

A Recipe for Success: Volunteering at the PNA Hot Meal Program

Before volunteering, please take some time to read over these guidelines.

Procedures:

- **Stay home when you are sick.** We don't want to serve up your germs!
- Come to the kitchen ready to work, in long pants and closed-toed shoes that can get wet or dirty. Aprons are available for you to wear while at work in the kitchens, but you're also welcome to bring your own.
- **Keep long hair tied back** away from your face.
- **Washington State requires all ongoing food workers have food safety training** before handling food served to the public. Food workers are those who work with unpackaged food, food equipment or utensils, or with any surface where people put unwrapped food. Ongoing volunteers are required to have a valid Washington State food worker card. Please bring your card, or a copy of it, to the meal in case of a food inspection by the health department. Food worker cards are available online for \$10: www.foodworkercard.wa.gov
- **Check in** when you arrive and ask how to get started so things run smoothly. Let the lead know if you have special skills, qualifications, or limitations that might impact your volunteering.
- **Wash your hands** when you arrive and often during your shift. Wear latex gloves when handling ready-to-eat food. Gloves are intended to protect the food and the diners, not your hands.
- **Use common sense** about hot stoves and food, heavy loads, and sharp knives. Let the lead know if you have any concerns about a task.

Attitude:

- **Be flexible** and ready to learn from the lead or more experienced volunteers.
- **Communicate** with the rest of the crew. Ask if you're not sure and speak up if you have a good idea. **Introduce yourself** and try to learn names.
- **Be friendly** with co-workers and clients alike. A smile goes a long way!
- **Treat clients with respect.** They are people, just like you. Make their meal the best you can.
- Make friendly and welcoming comments such as "Hello" and "How are you today?" Acknowledge regular clients and try to remember their preferences, etc.
- **Present the food as attractively** as possible and serve it politely.
- **Use eye contact and listen carefully** to what clients request. Give clear, simple choices and don't serve food automatically. Remember they can choose what they want.

Dealing with Problems:

- **Ask for the lead for help** when you need it.
- **Enforce the rules**, but be clear that you did not make them.
- If a client challenges you, state simply that you are a volunteer doing what you've been asked to do. You do not need to take responsibility.
- Rude, disrespectful, threatening behavior is not welcome and should be taken outside.
- Don't get drawn into a shouting match, confrontation, or argument.
- Refer to the Hot Meal Program rules posted on the wall in the dining room.
- Remaining calm in a crisis is half the solution!

Remember, our clients may have problems we cannot imagine (homelessness, mental or other illness, alcoholism, drug addiction, or many others) but this makes them no less worthy of pleasant service and respectful treatment. Be friendly, not patronizing or judgmental. Please consider wearing

Monday dinner is served 4-6 pm at Greenwood Senior Center, 525 N 85th St. Volunteer hours are 1-7 pm.
Tuesday dinner is served 4-6 pm at St. John Lutheran Church, 5515 Phinney Ave N. Volunteer hours are 1-7 pm.
Wednesday lunch is served 11 am-1 pm at St. John Lutheran Church, 5515 Phinney Ave N. Volunteer hours are 8 am-2 pm).

Joseph Wapner is the Hot Meal Program Coordinator & LeAnne Chow is the Volunteer Program Manager. Phinney Neighborhood Association is located at 6532 Phinney Avenue N. Questions? Call 206.783.2244.