ safety and well-being are of the upmost importance to us, and we will do everything in our power to protect that.  If necessary, La Posada Providencia will take legal action when there are allegations of sexual or physical abuse.

**Fraternization / Outside Contact with Clients**

Given the nature of the work that we do, there are at times in which some risks can result from being in contact with clients outside of the context of your role as a volunteer with La Posada Providencia. At the same time, we pride ourselves in being an organization where volunteers have the opportunity to build deeper relationships with our clients. We advise all volunteers to use prudent caution in limiting outside contact with current and former clients. In particular we warn against giving out your full name, phone number, address, or email address or connecting through social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. In general, we warn against making plans to meet with a client for an activity or event that is not sponsored by La Posada Providencia.

**Photograph and Video Policy**

While volunteering with La Posada Providencia, your picture may be taken for the agency’s promotional materials. If you do not want to be included in photographs, please inform the Volunteer Coordinator.

**Taking Pictures / Recording Videos**

It is strictly prohibited for any volunteer to take any pictures and/or videos of any client that is residing at La Posada.

**Abuse of Agency Property**

All property and resources of La Posada Providencia are intended either to provide assistance for our clients or to further our mission. Volunteers should never take food, clothing, or any other property of La Posada Providencia without receiving explicit permission from a supervisor. If you are in need of assistance, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator.

**Diversity and Equal Opportunity**

La Posada Providencia is committed to welcoming all who are interested in volunteering to serve and share in our work independent of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, handicap, citizenship, ancestry or familial status as a veteran. Any volunteer who believes he/she has been unfairly treated should bring it to the attention of the Volunteer Coordinator and utilize the procedure set forth in the Anti-Harassment Policy section.

**Sexual Harassment Policy**

Sexual Harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity and where a situation which creates an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient. La Posada Providencia is committed to providing a safe environment for all its clients free from discrimination on any ground and from harassment at the shelter including sexual harassment. La Posada Providencia will operate a zero-tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment in the shelter, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. Any person found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the shelter.

**Anti-Harassment Policy**

La Posada Providencia will not tolerate harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual preference, national origin, age, height, weight, disability, marital status, or status in any group protected by state or local law. Improper interference with the ability of La Posada Providencia volunteers to perform their expected job duties is not tolerated. Any volunteer who believes that he/she has been the subject to or witnessed unlawful harassment, he/she should immediately report the alleged act to the Volunteer Coordinator. Any volunteer who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have initiated or engaged in harassing behavior of another volunteer, staff member or client will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of their volunteer service. The severity and pattern of behavior will be taken into consideration when determining disciplinary action.

**Americans with Disabilities Act Statement**

Volunteers with disabilities are encouraged to contact La Posada Providencia for a confidential discussion of their individual needs. La Posada Providencia will make reasonable accommodations in all volunteer positions to enable participation by an individual with a documented disability that meets essential eligibility requirements.

**Rules of Conduct**

All volunteers are prohibited from being engaged in the following activities:

* Theft or unauthorized possession of La Posada Providencia property or dishonesty of any type.
* Reporting under the influence of liquor or narcotics or bringing or consuming either on La Posada Providencia property or event.
* Disorderly conduct with malicious intent which might result in injury.
* Threatening, intimidating, coercing or interfering with La Posada Providencia staff, clients, or volunteers.
* Insubordination or refusal to carry out any reasonable instructions or directives.
* Willful destruction of La Posada Providencia equipment, merchandise, or property.
* Falsifying personnel records or giving false information.
* Gambling of any kind on La Posada Providencia premises or events.
* Using offensive language.
* Violation of confidentiality.
* Any illegal activity.

**Smoking**

Smoking is NOT permitted in La Posada Providencia buildings, surrounding property or in any vehicle belonging to La Posada Providencia.

**Grievances**

While we certainly hope that you have a positive experience with La Posada Providencia, we realize that there may be times when conflicts arise. Volunteers are welcomed and encourage to bring any concerns regarding their experience to the attention of the La Posada Providencia staff. We are here to help any way that we can.

**Reporting Ethical or Professional Misconduct**

Employees and volunteers have a duty to report their own ethical or professional misconduct as well as the misconduct of others. Employees and volunteers are expected to hold each other accountable for maintaining the highest ethical and professional standards. When there is an indication of illegal activities by employees or volunteers, the proper civil authorities should be notified immediately as well as the competent authority within La Posada Providencia. Any other violations or suspected violations of La Posada Providencia’s policies or Rules of Conduct should be brought to the attention of the appropriate supervisor.

**News Releases and Activities**

Authorized statements or news releases to the media on behalf of La Posada Providencia and/or the Sisters of Divine Providence shall be made only by the Program Director or a CDP designated representative.

**Anti-lobbying Statement**

In order to retain its tax-exempt status, La Posada Providencia is prohibited from participation, intervention or involvement, either directly or indirectly, in support of, or in opposition to any candidate for elective public office. No facilities shall be used in any manner which would directly, or indirectly benefit any candidate for elective public office. Specifically, and without limiting the foregoing, La Posada Providencia staff shall not:

1. Issue any statement, orally or in any news release, connecting La Posada Providencia with endorsement of or comment on an election or candidate for elective public office.
2. Use La Posada Providencia in connection with any campaign election or candidate for elective public office.
3. Use the facilities of La Posada Providencia, including office space, office machines, telephones, supplies, etc. in connection with any election or candidate for elective public office.
4. Devote any time, during the hours for which such as intern is paid by La Posada Providencia, to any activities in connection with any election or candidate for elective public office.

**Religious Participation**

No staff and/or volunteer is allowed to conduct mandatory scripture studies or worship services or evangelize clients to any sort of religious beliefs. Staff and/or program volunteers should not distribute literature that is religious in nature. Staff and volunteers shall facilitate clients’ reasonable requests for transportations/access to religious services. However, staff and volunteers will not make religious instruction, worship or counseling a basis for admission to or continued residency in the shelter. Staff and program volunteers will not discriminate against clients due to religious beliefs.

**Personal Property**

It is wise to safeguard your personal money and possessions. They are considered your responsibilities. Any items that are found must be reported to the Program Director.

**Client Conduct**

Clients are expected to act in accordance with the following rules:

* Clients should be respectful to our volunteers, staff, and each other.
* Clients are expected to observe the daily schedule.
* Only the designated cook is permitted in the kitchen to prepare food. Between meals there are snacks provided next to the coffee.
* Dress code should be observed at all times.
* Phone calls are not to be made or received after 10:00 PM; phone calls should be limited to 10 minutes.
* Everyone must sign out when leaving the property and sign in when returning. No one should leave the property after 10:00 PM.
* Smoking is NOT permitted in any of the houses or cars.
* Women are not permitted in the male dormitory; men are not permitted in the women’s dormitory.
* Food is not permitted in the dormitories, with the exception of water.
* Clients must be fully dressed when leaving the privacy of their rooms.

**Rules Resulting in Immediate Departure:**

* Fighting
* Verbal aggression and physical punishment
* Use of possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, and/or pornography.
* Being physically aggressive.
* Engaging in sexual relations.
* Choosing to continue arguing with others after being given a warning.
* Possessing firearms or other weapons including pocket knives (toy weapons are discouraged as well).

No second chances will be given to any resident who violates these rules.

**Client Daily Schedule**

7:30 am – 8:30 am Breakfast – each client prepares own breakfast

8:30 am – 9:30 am Daily Chores

9:30 am – 11:30 am ESL Classes

12:00 Noon Lunch

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm ESL Classes

6:00 pm Dinner

10:00 pm Lights out

**Volunteer Procedures**

**Expectations:**

* All potential volunteers will be required to submit an application and background check for approval. Once approved an online training will need to be completed.
* No volunteer will offer personal help outside of La Posada Providencia to any client or staff member.
* It is highly recommended that every volunteer purchases a unique t-shirt to wear while on the premises volunteering. This will aid all staff to identify all volunteers. T-shirts can be purchased from the Volunteer Coordinator.
* Maintain a good team attitude.
* Communicate with the Volunteer Coordinator prior to your schedule start date.
* All communications with and/or concerning La Posada Providencia clients should be kept confidential.
* No volunteer will be allowed to handle any monetary donations that are donated to La Posada.
* Under no circumstances will any volunteers accept cash from any client requesting for personal items to be purchased for them.

**Documenting Volunteer Hours**

All volunteers must report to the Volunteer Coordinator’s office at Casa Carolina, each time they arrive for a work assignment. ALL Volunteers must sign in and out on a time sheet provided to them by the Volunteer Coordinator.

**Absences and Lateness**

Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator if you know that you will be late or absent.

**Change of name, address and telephone numbers**

It is important for La Posada to have the correct address, telephone number, and emergency contact information on file at all times. Volunteers must notify the Volunteer Coordinator if there is any change in any of this information.

**Volunteer Badges**

Please pick up a volunteer badge from the Volunteer Coordinator’s office to wear each time you come to volunteer. These should be returned to the office when you are ready to leave. Volunteers will also be provided with badges during special events and/or fundraisers. These badges should also be returned at the end of the event.

**Dress Code**

All volunteers are asked to dress appropriately for the job you are doing. It is best neither to overdress nor underdress. Casual clothing is fine, but La Posada Providencia asks that your attire be neat and conservative.

**Emergency Procedures**

***Fire***

In case of a fire, everyone in the building must evaluate. Clients should be directed to the nearest and safest exit out of the building and gather at a reasonable distance from the fire. The area should be checked to make sure clients are not sleeping. Doors should be closed when leaving the rooms. Feel the doors for heat before entering. A La Posada Providencia staff member will check to make sure that all volunteers are accounted for. All staff, volunteers and clients will remain outside until the fire department designates that the building is safe to enter.

***Tornado***

All staff, clients and volunteers should go into rooms with no windows. Staff should bring a flashlight.

***Earthquake***

Earthquakes occur without warning. Most injuries occur as people are entering or leaving buildings.

* Stay calm.
* If you are indoors, stay indoors. If you are outdoors, stay outdoors.
* If indoors, get under a desk or table and stay away from windows and outside walls.
* If outdoors, move away from buildings, trees, walls, and utility lines. Once in the open, stay there until the shaking stops.
* If you are in a vehicle, pull to the side of the side of the road and stop the vehicle. Do not park under overpasses or power lines. Stay in the vehicle until the shaking stops.
* Be prepared for additional earthquakes or “aftershocks”.

***Bomb Threats***

If a phone call is received with a bomb threat, ask the caller for the location of the bomb. Assume that the threat is valid, and page all in the building to evacuate. Call 911 as soon as you are safely away from the building. All staff, clients and volunteers are to evacuate the building and stay away at a distance of at least 300 feet from the building. No one is to re-enter the building until the police or fire department give clearance.

***Lockdown***

If anyone observes that a dangerous situation is occurring, the building will be locked until further notice. A La Posada Providencia staff member will call 911. No one may leave the building. Neither staff nor clients are to open doors for anyone.

***Other Emergencies***

Press the PAGE button on the office phone to notify all staff of the need for assistance in your particular area.

**Addressing Client Misconduct**

All clients are expected to follow the rules listed on page 10 while in our program. If a client’s behavior is not in line with the listed expectations or if there are issues with rudeness, disrespect, etc., we ask that volunteers please inform staff. If you believe that someone is posing an imminent threat to themselves or to others, please call 911. Thank you for helping us ensure that this continues to be a safe and rewarding program for everyone involved.

**Exit Interviews**

As you are ending your time as a volunteer with La Posada Providencia, we ask that you contribute any suggestions or other feedback that might improve the quality of our program.

**Holidays**

The following holidays are observed by La Posada Providencia and thus no volunteer activities will take place:

New Year’s Day

Martin Luther King, Jr Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Day

**I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the La Posada Providencia’s volunteer handbook. I agree that if I do not comply by the rules and regulations of the volunteer program at La Posada Providencia it will lead to immediate dismissal.**

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Volunteer Signature Date

**Thank you for choosing to make a difference!**

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**www.lppshelter.org**