



**THIS IS LIVING MINISTRIES  
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

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# Welcome Letter

*Dear Volunteer,*

*I am thrilled you have chosen to volunteer with This Is Living Ministries. Volunteers are such a vital part of the reentry system and here at This Is Living we take great pride in making sure that each of our volunteers has the best experience possible while serving with us. I pray that you find the duties you perform while volunteering with us are benefitting you as well as the people you are serving. God has blessed us so abundantly and we are so excited to welcome you to the mission of this non-profit organization. The following packet is all the information you will need to know going into this program! Thank you so much for your time and dedication.*

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lindsay Holloway".

*Lindsay Holloway*

*Founder and Executive Director*

*This Is Living Ministries*

## **Vision Statement**

*We envision women healed from the effects of incarceration and addiction, seeing all walk in their identity and truly living, through the faith, hope, and love found in Jesus Christ.*

## **Mission Statement**

*Seeking to put God's love into action, This is Living Ministries disciples those affected by incarceration and addiction with Biblical Principles, teaching them how to reenter society, and live out these principles in their own home, church, workplace, and community.*

## **Our Story**

*Women with a heart to see lives restored met as a group of jail ministry volunteers. We all felt passionate about helping women after incarceration. As we were seeking to find resources for them, we realized there was a huge need for housing, training, clothing, and spiritual formation. With a recidivism rate of 46% in Tennessee Prisons and 80-90% in rural county jails, we decided to turn our vision into a mission.*

*But my life means nothing to me. My only goal is to finish the race. I want to complete the work the Lord Jesus has given me. He wants me to tell others about the good news of God's grace. -Acts 20:24*

## **Objectives and Goals**

Your goal as a volunteer is to:

1. Honor God FIRST
2. Honor the mission statement of This Is Living.
3. Always put your best foot forward when dealing with all things.
4. Lead each person you encounter in the right direction as a Christian.

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **I. Emergency Situations and Procedures**

- **Fire:** For safety purposes, anytime an alarm sounds, prepare for normal evacuation of the building. Hold doors open for guests and other house members to insure a safe and orderly exit. Everyone should meet at the tree line next to the middle of the driveway. Keep driveway clean for emergency vehicles. For any false alarms, an announcement will be made to disregard the alarm.
- **Tornado:** In the event of a tornado, move all persons away from windows and exits. Direct them to the designated shelter area(s). Announcements will be made when warnings have passed.
- **Program participant or guest collapses or gets sick:** Follow the following procedures:
  1. Immediately notify your supervisor.
  2. Ask person if they need help, stay near to make sure they are being helped.
  3. Clear the immediate area of all guests and Program participants.
  4. Request assistance from the closest volunteer or supervisor.
  5. **DO NOT DO ANYTHING TO PUT YOU, YOUR HEALTH OR SAFETY AT RISK.**

## **II. Confidentiality and Communications**

Living in a group environment, secrets and rule-breaking often occur. We are expected to protect our friends and keep secrets for them when the rules are broken but protecting someone and snitching are two very different things. Here at This Is Living, protecting someone is encouraged and many times, that means coming forward with information when rules are broken, or secrets are being kept that could put you or another house member in harm's way.

- Program participant files: All files are always to remain in the locked filing cabinet (located in the weekend manager's room) with door and bolt-lock engaged at all times. Only staff and volunteers approved by the Executive Director are allowed access to Program participants' charts and files.
- Dealing with media: Every member of the ministry team, from founder to volunteer, should know how to respond if approached by persons of the media to give any sort of statement about the organization.
- Social media has become a fun and worthwhile method of sharing life events, views with family members, friends, and co-workers. However, there are risks and responsibilities associated with social media usage. Inappropriate or unprofessional posts that could negatively represent our organization including ethnic, racial, sexual, religious,

discriminatory remarks, and threats of violence or harassment will not be tolerated and may result in expulsion from volunteering with This Is Living Ministries.

### **III. Grievance Policy**

- In a situation where differences arise between volunteers or a volunteer and a supervisor, the conflict is first advised to be handled between the parties involved, if a third party is needed, the volunteer coordinator is to be informed and involved in said situation.
- Under NO circumstances should the grievance be made public or involve other members of the volunteer staff or organization.
- If a grievance is regarding a program coordinator, an appeal may be made to the board of directors.

### **IV. Guest Regulations**

- **Complaint/Compliment Procedures-** Visitor complaints and compliments should be directed to the volunteer coordinator. Should a guest ask a question you are unable to answer, direct the visitor to the volunteer coordinator or your supervisor at the time.
- **Collection Procedures-** If you are approached by a visitor wishing to donate clothing or household items, please contact the volunteer coordinator or your supervisor to accept the donations and thank the visitor for his/her contributions to the ministry.

### **V. Standard of Appearance (Dress Code)**

Volunteers are expected to dress appropriately and in a professional manner while in the volunteer capacity. All volunteers must dress appropriately for their duties.

- Nametags must be worn while in volunteer capacity
- Clothes cannot be torn, frayed, dirty or reveal any part of cleavage, midriff or buttocks.
- Make-up and jewelry must be minimal- especially in regard to facial jewelry and piercings.
- Usual attire is casual or business casual
- Event attire will be dependent upon the type of event

### **VI. Sexual Harassment**

- What is sexual harassment?

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature constitute sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is also when a decision is made because the individual submitted to or rejected the unwelcome conduct, or the unwelcome conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work, program, or volunteering performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or abusive work environment.

- Unwelcome actions such as the following are considered sexual harassment and are inappropriate for any reason and grounds for dismissal of staff, volunteers, or Program participants:

1. Sexual pranks or repeated sexual teasing of any kind.
2. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature.
3. Touching or grabbing of any kind.
4. Repeated standing too close or brushing against certain persons.

5. Repeated asking a person to socialize during off-duty hours when the person has said no or indicated he or she has no interest.
6. Giving gifts or leaving objects that are sexually suggestive.
7. Making or posting sexually demeaning or offensive pictures in the house.

A victim of sexual harassment can be of any sex. The victim can be the same sex as the harasser, the harasser can be a co-worker, a supervisor, another department volunteer, Program participant, or a non-employee who has a business relation with the program.

## **VII. Resignation of Volunteer Services**

If a volunteer signs on for a specific time with a set ending point, there is no need to give notice of resignation. However, volunteers without pre-determined ending times should notify their supervisor if they wish to resign from their volunteer position.

Dismissing a volunteer is never a pleasant task, but it is made less difficult if reasons for termination and dismissal are clear and concise up front.

- Breach of confidentiality will result in immediate termination of volunteer services.
- Failure to carry out duties assigned will result in immediate termination of volunteer services.
- Sexual harassment or inappropriate relationships within the program or house.
- Testing positive on a random drug screen

## **VIII. Conflict of Interest**

*Conflict of Interest is defined as:* A situation that has the potential to undermine the impartiality of a person because of the possibility of a clash between the person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest.

TILM strives to be transparent and honest in all interactions with Program participants, holding to the moral and legal boundaries of treatment and Standard of Conduct set by the Center for Ethical Practices. TILM will protect and assist each Program participant in realizing their true potential. In achieving this goal for the Program participants, we must take into consideration the ramifications of having family members work as Volunteers, Respite Workers, or Staff. At no time will staff, respite or volunteers be placed in the work environment with a Program participant that is a family member or personal friend. This would be considered a "Conflict of Interest" and the issue will be addressed immediately at discovery.

TILM reserves the right to not tell any worker the name of the Program participant once staff learns of the family or friend relationship. Naming a Program participant is a breach of confidentiality and TILM will always protect the confidences of Program participants.

As Volunteers and Respite workers with This is Living Ministries, it is the responsibility of the worker to inform staff if a family member or friend has entered into the program. As well, the worker is required to discuss with staff if a family member/friend is considering entering into the program. Should a member of a worker's family (any part of the family) or any friend be admitted into the program, that worker will be asked to withdrawal from the position in the home until such time the Program participant no longer living at This is Living Ministries.

# Volunteer Categories

- I. **Active Volunteers-** volunteers who work on a regular basis for an extended period of time are considered ACTIVE. They must volunteer either weekly or monthly for a minimum of 25 hours annually.
- II. **Temporary Volunteers-** volunteers who work on a short-term project or event are considered temporary volunteers. Community service volunteers doing hours required for any amount of time are considered temporary volunteers. Volunteers who serve for one-time or special events are considered temporary volunteers.

## Application Process

All prospective volunteers applying for active volunteer positions must complete a *volunteer application*, a *volunteer agreement of service* form, and an *authorization for release of information* form, all located at the back of this packet.

Applicants will be contacted in a timely manner after submitting a volunteer application to schedule an interview.

Temporary volunteers who are serving for a one-time event, are not required to complete these forms or go through the interview process. Instead, they will only complete the *volunteer release and waiver* form. If a volunteer chooses to volunteer additionally after the initial one-time event, they will need to fill out the remaining forms and go through the interview process.

### **1. Interviewing**

Active volunteers must go through the interviewing process. The purpose of this initial interview is to determine the qualifications, availability, abilities, and suitability of the individual to perform work on behalf of This Is Living. Assignment of volunteer work will be based on the assessment of the information received during this interview and in the application process.

Applicants will be assessed on the following criteria:

- No violent or sexual offenders, nor domestic assaults
- Clean driving records
- Service letter stating why you want to partner with This Is Living Ministries
- Training conferences certificates
- References
- Previous volunteer experience

- Ability to correct and teach out of humility and love for the Program participants
- Agreement with our vision and mission statements
- Respectable reputation in the community
- Volunteers need to be faithful, available, and teachable

## **2. Background Checks**

- Background checks will be done for all **active adult applicants** who meet the requirements for volunteer positions (This will be a \$25 fee to be covered by applicant).
- Volunteers are placed after, and only after, background checks confirm the information given on the application.
- Volunteer will not be placed in the event of falsified information or if information provided in contrary to that of the background check.
- A conviction record does not bar a person from volunteering.
- Volunteers not placed due to complications with application and background check will be notified within 3 weeks of the application date.
- Since juvenile records are typically sealed, background checks will not be done on teen volunteers.

## **3. Orientation and Supervision**

All volunteers will receive a broad overview, including missions, policies, and a review of the volunteer position assigned. Every volunteer will have an assigned supervisor to report to and will be responsible for reporting any and all issues to said supervisor.

The Executive Director, House Manager, or TILM Board of Directors reserve the right to terminate any volunteer workers from their position at any time without notice or cause and at their discretion.

# **Volunteer Specific Info**

## **What is a volunteer?**

According to State standards, a volunteer shall be considered to be any person providing assistance to This is Living Ministries Re-Entry Program without remittance, who has direct and ongoing contact with the Program participants. Volunteers are those individuals recruited to participate in TILM programs because of their interest or acknowledged expertise in some area of assisting Program participants, home maintenance, or administration. They neither receive financial compensation nor participate in any of TILM benefit programs. They may, however, be eligible for reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred as part of their TILM volunteer duties.

## **Why is it Important for me to volunteer?**

1 Corinthians 12:27 says all of us together are Christ's body. Being the hands and feet of Jesus is so important in today's world. Volunteering is a small part of a big difference. This Is Living Ministries would be nowhere today without the caring hearts of people who stepped forward to volunteer in the beginning stages of the ministry and continuing to do so today. Volunteers are the heart and soul of this ministry and help us spread the love of God to each and every person welcomed into the ministry's reentry program.

## **Why Volunteer with us?**

This Is Living is a Christ-centered non-profit organization that is dedicated to discipleship. We believe that through discipleship women can embrace a life of freedom and joy. We believe that Jesus came to give us an abundant life, and we want to partner with Him to see these women discover the very life God has planned for them. Volunteering with This is Living Ministries will not only help our women build new lives. You will affect future generations through our ladies' living out their faith in every area of life! We believe by volunteering in this program you will find joy in being a part of life transformations, gain close friendships and community, and help to lower the recidivism (relapse) rate in Tennessee. We believe volunteering with us will help you continue to grow and develop in your own walk with Christ as you discover gifts inside of you!

# Volunteer Application Form

- Provide three reference letters (2 professional/ 1 personal or 1 professional/ 2 personal) with contact information
- Copy of driver's license, automotive registration, and insurance a
- Copies of any trainings or conferences you have attended. (not mandatory but will help us place you in the volunteer program.
- Criminal background check (\$25 Fee)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Office) \_\_\_\_\_

(Cell) \_\_\_\_\_ (Fax) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Skills and Interests

1. Educational background: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Current Occupation (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

a. Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ City/ location: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Work Schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Hobbies: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Previous volunteer experience: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Special skills: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you enjoy working with a group? (circle one) Yes or No

7. When are you available for volunteering? Anytime Weekends Weekdays

8. What hours are you available for volunteering during those days? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Why do you want to volunteer for TILM? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense? Yes or No

11. Type of charge & date of conviction? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you have any physical limitations? Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Volunteer Skills Assessment

Personal Attributes					
	Never	Needs Work	Average	Above Average	Experience Where You Gained the Skill
<b>Competitiveness</b> Ability/willingness to compete & be measures on performance					
<b>Constancy</b> Persistent, faithful					
<b>Direction</b> Ability to define personal goals & needs					
<b>Deciding</b> Finding alternatives, making best use of resources or materials					
<b>Delegating</b> Task or responsibilities					
<b>Energy Level</b> Demonstrates confidence & capacity to make things move ahead					
<b>Flexibility</b> Receptive to new ideas & situations					
<b>Goal-Oriented</b> Ability to identify, work toward & reach goals					
<b>Motivating</b> Self & others					
<b>Patience</b> Ability to remain calm, endurance					
<b>Perseverance</b> Continue course of action despite difficulties					
<b>Self-Knowledge</b> Ability to assess your own capabilities					
<b>Self-Starter</b> Identify purposeful work & take action					

Notes:

Personal Skills					
	Never	Needs Work	Average	Above Average	Experience Where You Gained the Skill
<b>Compiling or Analyzing</b> Situations or Data					
<b>Calculating/Estimating</b> Costs, income, space or risk assessment					
<b>Coaching or Counseling</b> Guiding or tutoring					
<b>Constructing</b> Objects or buildings					
<b>Coordinating</b> Activities or events					
<b>Creating/Designing</b> New ideas, products or systems, e.g. websites					
<b>Monitoring/Evaluating</b> Performance, programs, processes or events					
<b>Fund Raising</b> One-to-one or through media					
<b>Group Facilitating</b> Managing group interactions					
<b>Interpreting</b> Data, legal, medical records or other language					
<b>Interviewing</b> Seeking data from others, then making recommendations or decisions					
<b>Making Layouts/ Sketching</b> Diagrams & charts for printed media, public displays or advertising					
<b>Observing</b> Physical phenomena, behavior or situations					
<b>Operating</b> Equipment or activities					
<b>Planning</b> Budgeting, goal setting, scheduling					
<b>Programming</b> Equipment or activities					
<b>Promoting</b> Ideas, products, or policies one-to-one or via media					
<b>Record Keeping</b> Logs, files, or time sheets					

<b>Repairing</b> Equipment, computers, furniture, tec.					
<b>Researching/Investigating</b> Obtaining information from library, surveys, or physical data					
<b>Speaking</b> In public, groups or via electronic media					
<b>Supervising</b> People or processes					
Notes:					

# Hours of Availability

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5:00 AM							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
8:30							
9:00							
9:30							
10:00							
10:30							
11:00							
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12:00 PM							
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6:00							
6:30							
7:00							
7:30							
8:00							
8:30							

# Volunteer Agreement of Service Form

This Is Living Ministries agrees to accept the service of \_\_\_\_\_ as a Volunteer.

We commit to the following:

1. To offer adequate training and information regarding what we expect from you as a volunteer.
2. To provide regular updates to all volunteers.
3. To ensure appropriate treatment of all volunteers and services provided by volunteers.
4. To offer constructive feedback regarding volunteers and their activities.
5. To respect the skills, dignity, services, and individual needs of each volunteer.
6. Designate a staff member all volunteers can report to with any concerns and issues.
7. To be respectful of privacy and receptive to any and all comments from volunteers.
8. To treat each volunteer as an equal partner in all things relating to This Is Living Ministries.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to serve as a volunteer of This Is Living Ministries and commit to:

1. Treat all people in my presence with respect and the grace God shows me every day.
2. Perform the tasks asked of me by my supervisor or any other staff member of the ministry.
3. Be drug and alcohol free.
4. Always work as a part of the team and never disrespect another team member.
5. Complete all training sessions required of me.
6. Comply with every detail listed in this handbook.
7. Notify appropriate staff members in a timely manner if I am unable to perform my daily/weekly/monthly duties.
8. Follow all policies and procedures.
9. Serve as the hands and feet of Jesus every day.
10. Positively represent This is Living Ministries everywhere I go.

I have reviewed all of my commitments and agree to the above stated rules and regulations as well as everything listed in this handbook.

Volunteer signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Authorization of Release of Information

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give THIS IS LIVING MINISTRIES my permission to release my information to a background check service and any other service required to complete my application process.

I understand the rules and regulations of the HIPPA law and understand that This Is Living Ministries is unable to disclose any information to anyone I have not given permission to access said information.

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

In consideration and as a condition of my participation and partnership with This is Living Ministries, I hereby agree to the following confidentiality agreement. I agree to keep confidential any and all information gained as a result of my participation with This is Living Ministries. In this instance confidential information shall include but is not limited to any and all case records, party names, projects specifically organized by or with This is Living Ministries.

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_