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San Leandro, CA 94577
510 357-0205
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www.BFWC.org
Crisis Line 1 866-292-9688

Thank you for contacting Building Futures about serving as a volunteer.

Our agency is in our 26th year of service to individuals and families in need. Our mission is to build communities with underserved women and children where they are safely and supportively housed, free from homelessness and domestic violence.

- Last year, we served 586 women and children in our emergency shelters located in San Leandro and Alameda. Our homeless shelters are consistently recognized for leading our County in rates of linking shelter residents to permanent housing.
- No woman is ever turned away because of the severity of the obstacles she faces. *Space limitations are the only barrier to entry at our emergency shelters.*
- With over 9,500 calls to our free 24/7 crisis hotline last year, we connected a record number of callers with help.
- Our Children's Program is available to every child served at one of our four residential sites. Services focus on the physical, emotional, and social well-being of these vulnerable children.
- During 2013, we served 250 domestic violence survivors in free support groups in the community at our shelters and supportive housing sites.
- We trained and certified 35 new domestic violence counselors through our California 40-hour certification training.

*We invite you to learn more about our programs and services at
www.bfwc.org.*

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Because of the issues faced by women and children surviving homelessness and domestic violence and the community setting within which we operate, all staff and volunteers must follow these policies regarding our interactions with each other and residents while at work. These policies are intended to ensure that residents are treated with respect, concern, and sensitivity, and that the safety of each person is strictly upheld. Toward these goals, we ask that you observe the following:

CONFIDENTIALITY

- The shelter locations are confidential, and we do not allow visitors. Never give out the shelters' addresses or directions. If you know someone who would like to volunteer or make a donation, please feel free to refer them to (510) 357-0205 x206 or direct them to our website. Always ask staff for permission before having anyone drive you or come with you.
- Sister Me Home's confidentiality policies are even stricter than the shelters'. Outside of staff, residents, and trained and authorized volunteers, NO ONE may know its location. Please respect this policy to protect our residents' safety. If you do not drive, talk with your volunteer supervisor about arranging the best way for you to arrive at the safe house.

CONDUCT

- For safety reasons, it is very important that you never confirm or deny any person's residency at our shelters to any outside person.
- To ensure fairness, all donations must be given to the program, not to individuals. Please do not give material goods or money to residents. If you wish to demonstrate your generosity, we would love for you to bring something that everyone can share.
- We do not allow alcohol or drugs on the premises or tolerate any person being under the influence while at our sites or representing our agency.
- Please refrain from comments or behavior that offend anyone's gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, veteran status, disability, ethnicity, or skin color, or that may insult anyone in any other way.
- If you have questions or concerns about shelter policy or about how a staff handles a situation, please wait and ask the staff privately. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to the staff, please talk to your direct supervisor or Volunteer Manager, who can be reached at 510-924-3092. It is important that you not address these matters in front of residents.
- Please do not take any donations or other shelter property.
- If any situation arises that you are not trained to handle, that you are unsure how to handle, or that makes you uncomfortable, immediately bring it to the attention of the staff on duty.

INTERACTING WITH RESIDENTS

- Please do not inquire about residents' personal information. Residents may or may not be comfortable sharing personal information and will raise the subject if they wish.
- Romantic or sexual comments or relationships are prohibited.
- If you are acquainted with a shelter resident, you may not volunteer with us for the duration of her stay.
- Please do not discuss your personal matters with residents; they should be left outside the door. We are here for the benefit of the shelter residents.
- Volunteers may not get involved with any resident's recovery (please do not invite them to your meetings or offer to be a sponsor).
- Volunteers may not offer rides to residents, nor accept if they ask.
- Please do not discuss staff, volunteer or other residents' matters with residents. However, if you become aware of any information that could jeopardize anyone's safety or recovery, or that may be pertinent to a resident's case management, please share it with staff right away.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- If you will be unable to volunteer at your scheduled time, please call and notify us at least 24 hours in advance, so that we may schedule another volunteer or make other arrangements.
- Please be prepared to take your volunteer position seriously. We do depend heavily on our volunteers. Not showing, not completing your project thoroughly, or not holding yourself accountable to the above policies can be detrimental to the operation of our shelters.
- Each time you volunteer with our agency, please enter your name, task completed, time in and time out and total hours worked on the "Volunteer Sign-In Sheet" (ask the staff on site where to find this sheet). And if you are a dinner cook dropping off your meal, please provide us on the "Volunteer Sign-In Sheet" with the hours it took to make your meal. By tracking your service, you will help us demonstrate to current and potential funders the depth of our community support, which can significantly impact their funding decisions.

*We are very grateful for your interest and your help!
We look forward to working with you.*

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES *(Please note: Before applying, confirm current volunteer needs)*

★ **DINNER COOK PROGRAM**

Our shelters rely almost exclusively on volunteers to provide our evening meals. Dinner cooks provide a healthy, well-balanced meal for 30 women and children. These volunteers **deliver meals by 5:00 p.m. after preparing them at home, at their church, or at another facility.** Individuals and groups alike fulfill this volunteer role, but of course coordinating a group reduces each individual's work load and cost contribution. Most volunteers **provide dinner at least monthly**, but we can consider other schedules.

★ **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

We sometimes need help with such tasks as bulk mailings (newsletters, holiday mailings, & invitations), photocopying, filing, and data entry. Other clerical tasks may be available.

★ **AT THE SITES**

Volunteer needs include **repair and Shelter Maintenance assistance, yard work and gardening, handling and sorting donations, hauling heavy items, serving meals, and cleaning/organizing.** We can schedule **one-time projects**, depending on the task. We often need volunteers with trucks or hauling vehicles to help us move heavy items and dump runs. If you have experience with services such as hair styling, massage, or exercise, we would love to speak with you about providing these services for our clients.

★ **GROUP PROJECTS**

Groups of volunteers, such as business or faith groups may schedule **one-time or quarterly projects.** Examples are painting, reorganizing our storage sheds, and preparing and serving meals such as a brunch or barbecue during a holiday. Groups are also welcome to **independently hold a drive for food** or supplies to give to the shelter. **Please contact us to discuss your project and complete paperwork one to two months before your proposed date.**

★ HOLIDAYS

The holidays can be a good time for volunteer groups or individuals to provide meals, entertainment, or educational programming. **If interested, we ask that you contact us to discuss your project one month in advance.** The following is a list of holidays and what we would like to provide for the residents:

- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** — educational celebration
- **Easter** —Easter egg hunt and dinner
- **Mother's Day** — brunch; activities, services, gift cards or self-care products for relaxation
- **Memorial Day** — barbecue (preparation, serving, cleaning up)
- **July 4th** — barbecue (preparation, serving, cleaning up)
- **Passover, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, Hanukkah** — an educational program to help children understand one or more of these holidays
- **Labor Day** – barbecue (preparation, serving, cleaning up)
- **Halloween** — costume drive, general entertainment activities, such as decorating the shelter, painting faces, telling fortunes, apple bobbing, etc.
- **Thanksgiving** —dinner, re-organization, art project, etc.
- **Kwanzaa** — a special meal or project with the kids
- **Winter holiday gift drive**— drives or donations of new gift items from our holiday wish list, gift-wrapping for our 250 clients, and transporting gifts between the office and the sites.
- **New Year's** — non-alcoholic cider and a special meal for New Year's Eve or New Year's Day



Individual Volunteer Application Form

Date _____

Name _____ Birth Date _____
(first) (last) (optional)

Home phone _____ Cell phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Emergency contact _____
(name) (relationship)

(daytime phone) (evening phone)

Health-related limitations _____

Name of employer _____ Position/Job title _____

Available days/hours: *(Please only include the times you would want to volunteer)*

Weekdays _____ Times: _____

Weekends _____ Times: _____

Site: Community Office. SL Shelter Safe house Midway Bessie Coleman

How did you become aware of and interested in our volunteer opportunities?

Please list any education, work, and volunteer experience, and skills or interests that you would like to share.

Please check the volunteer opportunity you are most interested in:

40 Hour Training- Please send me information!

Our **40-hour Domestic Violence Counselor training**, offered semi-annually, is a prerequisite to volunteering at the Sister Me Home Safe House.

Dinner Cook Program

We have several available dinner slots. Dinner cooks provide a healthy, well-balanced meal for 30 residents. Dinner cooks **deliver meals no later than 5:00 p.m. after preparing them at home, at their church, or at another facility.**

Administrative Office

At the office we occasionally need help with such tasks as bulk mailings, copying, filing, and data entry.

Shelter Site Projects

Activities include painting, yard work, building shelves, reorganizing our storage shed, hauling heavy items, and cleaning/organizing.

Holidays

We rely on volunteer groups or individuals to provide meals, entertainment, or educational programming over the holidays. Please read Volunteer Opportunities sheet for complete list of holidays.

Which volunteer opportunity is your primary interest? _____

By signing below, I attest that the above information is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that I have read and understand the agency's policies with regards to confidentiality, alcohol/drugs, and interactions with residents, staff, and other volunteers. I agree to follow all of these policies, as well as any other rules or directions given by staff while I am volunteering. By signing below, I also grant BFWC permission of the use of my name, picture, story, likeness, voice and words in television, radio, website, CD-Rom, newsletters or in any way to promote activities of Building Futures.

Signature _____ Date _____

This organization is not obligated to provide a placement, nor are you obligated to accept any position offered. We reserve the right to conduct a criminal background check for any volunteer applicant. Opportunities for volunteers are provided without regard to religion, skin color, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.



Confidentiality Form

I understand that the location of Building Futures facilities must be kept strictly confidential in order to protect the safety of both staff and clients. I agree not to disclose to anyone the address, neighborhood, or directions, or otherwise compromise the confidentiality of Building Future's facilities.

Signature of Serviceperson/Volunteer

Printed Name

Company and Position (reason for visit)

Date