

Who Volunteers?

Every program at the Community Kitchen depends on volunteers. Individuals and groups are welcome, whether for a short term project, or ongoing commitment. People from all walks of life help in our mission to serve the homeless and needy. Skilled professionals (lawyers, doctors, psychologists, beauticians, electricians, HVAC technicians, plumbers, builders, etc.) can help by volunteering their professional services. Others can help by serving a meal, holding a drive, or working in the office. Everyone has a skill that can be used by the Community Kitchen.



Volunteer Guidelines

*Adults over 21 can volunteer in all programs and act as overnight hosts at our shelters.

*Those 16 and over can work in all programs, but cannot serve as shelter hosts.

*Youth 10-15 can work in supervised groups, but cannot work in food preparation or serving.

*Children under 10 can best serve by holding off-site drives for food, clothing or monetary donations; these groups are invited to tour our facility when delivering the items.

Get Started

Whether you want to get involved as an individual or group, alone or through your church, business or school, contact Kathy Spangler at 423-756-4222 and let her know how you'd like to help out.



Together we can make a difference!



Volunteer Information

(opportunities, policies and programs)

Contact Information:

Kathy Spangler
Volunteer and Church Relations

Chattanooga Community Kitchen
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Chattanooga, TN 37403

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More Than A Kitchen...

About the Organization

The Chattanooga Community Kitchen was founded in 1982 by a group of downtown churches interested in joining together to help the area's homeless.

Early services were limited to sandwiches and meals. But, as the homeless population has changed and grown, so have the services.

Today, the Community Kitchen occupies the entire north side of the 700 block of East 11th Street. Anyone that is hungry can find a free meal in our dining room. Our basic services (bathrooms, showers, telephones, mail, etc.) are free and available to all. Located next to the Community Kitchen, the Homeless Health Care Center offers on-site health care, case management, mental health services and alcohol and drug abuse treatment.

In addition to our core services, we operate three case-management intensive programs, HELP II (employment assistance), SAFAH (assistance to domestic violence victims and their children as they move from shelter into permanent housing) and FHLC - Family Housing (transitional apartments for families).

In all that we do, we strive to show compassion to those most in need while helping them transition into self-sufficiency.

Volunteer Opportunities

The FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT provides three meals a day, 365 days a year—no questions asked. All cooking is done by staff. Volunteers are needed every day for preparation and serving.

CONSIDER THE LILIES THRIFT STORE distributes free clothing to needy people and sells affordable clothing, furniture, and other items to the general public. Volunteers are needed to sort, size, and hang clothing and assist customers.

The DAY CENTER offers showers, restrooms, washers and dryers, telephone and mail services. Volunteers are needed to serve as receptionists at the front desk Monday through Friday.

The HELP II PROGRAM assists in securing jobs, teaching life skills, and preparing clients for employment. Volunteers are needed to teach life-skills classes and mentor clients.



The Community Kitchen manages two NIGHT SHELTERS—a men's shelter and a shelter for women and children. These shelters are located offsite in downtown churches. Volunteers are needed as hosts and hostesses for overnight stays.

The FAMILY HOUSING AND LEARNING CENTER offers apartment living to families that have been in the shelter system and need additional support in becoming self sufficient. Volunteers provide child care, tutoring, apartment renovation and preparation.

MAINTENANCE projects are available for groups and skilled individuals (carpenters, electricians, HVAC technicians, etc.) All types of groups have painted, built storage areas, replaced floors, torn out walls, etc. Some have assisted us in keeping our interior areas clean.

Others have assisted us with landscaping and exterior beautification.



OUTREACH is available to clients living on the street or in camps. Volunteers can sometimes assist with transportation or other services related to client care.

ADMINISTRATION is open from 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday. Help is sometimes needed with data entry, mailings and other office tasks.

MEMBER CHURCHES: We're always interested in growth. As a member church, your congregation, along with our Board, would guide our work with the homeless.