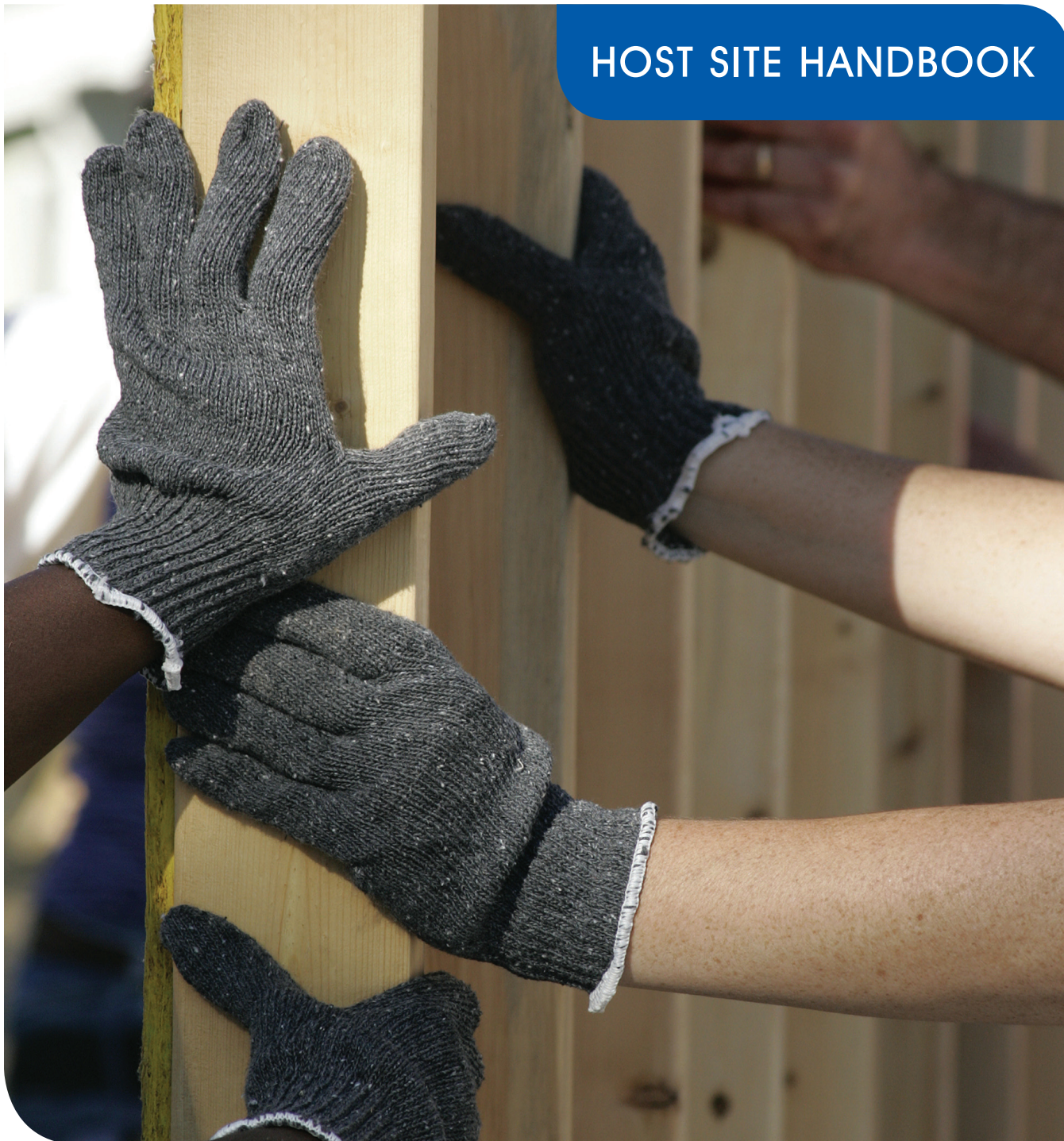


NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM

HOST SITE HANDBOOK





Dear Host Site Leaders,

Thank you for serving the people of New York City in their time of need. Your work to coordinate volunteer housing efforts to rebuild after Superstorm Sandy is invaluable. One of the great gifts the nonprofit sector offers our society is volunteer labor. Without this service, much of the rebuilding work that needs to be done could not, and would not happen. Through the work of volunteers, vulnerable populations will collectively save hundreds of millions of dollars in rebuild costs, needs that would otherwise not be met. By housing volunteers, you are making the lives of individuals affected by Superstorm Sandy whole again.

This Host Site Handbook is designed to give organizations a comprehensive introduction to volunteer housing in New York City and the knowledge you need to have a successful housing project. While any potential host site will find this handbook informing, organizations operating in New York City in response to Superstorm Sandy are the primary audience.

New York is a complex city, and hosting volunteers here offers unique challenges and rewards. One of the greatest challenges faced by volunteer groups is finding appropriate and affordable lodging. New York Disaster Interfaith Services' (NYDIS) Volunteer Group Housing Program (VGHP) is designed to assist potential host sites in setting up and maintaining long-term, sustainable programming that will enrich their existing community and assist their neighbors in what will be an extended recovery period. By offering a comprehensive, central listing of all the volunteer housing opportunities in New York City, we assist organizations housing volunteers in reaching volunteers from around the nation and the globe.

If you have questions about information covered in this Handbook or about volunteering in New York City, please contact the Volunteer Group Housing Program at New York Disaster Interfaith Services. Staff can be reached through email at volunteerhousing@nydis.org, or by telephone at 212-669-6100.

Sincerely,
The NYDIS Board and Staff

Effective use of volunteer labor greatly increases the pace at which communities recover from disaster. Faith-based and community organizations can play a crucial role in facilitating recovery by providing safe, welcoming accommodations for much-needed volunteer groups. This handbook contains resources and practical guidance for organizations who are interested in supporting their community by becoming a host site.

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MISSION STATEMENT: THE NEW YORK CITY VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM WORKS TO ENSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING FOR VOLUNTEER GROUPS SERVING NYC THROUGH SUPERSTORM SANDY NONPROFIT REPAIR AND REBUILD PROJECTS.

Despite the misconception that disaster volunteer efforts are haphazardly thought-out and slapped together at the last minute, it is important to recognize that the disaster volunteer sector is highly organized, professional, and efficient. This section will give you a brief outline of the local and national nonprofit disaster response and recovery structures and how your volunteer group fits into it.

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership based organization that serves as the forum where organizations share knowledge and resources throughout the disaster cycle—preparation, response and recovery—to help disaster survivors and their communities.¹

New York City Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NYC VOAD) is a member of NY State VOAD.²

New York Disaster Interfaith Services (NYDIS) is a 501(c) (3) faith-based federation of service providers and charitable organizations who work in partnership to provide disaster readiness, response, and recovery services to New York City.³

The NYC Volunteer Group Housing Program (VGHP) is administered by NYDIS. The VGHP works to ensure the availability of housing for volunteer groups serving NYC through Superstorm Sandy nonprofit repair and rebuild projects.

Local Long Term Recovery Organizations (LTROs), also called Groups or Committees, are location specific and differ in exact services provided, based on local need. Generally, LTROs strengthen area-wide disaster coordination in the affected area by sharing information, simplifying resident access to services, and jointly resolving cases with disaster-caused recovery needs.⁴

By becoming familiar with and engaging these structures, you will become part of a comprehensive service community aspiring to meet the needs of those affected by Superstorm Sandy in the most efficient manner possible. Contact these organizations for more information on how your volunteer group will complement the recovery work already happening in NYC.

NOTE THAT VOAD ORGANIZATIONS DO NOT OFFERS SERVICES, BUT THEIR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS DO. VOADs ARE A SOURCE OF SECTOR-WIDE COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION OF DISASTER RELIEF AND RECOVERY EFFORTS.

1 <http://www.nvoad.org/>

2 <https://sites.google.com/site/nycvoad/>

3 <http://www.nydis.org/>

4 Sample LTRO Mission Statement provided by United Way.

The impact of volunteer support on a place ravaged by disaster cannot be overstated. In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, both national and local volunteers provided immense support in the relief and recovery efforts that helped save lives, secure property, and reduce catastrophic damages, among other benefits. In fact, volunteer presence largely determined New York's capacity to feed, shelter, provide, and comfort those affected. It now determines our capacity to rebuild our communities back to where they were before the storm.

Volunteering isn't about charity; it's about investment. Volunteers make us all wealthier. [Research by Independent Sector](#)⁵ estimates the average value of a volunteer hour in New York State is \$28.74. The roughly 65 million Americans who volunteer every year come from all walks of life. Nationwide, their 7.9 billion unpaid hours of community service save us \$171 billion annually. In 2011, 3.22 million New Yorkers volunteered more than 413 million hours of unpaid service, which saved us \$11.9 billion. While the numbers speak for themselves, the value of volunteering goes beyond monetary value to its core purpose: to selflessly better the lives of those in need.

Volunteers continue to have a substantial impact and will remain a pivotal part of the post-disaster rebuilding process in New York City for years to come. The volunteers who come to work in New York City are working for those who, without voluntary labor, would not be able to come close to returning to their standard of living before Superstorm Sandy. Volunteers are rebuilding and repairing, mucking-out and demolishing the homes of vulnerable populations all around our city, the elderly, the infirm, the impoverished, and those with access and functional needs. Without volunteer labor, these people would never be able to return home. By housing volunteers, you are ensuring that your neighbors can return home.

IN 2011, 3.22 MILLION NEW YORKERS VOLUNTEERED MORE THAN 413 MILLION HOURS OF UNPAID SERVICE, WHICH SAVED NEW YORK \$11.9 BILLION.

⁵ The Independent Sector, "Independent Sector's Value of Volunteer Time," http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time#sthash.mwAnZ7IP.dpbs

Volunteers are invaluable to the needy populations they serve. Yet volunteers cannot work where they cannot find housing for themselves. In the absence of appropriate housing for volunteers, volunteer rebuild labor greatly diminishes. Housing volunteers goes a long way toward maintaining the much needed labor pool for what will be a sustained rebuilt effort, which is predicted to go on for years in New York City. Organizations that offer to let their facilities as host sites is the only way to fulfill this integral part of the post-disaster recovery process. For example, a host site could make it possible for college students planning a Spring Break service trip to stay in safe, affordable lodging while they are working in the community.

In addition to safe residency, host sites may include facilities to maintain personal hygiene, cooking amenities, eating area, access to laundry and other basic needs of volunteer groups. Organizations which do not have the ability to house volunteers may be able to assist with the housing effort by engaging volunteers in other ways. For example, many of the houses of worship in New York City where volunteers are staying do not have showers. Conversely, there are many locations in NYC that have showers, but cannot house volunteers. By forming partnerships, different organizations in the same neighborhood can find solutions to volunteer housing where, at first glance, there seem to be no opportunities. Host sites and partner organizations can also present opportunities to enrich the volunteer groups' experiences through activities that help to educate volunteers about the communities they are serving, thus energizing their involvement and enhancing their understanding.



In considering whether or not to become a host site, there are several factors to keep in mind, including:

Internal Organizational Structure

As a host site, it is important to adhere to one's internal organizational structure. If you are a faith-based organization, approval from your organization's adjudicatory body may be necessary. Your national organization may already have its own VOAD agency that assists its members with volunteer housing operations, reservation services, as well as insurance coverage, and other valuable coordination services.

Internal organizational structure also applies to how you choose to set things up as a host site. It is important to assign certain roles that accommodate both your needs as a host site and those of the volunteer group. Having a structure in place and putting people in certain roles creates order and clarity, maintaining your effectiveness as a host site.

Reservation Donation

Host sites retain the right to request a per-person or per-group donation to help defray facility costs and the extra expense of hosting volunteers. Some host sites allow volunteers to stay with them for free, while others request a donation of between \$10 and \$30 per person per night (sometimes more), depending on the services they are providing. Historically, sites that request larger donations generally tend to provide meals and cleaning services, and may be involved in program coordination. Sites that only offer the most minimal services request the most minimal donation. Bathroom supplies, laundry equipment usage, linens, maintenance costs, extra staff costs, and extra utility usage are all factors to take into consideration when identifying your costs. Ultimately, donation requests should respect the spirit of the program – allowing both host sites and volunteer groups to contribute to the New York City recovery without causing an undue burden to either the organization or the volunteer.

All monetary exchanges should be handled directly between the host site and volunteer group. It should be the responsibility of the host site to collect all donations, and the responsibility of the volunteer group to donate in full. Make sure to indicate donation expectations to your volunteer group in advance. The Good Faith Agreement (Section IV, Attachment 3), is a template that can be used to indicate agreement on donations, method and timing of donation, and other details.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER: VOCABULARY CHOICE IS VERY IMPORTANT WHEN TALKING ABOUT MONETARY EXCHANGES BETWEEN VOLUNTEER GROUPS AND HOST SITES. IN SOME JURISDICTIONS, CHARGING A "FEE" IMPLIES THAT YOU ARE A FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, COMPLICATING MANY TAX AND INSURANCE ISSUES. ALWAYS REFER TO MONETARY EXCHANGES AS "DONATIONS" TO AVOID JEOPARDIZING YOUR 501(C)(3) STATUS.



Point of Contact

The host site should designate one person as their point of contact for volunteer groups. The contact person will be responsible for handling logistics prior to arrival and for the duration of the volunteer group's stay. Duties can include collecting donations, ensuring all documents are shared and forms signed by the volunteer group, and making sure the host site is safe and orderly for the volunteer group when they arrive. While the contact person may need assistance in carrying out these duties, only the contact person should correspond with the volunteer group, to avoid confusion. The host site should also request a counterpart point of contact person from the volunteer group.

Volunteer Group Reservations

Some VOAD member organizations (e.g., Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) maintain their own volunteer reservation services. If such a service is not available to your organization, the VGHP can assist with volunteer reservations. The VGHP website lists the volunteer housing opportunities at www.nydis.org/volunteerhousing. Using the VGHP website assists national and international volunteers in finding and reserving the housing option that most closely fits their needs.

To be listed on the website, a host site can contact the VGHP directly at volunteerhousing@nydis.org. A VGHP Coordinator will follow up and arrange a host site visit when a Facility Survey (Attachment 2) will be used to determine how ready a host site is to house volunteers. If a host site needs some additional supports to become operational, VGHP resources may be available to help. Once this process is completed, the host site will be listed on the website as an active bookable space, based on their availability profile.

Youth Groups

Many youth groups go on service trips during school breaks, eager to serve as volunteers. Host sites are encouraged to assess their ability to host groups of any age. Please note that many volunteer rebuild and recovery projects are not open to volunteers under 16 years of age, and very few are open to youth under 14 years of age. If you determine as a host site that you are able to accommodate youth volunteers, please indicate any specific additional requirements to be met by the volunteer group (i.e. chaperone to youth ration).

Safety

Safety is one of the most important elements of serving as a host to volunteer groups. While most houses of worship and other large facilities follow safety guidelines for places of “public assembly,” many are not typically built to accommodate overnight guests. To ensure safety, it is imperative that relevant laws be adhered to at all times. Every site should create clear, site specific guidelines, and are encouraged to assign a safety lead tasked with learning the safety protocols pertinent to the host facility.

Buildings with aging infrastructure, which characterizes many houses of worship, face numerous fires yearly. Many of these take place during the night, making fire safety is a top priority. Host site must comply with local fire codes to responsibly house volunteers. **A copy of New Jersey Fire code is indicated below:**

Temporary Use of Non-residential Buildings to House Volunteers — Outline of Fire Safety Requirements

1. **An application for a fire safety permit and a written plan will need to be submitted to the local Fire Official.** The application must include the location, name and contact information of the responsible party, the date(s) when the building will be used to house volunteers, and the number of volunteers to be housed, including the number and ages of volunteers who are under the age of 18, if any. A floor plan sketch of the building should be made, showing the location(s) where volunteers will sleep, the other spaces to be made available to the volunteers and the exit access from each space (exit access is the area that will be traveled to arrive at the exterior exit door or rated enclosure). This floor plan does not need to be to scale or professionally prepared.
2. **Fire drills:** A fire drill must be conducted on the first day of occupancy by a given group of volunteers. The fire drill must be repeated each time there is a changeover in the volunteers being housed. The fire drill must include gathering at a designated spot outside the building and taking attendance to ensure all volunteers have evacuated safely. A record of all such fire drills must be maintained and must be made available to the local fire official upon request.
3. **Supervision:** There must be one person remaining awake overnight in any building being used to house volunteers. When volunteers under the age of 18 are being housed, there must be at least two persons providing overnight supervision. (Note: The person(s) assigned to stay overnight are to ensure the safety of the volunteers in the event of a fire or other emergency in the building. Adequate supervision for any minors being housed will be the responsibility of the volunteer group involved.) The hosting facility shall train the person or persons assigned. They must be familiar with the evacuation procedure to be followed in an emergency, with the building layout and with the fire detection or suppression systems, if any, and must be capable of notifying the fire department in the event of an emergency. Emergency numbers, including numbers for those responsible for the facility, must be posted in a conspicuous location. The person or persons assigned must have a record of the names of all volunteers being housed on a given night.
4. **Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms:** Each sleeping room must have battery-powered smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms. The smoke alarms must be installed in the sleeping room(s) and throughout the exit access leading to the required exit or exits.

All smoke alarms must be maintained in accordance with the State Fire Prevention Code (N.J.A.C. 5:70-3) Section 907.21. Monthly tests must be conducted for other than battery powered smoke alarms and weekly tests must be conducted for battery powered smoke alarms. A log must be kept on site documenting the required testing. When smoke alarms are installed with 9 volt batteries, the batteries must be replaced annually.

Buildings with automatic fire alarm systems with complete smoke detection installed meet the requirement for smoke alarms.

5. **Exits:** Each sleeping room must have at least two means of egress (exits). The main means of egress must be a door of not less than 32 inches in width. The second means of egress may be an emergency egress window or a door that goes to the exterior of the building. An emergency egress window must have a sill height of not more than 44 inches and a minimum opening of 5.7 square feet measured from head to sill and side to side. The minimum width must be 20 inches and the height must be at least 24 inches. There are two conditions when a second means of egress is not required: (1) When the sleeping room is served by an exit door that goes into a corridor that provides access to two remote exits; or (2) When the building is protected throughout by an automatic fire sprinkler system.
6. **Location of sleeping rooms:** Sleeping rooms must be located at the level of exit discharge unless the building is equipped throughout with an automatic fire alarm system. Sleeping in a basement is not permitted unless the building is equipped throughout with an automatic fire sprinkler system.
7. **Vertical opening protection:** A minimum one-hour fire resistance rated barrier must be provided to protect all interior stairways and other vertical openings. Existing 30 minute vertical opening protection will be allowed to remain in buildings housing 25 or fewer volunteers or in buildings where all sleeping rooms are located at the level of exit discharge. Buildings that are in compliance with the Uniform Fire Code retrofit requirements N.J.A.C. 5:70-4 should already have the required vertical opening protection.
8. **Habitable space:** Each sleeping room must provide at least 40 square feet per occupant.
9. **Lighting:** Artificial lighting of a minimum of one foot candle must be provided at all times throughout the space to be occupied by the volunteers including any exit access and exit discharge. Buildings that are in compliance with the Uniform Fire Code retrofit requirements N.J.A.C. 5:70-4 should already have the required artificial lighting.
10. **Emergency egress lighting and exit signs:** Egress lighting and illuminated exit signs will be required for any building housing 50 volunteers or more. Buildings that are in compliance with the Uniform Fire Code retrofit requirements with the Uniform Fire Code retrofit requirements N.J.A.C. 5:70-4 should already have the required emergency egress lighting and exit signs if the building is required to have two exits.
11. **All buildings housing volunteers will be subject to quarterly inspection by the local fire department.**

Possible Accessibility Features

Certain host sites have features that may allow some people with access and functional needs to use their facility. Please note that your facility is not required to have these accessibility features. However, it is helpful for potential volunteer groups to get a sense of whether or not a member of their team with specific needs could comfortably reside in the facility.

Sleeping Areas

Host sites are expected to have a sleeping area for volunteers. Typically, host sites provide beds or cots for volunteers to sleep on. Sites that are unable to provide cots or beds can still host volunteers, but should specify that volunteers will need to bring their own sleeping mats and sleeping bags. Some volunteer groups come from faith traditions that require sleeping areas, bathroom facilities, and shower facilities to be separated by gender. If you have separate sleeping areas, it's helpful to share that information with volunteer groups. Providing sleeping areas that accommodate volunteer groups' religious practices and beliefs enables volunteers to stay focused on their service and mission.

Kitchen and Meals

Providing meals for volunteers is at the discretion and ability of each host site. Your choice will depend on your available time, resources, and staff. Many sites choose to provide guests with self-serve breakfast items and bag lunches for volunteers to bring to their work site each day. Some provide a hot meal each night, and some have a community pot-luck dinner once a week.

Whatever a host site chooses, there should be a designated place for volunteers to store, prepare, and eat meals, ideally with access to a refrigerator and stove. In addition, before a volunteer group is confirmed, inform them of any food restrictions your kitchen has. (Is it used to prepare Halal or Kosher food?)

Providing accurate information about your kitchen's food restrictions will ensure an appropriate volunteer match and the integrity of your kitchen.

Showers

Construction work can be dirty, and volunteers will need showers to keep themselves hygienic. Ideally, shower facilities are in the same facility as sleeping quarters. If showers are not available on site, the most common alternative is to partner with a local YMCA, gym, or community center. Renting a shower trailer is also an option. If you are interested in hosting volunteers in NYC and don't have showers on site or any alternate options, please contact the VGHP Coordinators, they will work with you to assess available options.

Laundry

Volunteers will need access to laundry facilities during their stay. If you do not have laundry facilities on site, please provide information about laundry facilities nearby, including the location and cost.

Clean-up Requirements

Most host sites ask volunteer groups to complete simple chores during their stay. It is reasonable to ask the group to clean up any areas that they are using. Keep in mind that these groups will be at work sites all day, so don't expect them to do major projects when they return in the evening. Some sites assign small, daily chores, while others request a few hours at the end of the group's stay for one major clean-up effort. Include clean-up requirements when sharing host site rules with volunteer groups, prior to arrival.

Transportation

Many volunteer groups will come with large vans and may not understand how difficult and expensive parking can be. In New York City. It's also possible that groups may be hesitant to take public transportation or are unaware of better options of travel to work sites. Whether you are a host site in a very congested place or your site has space for vehicles, please be very clear when communicating parking availability. Help educate out-of-town groups on the use of public transportation.

No matter how well a host site operates, program improvement should always be a priority. Constantly exceeding volunteer expectations comes from an evolution of standards and practices. Experience brings a series of lessons that should benefit a host site, even if it has been in existence for a long time. Here are some suggestions to current host sites that should help support a system of continual improvement:

Feedback

Volunteer groups should be asked to fill out a feedback form as they near the conclusion of their stay. The feedback form should cover all aspects of the volunteer group's experience including communication prior to/during stay, food, facilities, accessibility, and other aspects of a host site user experience. Direct guest input is helpful in understanding what you are doing right as a host site and where improvement is needed. It may also suggest some refreshing ideas for program improvement.

Enrichment Activities

Enrichment activities are an excellent way to complement the volunteer experience. These activities should enhance a volunteer's knowledge, put their service into perspective, or serve to peak their interest in new knowledge sets. A good enrichment activity will energize volunteers and increase the likelihood of them returning again, or of them recommending the experience to others. For example, a host site can plan a tour of the community and arrange for volunteer groups to meet the people they are directly helping. This provides an opportunity for stories to be shared, bonds to be developed, and a chance to see how one's service impacts the people receiving it.

Outreach And Strengthening Partnerships

Host sites should develop and maintain partnerships with voluntary organizations, rebuild organizations, and local LTRGs. Organizations such as NVOAD, NY State VOAD, NYC VOAD, and their members, such as NYDIS, are helpful networks for maintaining partnerships that will keep you informed of updates and best practices in the volunteer sector. Training in volunteer management and other aspects of recovery relevant to host sites is often provided by these partner organizations.

NYDIS would like to thank our partner organizations for their input and advice in producing these documents for the unique needs of New York City, some elements of which were adopted from their resources and tool kits: the American Red Cross, the Disaster Response Office of the Metropolitan New York Synod, ELCA; Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the New York City LTRGs and their Volunteer and Rebuild Committees, and the members of the New York City Volunteer Group Housing Task Force.



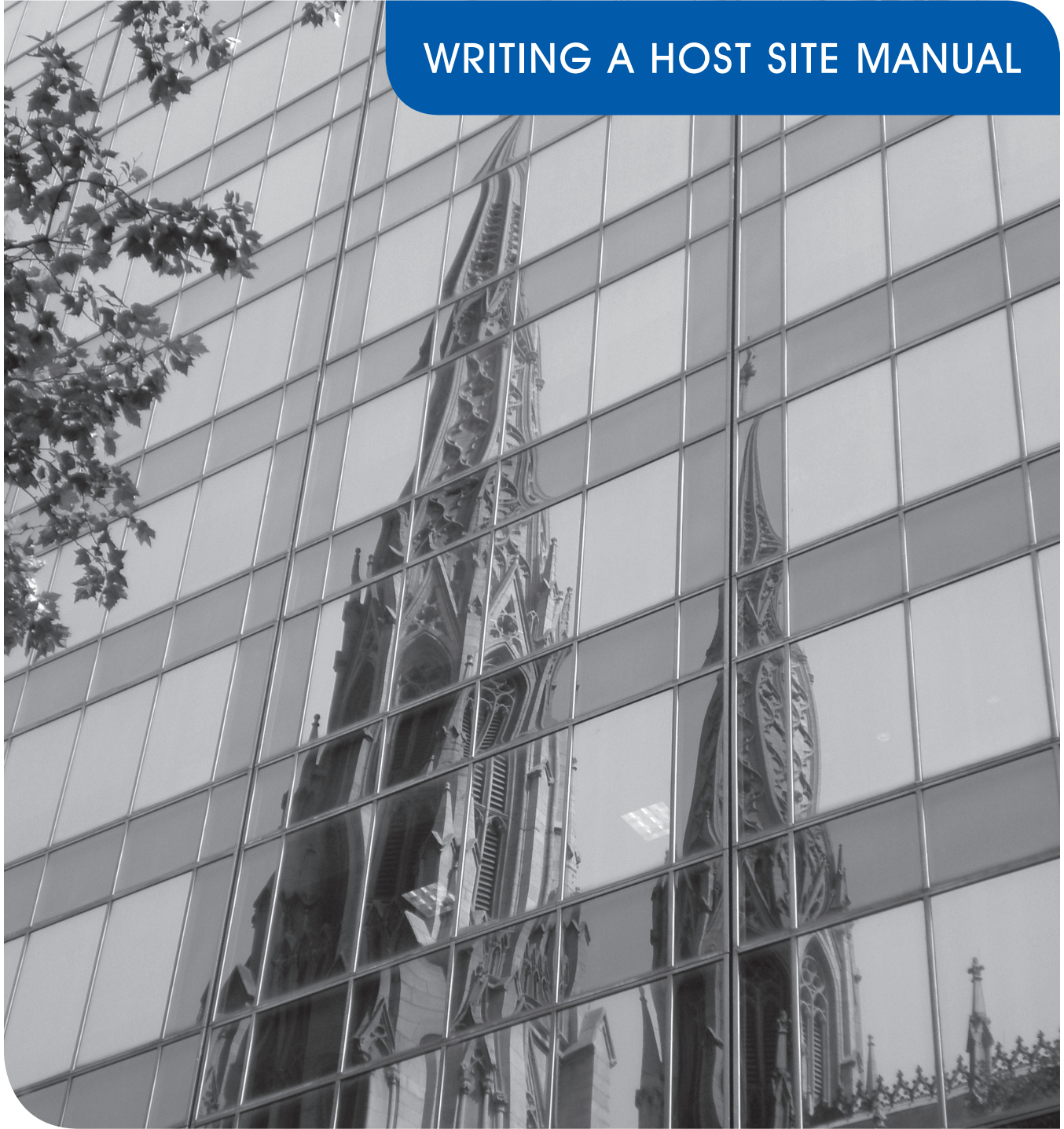
These materials were originally produced, in part, by a grant from the American Red Cross.

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NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM

WRITING A HOST SITE MANUAL



This document assists groups wishing to house volunteers in writing a comprehensive Host Site Manual.

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What is a Host Site Manual?

A Host Site Manual is a document produced by an organization housing volunteer groups. It should contain all the information a volunteer group would find pertinent to their stay in your area, and all the information a volunteer group needs to know before arriving, so that they can have an enjoyable and fruitful volunteer experience. Use the Host Site Manual as a way to preempt questions from a volunteer group. It should provide your guests with a clear and concise portrait of your facility, program, and what their stay with you will be like.

Who will use the Host Site Manual?

The Host Site Manual is for volunteers who will be staying at your facility. Remember that many of these volunteers will be traveling from far away, and may know little to nothing about your area. When writing the Manual, be as specific to your facility, environment, and disaster as possible. By reading this document, a volunteer who is completely new to your part of the country should know everything they need to know before they arrive. Give the Host Site Manual to a prospective volunteer group as soon as possible, so they can begin preparing for their service trip.



What is in a Host Site Manual?

A Host Site Manual can be a simple document of two or three pages, or it can be a complex and comprehensive document of thirty pages. This depends upon the complexity of the host facility. However, length does not matter as much as content, so long as all the information a volunteer needs is present within the Host Site Manual. The Host Site Manual should include all environmental, social, and situational information that is pertinent to a short-term volunteer group living and working in your area. A good Manual will document everything from number of beds to cell phone signal strength.

When writing your Manual, it may be helpful to refer to the Facility Survey (Attachment 2). The Facility Survey offers a comprehensive look at common issues that may arise when you are housing volunteer groups, such as gender separation and sensitivity to religious needs.

The next section is a list of information that volunteers will find valuable to know before they arrive. There are three basic categories of information which should be included in a Host Site Manual: General Information, Program Information, and Facility Information.

Volunteers will be coming from all around the country, and possibly even other countries, to serve in your area. While some volunteers may have done research about your area and the disaster which affected you, others will have no knowledge about your community or the disaster which affected it. Offer them some basic, generalized information about where they will be living and the disaster they are responding to.

History of the disaster

Although the volunteers coming to stay with you probably have a basic idea of what happened, it may be helpful to give them some information about the disaster they are responding to. Offer volunteers context, such as a short narrative and a few telling statistics, so they have more than just basic knowledge about why they are needed. Perhaps include success stories of what past volunteers have accomplished so that future volunteers are aware of the good that will result from their efforts.

Local history

Give a brief history of your town or city to help volunteers feel more at home during their stay. Tell them what makes your town special and give them a connection to the area and people that they are serving.

Introduction to the local environment

Remember that volunteers may be coming from far away and your local environment may be different from what they are used to. Inform volunteers of normal weather patterns and the natural environment. Many of these questions can be answered accurately by a simple internet search, but the addition of local wisdom will assist volunteers in making packing choices (for example, weather-appropriate clothing, protective gear). Here are some common questions that volunteers should know about:

- Are your seasons mild or harsh?
- Does it rain or snow often?
- What is the predominant environment like? Dry? Swampy? Forested?
- What specialized clothing is required to work outside in your area?
- Are there environmental hazards that are common to your area (e.g. snakes, mosquitoes, etc.)?
- Are there environmental hazards stemming from the disaster (e.g. mold, dust, etc.)?

Religious guidelines

Many organizations that house volunteers are faith-based. It is important that volunteers who will be housed in a faith-based facility are familiar with the host's customs and beliefs. If you are a faith-based organization, please take the time to inform volunteers of your beliefs and traditions, to avoid confusion and complications during their stay.

Please include any information pertinent to volunteers staying in your facility, some of whom may be unfamiliar with your religion. Assume incoming volunteers do not know anything about your faith; what do they need to know in order to respect your beliefs? Provide this important information to your volunteer guests. This could include a short introduction to your religious beliefs and history, but should also include things like dress code, proper titles for religious figures, cooking restrictions, or gender separation requirements.

However, please remember that just as a volunteer group staying at your facility must respect your faith, you must respect the religious freedom of your guests. While inter-religious dialogue is to be embraced, it is highly inappropriate to proselytize volunteers who are being housed in your facility.

The Program Information section of a Host Site Manual should detail the overall policies and program information that would be pertinent to a volunteer group. Here are some suggestions of information to include in this section:

Prerequisites for housing

Organizations housing volunteers normally have pre-requisites for volunteer groups who wish to stay in their facilities. The most common pre-requisites for volunteer groups are insurance and work projects. Volunteer host sites should only accommodate volunteer guests who are fully insured. Volunteer groups should have a work project scheduled before they apply for housing. Volunteer housing location should be as close to the volunteer work location as possible to ensure short commutes and maximum length of work days. Requiring that volunteers have both insurance and a work project before they receive housing will help ensure their time and labor are uncomplicated and productive.

Donations

Decide if you should request a donation from volunteer groups, along with how much the donation should be. (Refer to the Host Site Packet for more information about requesting donations.). Be as explicit as possible when describing your donation policies so there is no confusion between host site and volunteer group. Here is some important donation information that your Host Site Manual should include:

- **Donation amounts:** How does a volunteer group figure out their total donation? Is it per person or per group? Is it a flat amount? Do they need to make more than one type donation?
- **Donation schedule:** When are donations due? Are there separate due dates for different donations?
- **Donation method:** How are donations to be made (e.g. check, cash, money order, PayPal)? If applicable, where should the donation be sent?

Cancellation

Make sure that your Host Site Manual includes a cancellation policy, both for your facility and for your volunteer guests. How long in advance must a cancellation be made? If the host site must cancel, will they assist the volunteer group in finding other housing? Are there consequences to canceling a reservation? If a volunteer group cancels, what happens to the donations they have already made? Ensure that these questions are answered in the Host Site Manual so there are clear guidelines to follow if this happens.

Host Site Contact

It is important to identify a single, stable contact within your organization with whom volunteer groups can communicate. Clearly convey the name and contact information of a member of your organization that will be available to interact with volunteer groups staying in your facility.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER: VOCABULARY CHOICE IS VERY IMPORTANT WHEN TALKING ABOUT MONETARY EXCHANGES BETWEEN VOLUNTEER GROUPS AND HOST SITES. IN SOME JURISDICTIONS, CHARGING A “FEE” IMPLIES THAT YOU ARE A FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, COMPLICATING MANY TAX AND INSURANCE ISSUES. ALWAYS REFER TO MONETARY EXCHANGES AS “DONATIONS” TO AVOID JEOPARDIZING YOUR 501(C)(3) STATUS.

Offer basic information about the facility where your guests will be staying. Volunteers should be afforded an honest appraisal of the conditions in which they will be living. Most volunteers understand that they will not be staying in a luxury hotel and that volunteer housing is most often in a group setting. Be honest in your assessment of your facility and what staying there will be like. You may want to include a few pictures of your facility.

Facility Description

Give a brief description of what your facility is like physically. Is this a campground, community center, an apartment, or an old rectory? The host site's contact information and street address should be included here, along with specialized directions if your facility is difficult to locate. This would be an appropriate area to include pictures.

Volunteer Restrictions

It is important to note what kinds of volunteers your facility cannot accommodate. Your volunteer living spaces may lack infrastructure that some people need. For instance, if your facility lacks a refrigerator or freezer, it may be inappropriate for insulin-dependent volunteers. Similarly, since not all buildings are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it is important to notify volunteers of accessibility issues. Noting this information will help volunteers choose a facility which is appropriate to their individual needs. Below is a list of common groups which need to take into account living environment:

- **Age** – Children and the elderly have special needs that need to be taken into account. While bunk beds may be fine for college students, retirees may find them difficult to enter and exit.
- **Access and functional needs** – Not all facilities are ADA compliant. It is important to inform potential guests whether you are compliant and to what degree.
- **Medical needs** – There are many people with medical needs that are easily met in their normal living environments, but which cannot be accommodated in all volunteer situations. The two most common needs are electricity and refrigeration.
- **Religious needs** – Dietary restrictions and degree of separation by gender are the two most common religious needs, with regard to volunteer housing.

Youth Volunteers

If you are allowing youth volunteers, explicitly state the minimum age for volunteers and your chaperone-to-minor requirements (e.g., 1 chaperone for every 5 minors).

Sleeping Arrangements

Provide volunteers with a comprehensive outline of your sleeping accommodations. The most important information to provide is the level of privacy. Refer to the Facility Survey (Attachment 2) for an in-depth look at what can be notated regarding volunteer sleeping arrangements. Here is a short list of basic questions that you should answer:

- What will volunteers be sleeping on – cots, beds, or bunk beds?
- Are genders housed separately? How are they separated?
- Are there separate sleeping accommodations for married or committed couples?

Restrooms

Your facility should have an appropriate number of restrooms for the volunteers you will be housing. Please notate how many restrooms will be available to your guests and their levels of gender separation. Applicable levels of gender separation can be found in the Restrooms and Showers section of the Facility Survey (Attachment 2).

Showers

Your guests will need to cleanup after a long day of work, but some places that house volunteers do not have shower facilities. Make sure that if you do not have showers, you have an agreement with a location nearby that will allow your guests to use their facilities. Most often this is the local YMCA or community center. If you do have showers, notate levels of gender separation. Applicable levels of gender separation can be found in the Restrooms and Showers section of the Facility Survey (Attachment 2).

Kitchen

Many facilities have kitchens which volunteers are allowed to use. Your Manual should include what kitchen appliances and equipment are available to volunteer groups, and acceptable times to use these facilities. Make sure to highlight and explain, if necessary, any restrictions applicable to the kitchen. If your kitchen is Halal, Kosher, or vegetarian, make sure that this is noted and you inform volunteers of the restrictions this places upon kitchen use.

Meals

Some host sites provide volunteer groups with meals. Please clearly indicate which meals, if any, you will be providing for your volunteer guests. If there is a cost associated with the meals, state this explicitly.

Laundry

Volunteer labor is often dirty work. Inform volunteers of where they will be able to launder their clothes and bed linens. If you do not have laundry facilities on-site, provide volunteers with directions to the closest laundromat.

Transportation

Out-of-town volunteers may not be familiar with the transportation systems common in your area. Provide volunteers with information on the best way to get to your facility, and once there, how they will most likely be traveling between work and host sites. What is the closest airport to your facility? Do people get around using mass transit or personal automobiles? Do not assume that volunteers will know this information without it being given to them. If you are in a large city, providing volunteers with a mass transit map before they arrive is extremely helpful.

Parking

Some volunteer groups will be arriving in personal automobiles or buses. Please indicate in your Manual whether your facility can accommodate these vehicles and to what capacity. If your facility cannot accommodate vehicles, where is the closest place to park?

Storage

Some volunteers may be inclined to bring laptops or other expensive personal equipment. Is there a safe place to store these? If not, you may request that these expensive items be left home. Some volunteers, such as professional plumbers or electricians, may bring their own tools. Is there a secure space to store these tools? Please notate availability of storage for volunteer tools and personal items separately.

Stores

Identify the location of nearby stores that provide services short-term volunteers might need. These would include grocery stores, restaurants, and large retailers. Provide concise directions for how to get to these places.

Recreation

Provide your guests with a short list of things to do or see on their day off. Your local Long Term Recovery Organizations (LTRO) may have already put together a package of suggestions for out-of-town volunteers. Check and see if they already have put together this resource. If not, please compile a short list of local attractions and points of interest. Include in this list activities that are affordable or free and which will appeal to a wide variety of people.

Rules

Include a list of house rules. Your rule set should be comprehensive without being constrictive. Include your alcohol and tobacco policies, especially if use of these products is strictly prohibited on your property. An identical set of rules should also be posted prominently throughout your facility.

Chores

Are there daily chores volunteers must perform? What chores need to be done before a group leaves?

Arrival and Departure

What days and times are preferable for volunteer groups to arrive and depart?

Work Expectations and Free Time

It is important that the work expectations of a volunteer group matches the expectations of the housing group, so make sure that these expectations are indicated in your manual. The standard work week for volunteer groups is six days of work and one day off. For faith-based volunteer groups, the free day usually coincides with a day of worship.

Volunteer Packing List

Make sure the Manual includes a personal packing list specific to your site. This list should include a short list of prohibited items as well. Important things to note are whether or not volunteer groups should bring their own towels, linens, and bedding items. The Sample Volunteer Packing List (Attachment 1) offers an example of what this list might include. Please add or subtract items so that the list is specific to volunteer needs at your host site.

Hosting and organizing volunteers is challenging. It is easier for all parties involved if there is a simple checklist detailing what a volunteer group needs to do and how long before arrival these tasks need to be done. Providing a Pre-arrival Checklist to your incoming volunteer groups will ensure that you both know what needs to be done and when it needs to be done. Ensure that you supply volunteer group leaders with all the materials they need to fill out or turn in long before they are due. Below are some common topics that should be covered in the Pre-arrival Checklist provided to your guests:

Forms

Send the volunteer group leader a packet of all host forms and a list of required documents as soon as possible. Give a firm deadline by which all relevant forms must be filled out and returned. Make sure that volunteer group leaders know when and how you would like these forms submitted.

Donations

Give firm dates as to when you expect all donations to be made. Make sure you are specific about how you would like your donations to be made. (Donations should be made in full at least two weeks in advance of a volunteer group's arrival date.)

Work Projects

Volunteer groups should already have work projects set up before they apply for housing. Make sure that all volunteer groups have contacted a volunteer coordination service or a volunteer rebuild organization long before they begin traveling to your facility.



Writing a Host Site Manual is an important first step in starting a volunteer housing program. It gives you control over your program by setting realistic expectations for volunteers who will be guests in your facility. However the process can seem daunting at times. If you have questions or need advice on how to create this important document, contact the Volunteer Group Housing Program at New York Disaster Interfaith Services (NYDIS) and they will assist you.



NYDIS would like to thank our partner organizations for their input and advice in producing these documents for the unique needs of New York City, some elements of which were adopted from their resources and tool kits: the American Red Cross, the Disaster Response Office of the Metropolitan New York Synod, ELCA; Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the New York City LTRGs and their Volunteer and Rebuild Committees, and the members of the New York City Volunteer Group Housing Task Force.



These materials were originally produced, in part, by a grant from the American Red Cross.

NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM



HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

Survey conducted by: _____

Date: _____

Facility guide: _____

LTRG representative: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of organization: _____

Religious affiliation (if applicable): _____

Website: _____

Facebook page: _____

Administrative address:

Street address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Neighborhood: _____

County/Borough: _____

Country: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Email address : _____

Facility address:

Street address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Neighborhood: _____

County/Borough: _____

Country: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Email address: _____

Reservations for this site are managed by:

☐ VOAD Agency

☐ Self-managed

☐ Other: _____

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

Reservation Contact:

Name:

Title:

Email:

Primary phone number:

Secondary phone number:

Best time to call:

Host Site Administrative Contact:

Name:

Title:

Email:

Primary phone number:

Secondary phone number:

Best time to call:

Volunteer Group Contact (if different from administrative):

Name:

Title:

Email:

Primary phone number:

Secondary phone number:

Best time to call:

AVAILABILITY INFORMATION

What is needed to make this site viable for housing volunteers?

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

Volunteer capacity:

Are individual volunteers welcome? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Volunteer age groups allowed: ☐ 11 – 13 ☐ 14 – 17 ☐ 18 – 24 ☐ 25+

Additional requirements if hosting youth volunteers (e.g. chaperone to youth ratio):

Is this facility be available year-round? ☐ Yes ☐ No (state availability):

Black-out periods within the above months (major holidays, school days, etc.):

SUGGESTED DONATION

Suggested donation per group per night:

Suggested donation per volunteer per night:

Suggested flat rate donation per group:

Donation method: ☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Money order ☐ Other: _____

Additional notes:

TRANSPORTATION

Nearest airport to hosting site:

Approximate driving time from nearest airport:

Distance to nearest subway/train:

Distance to nearest bus service:

Distance to nearest ferry:

Can the host site provide transportation to work sites?

Cost of transport to work sites (if applicable):

Notes on provided transportation:

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

PARKING AND STORAGE

Does the site have a parking lot? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, indicate the number of parking spaces: _____

Can the site accommodate buses? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how many buses? _____

Can the site accommodate RVs? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how many RVs? _____

Is the parking lot secured? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is there street parking nearby? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is there a parking garage nearby? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, indicate garage hours, cost, and distance from site: _____

Is there secure storage for tools on site? ☐ Yes ☐ No

NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION

General description of buildings/campus/site: _____

Cell phone coverage at hosting site (select one): ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Poor

Mention distance to the following:

Restaurants: _____

Grocery stores: _____

Hardware stores (i.e. Ace, Home Depot, Lowes, etc.): _____

Discount retailers (i.e. Wal-Mart, Target, etc.): _____

Recreational facilities (i.e. parks, theaters, etc.): _____

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

PREFERRED ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Arrival (day of the week):

Arrival time:

Departure (day of the week):

Departure time:

Time restrictions on volunteers being at host site (if any):

Additional comments:

SLEEPING AREAS

Please ensure 40-60 square feet per person.

Number of rooms:

Indicate floor space dimensions for each:

Number of bunk beds available:

Number of separate beds available:

Number of cots available:

Number of floor spots available:

Total sleeping capacity (combine all of the above):

Please list any bedding materials provided (pillows, linens, towels, etc.):

Is there secure storage for personal items on site? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Additional notes on sleeping areas:

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

KITCHEN AND MEALS

Which of the following does the kitchen include? (Indicate number)

☐ Refrigerator

☐ Freezer

☐ Stove

☐ Microwave oven

☐ Dishwasher

☐ Ice machine

☐ Sink

☐ Grill

Is kitchen use restricted?

☐ Yes, Halal ☐ Yes, Kosher ☐ Yes, vegetarian ☐ No

☐ Other

Meals:

Please provide information on any meals your site is able to provide.

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Cost of meals (if applicable):

Additional information:

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

LAUNDRY

Is there a laundry facility on-site? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, state:

Number of washers: _____ Number of dryers: _____

Are they coin-operated? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, please identify closest off-site laundry facility:

Distance to off-site facility:

Cost of using off-site facility:

RESTROOMS AND SHOWERS

Restrooms:

Number of stalls (men):

Number of urinals (men):

Number of sinks (men):

Number of stalls (women):

Number of sinks (women):

Number of stalls (unisex):

Number of sinks (unisex):

Number of stalls (access and functional needs):

Number of sinks (access and functional needs):

Showers:

Are showers available on-site? ☐ Yes, indoor ☐ Yes, outdoor ☐ Yes, shower trailers ☐ No

Number of on-site showers (men):

Number of on-site showers (women):

Number of on-site showers (unisex):

Number of on-site showers (access and functional needs):

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

If showers are not available, please list potential options (i.e. YMCA, recreation centers, fitness centers, etc.):

Name of 1st off-site location:

Address:

Days and times available:

Number of showers:

Distance from facility:

Name of 2nd off-site location:

Address:

Days and times available:

Number of showers:

Distance from facility:

GENDER ACCOMMODATIONS

Is this a gender-restricted facility? ☐ Yes, female only ☐ Yes, male only ☐ No

Is there sleeping space for married or committed couples? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Can this facility accommodate transgender individuals? ☐ Yes ☐ No

To what extent can sleeping spaces be isolated by gender?

- ☐ Housed in separate buildings
- ☐ Housed on separate floors
- ☐ Rooms separated by distance
- ☐ Separate rooms side-by-side
- ☐ Separated by dividers
- ☐ Separated by a curtain
- ☐ Beds grouped by gender in open space
- ☐ Not separated

If separated by gender, does each space have its own, private entrance point? ☐ Yes ☐ No

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

How are restroom facilities gender-isolated?

- ☐ Designated separate restrooms ☐ Single-user unisex restrooms ☐ Both

If separate restrooms, indicate manner of separation:

- ☐ Different buildings
☐ Different floors
☐ Different hallways
☐ Same hallway some distance apart
☐ Side-by-side separated by divider
☐ Side-by-side separated by curtain
☐ Side-by-side

Is there a private route from the sleeping area to the restrooms for each gender? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are shower facilities gender isolated? ☐ Yes, separate facilities ☐ Yes, designated shower times for each gender ☐ No

If separate facilities, indicate manner of separation:

- ☐ Different buildings
☐ Different floors
☐ Different hallways
☐ Same hallway some distance apart
☐ Side-by-side separated by divider
☐ Side-by-side separated by curtain
☐ Side-by-side

Is there a private route from the sleeping area to the showers for each gender? ☐ Yes ☐ No

To what extent can the dining area be separated by gender?

- ☐ Separate rooms
☐ Separated by dividers
☐ Separated by a curtain
☐ Separated by distance
☐ Seating grouped by gender in open space
☐ Eat at separate times/Not separated

Could gender-separated prayer spaces be provided to groups that request them? ☐ Yes ☐ No

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

COMMON AREA AND RECREATION

Is there a common area available for volunteer use? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, check all of the following that are available in the common area:

- ☐ Cable TV
- ☐ WIFI
- ☐ Desks and tables
- ☐ Sofas/chairs
- ☐ Electrical outlets for charging phone, computers, tools, etc.
- ☐ Board games, cards, books, etc.
- ☐ Vending machines

Is there outdoor space available for recreation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please describe any additional facilities or materials available for volunteer recreation:

ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

Is the facility ADA Compliant? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please indicate all accessibility features available at the site from the lists below.

Access to building:

- ☐ Curb cuts (minimum 35 inches wide)
- ☐ Accessible doorways (minimum 35 inches wide)
- ☐ Automatic doors or appropriate door handles
- ☐ Fixed ramps (minimum 35 inches wide)
- ☐ Portable ramps (minimum 35 inches wide)

Accessible and accommodating restrooms:

- ☐ Grab bars in restrooms (33-36 inches wide)
- ☐ Stall (38 inches wide)
- ☐ Sinks at 34 inches in height
- ☐ Towel dispenser at 39 inches in height

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

Showers:

- ☐ Shower stall (minimum 36 inches by 36 inches)
- ☐ Shower seat (17-19 inches high)
- ☐ Grab bars (33-36 inches wide)
- ☐ Fixed shower head (48 inches high)
- ☐ Hand-held spray unit with hose in showers

Accessible and accommodating cafeterias:

- ☐ Tables (28-34 inches high)
- ☐ Serving line [counter] (28-34 inches high)
- ☐ Aisles (minimum 38 inches wide)

WORK PROJECT

Does your site provide projects for volunteer groups? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes complete the following:

Primary contact for project/volunteer coordination:

Organization(s) you partner with on recovery projects:

Please describe the kind of work these projects entail:

In what area are these projects located?

Please provide any additional information regarding these projects including volunteer skills needed:

OTHER FACILITY INFORMATION

Security on site (personnel, cameras, areas locked at night, etc.):

Heating, air conditioning or both?

List animals on site (if any):

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

Host site clean-up requirements: Please describe any requirements you have for volunteers regarding doing chores and clean-up at your facility.

Language assistance capabilities (if any):

Special service offered by the host site (if any):

FACILITY WELCOME NOTE

Please write a short welcome letter for incoming volunteers. This will be in your profile.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

Are there an appropriate number of fire extinguishers, fire alarms, and smoke detectors on site? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are they inspected regularly? ☐ Yes ☐ No

When is the next inspection scheduled? _____

Is there a fire sprinkler system installed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is there a fire/building evacuation plan posted on site? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the emergency contact information clearly posted? ☐ Yes ☐ No

HOST SITE FACILITY SURVEY

Does the sleeping area have two exits with at least one leading directly outside? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are the emergency exits clearly identified? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are exit routes marked and free of obstructions? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are there adequate first aid supplies available? ☐ Yes ☐ No

When was the last Fire Department inspection conducted?

Date of Inspection: _____ Fire House # _____

Have fire codes been reviewed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are changes needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Have local building codes been reviewed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are changes needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

It is highly recommended that organizations have an appropriate insurance policy (at minimum, a million-dollar liability policy) for their facility, and that they contact their insurance provider to inform them of volunteer housing plans.

Is the facility insured? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What liability value of your policy?

Have insurance companies been contacted? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Additional Notes:

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NOTES

NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM



GOOD FAITH AGREEMENT

The purpose of this form is to document the good faith agreement between the Host Site and the Volunteer Group. It details the intent and reasonable expectations of both parties, and is monitored by a third party.

Host Site: _____

Volunteer Group: _____

Third Party: _____

Duration/Dates of Stay: _____

SECTION 1: HOST SITE AND VOLUNTEER GROUP STIPULATIONS

The Host Site is happy to welcome and house the Volunteer Group in a warm and hospitable environment. This agreement, to be completed by both the Host Site and Volunteer Group Representatives, is intended to facilitate such and thereby commits both parties to meet their noted responsibilities.

1. Non-discrimination – All parties will treat each other with respect, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, access and functional needs, religious beliefs, and cultural background.

2. Arrival and Departure – You, as the Volunteer Group, confirm the following arrival and departure dates and times, and guarantee that the Host Site Representative will be immediately informed of any changes or delays:

i) Arrival date and time: _____

ii) Departure date and time: _____

3. Work Expectations

a) *We, as the Host Site*, expect the Volunteer Group to have already secured volunteer work projects for the duration of their stay, with one designated day off for worship or recreation for every six days of work.

b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, will have secured a work project for the duration of your stay allowing for one day off, if desired, for every six days of work.

GOOD FAITH AGREEMENT

4) Suggested Donations –

a) *We, as the Host Site*, suggest the following donations to allow us to continue hosting volunteers and offset the numerous costs we incur (utilities, disposables, wear and tear, etc.).

i) Requested donation: _____

ii) Requested meal donation (refer to Section 1, Item 11): _____

iii) Other: _____

iv) Donation total: _____

b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, agree to the Host Site's requested donation amounts, and will donate in full, through the method indicated, at least two weeks prior to arrival.

5) **Donation Method** – *We, as the Host Site*, expect all donations to be made in full at least two weeks prior to the Volunteer Group's arrival, in the manner described below:

i) _____

6) Point of Contact –

a) *We, as the Host Site*, will provide a Point of Contact for the Volunteer Group who will be available to provide assistance for the duration of the Volunteer Group's stay.

b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, will provide a Volunteer Group Representative who will serve as a Point of Contact for the Host Site during your stay.

7) **Volunteer Group and Individual Information** – *We, as the Volunteer Group*, attest that all information detailed on the Volunteer Group and Individual Information Forms are accurate and current. The Volunteer Group Representative will contact the Host Site Representative immediately if there are any changes.

GOOD FAITH AGREEMENT

8) Youth Volunteers – *We, as the Volunteer Group*, are solely responsible for the behavior of our youth volunteers. We guarantee that all youth volunteers have the permission of a legal guardian to stay at the Host Site, and that there is at least one adult over the age of 25 for every 5 members under the age of 18.

9) Facility and Amenities –

- a) *We, as the Host Site*, attest that all information we have submitted to the Volunteer Group is accurate, comprehensive, and current.
- b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, attest to have read the literature provided by the Host Site. You are aware of facility access, Host Site Rules, sleeping arrangements, kitchen access, shower availability, parking options, and other details provided in this literature.

10) Access –

- a) *We, as the Host Site*, will provide the Volunteer Group with access to the facility in the manner described below:

i) Access provided by:

- b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, agree to remit all access to the facility at the end of your stay.

11) Meals –

- a) *We, as the Host Site*, will provide the following meals for the Volunteer Group:

i)

- b) *We, as the Host Site*, will provide the Volunteer Group with access to a kitchen at the following days and times:

i)

GOOD FAITH AGREEMENT

12) Showers – *We, as the Host Site*, will make showers available to the Volunteer Group as described below:

i)

13) Chores –

a) *We, as the Host Site*, expect the Volunteer Group to perform the following chores during their stay:

i)

b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, agree to perform the aforementioned chores listed by the Host Site.

14) Special Accommodations – We, as the Host Site, will meet the following expectations for gender separation, dietary restrictions, access and functional needs, or other volunteer needs, as agreed with the Volunteer Group Representative:

i)

15) Facility Walk-Through – We, as the Host Site, will conduct a facility walk-through to familiarize the Volunteer Group with the site on the first day of their stay.

16) Fire Safety –

a) *We, as the Host Site*, are in compliance with local fire safety codes for volunteer group host sites, and will conduct a fire safety drill on the first night of the Volunteer Group's stay. The Volunteer Group is responsible for conducting a nightly fire watch, if necessary.

b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, agree to comply with all fire safety codes including the first night fire drill and a nightly fire watch if necessary.

GOOD FAITH AGREEMENT

17) Grievances –

- a) *We, as the Host Site*, will promptly and respectfully communicate any relevant concerns to the Volunteer Group Representative. In the event that an understanding cannot be reached in a timely manner, we agree to seek and abide by mediation conducted by the aforementioned Third Party.
- b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, will promptly and respectfully communicate any relevant concerns to the Host Site Representative. In the event that an understanding cannot be reached in a timely manner, you agree to seek and abide by mediation conducted by the aforementioned Third Party.

18) Transportation – We, as the Volunteer Group, are responsible for arranging our own transportation to and from the Host Site and our work site unless otherwise agreed upon.

19) Insurance –

- a) *We, as the Host Site*, are insured and have notified our insurer that we are housing volunteers in our facility.
- b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, attest that all volunteers traveling with your group are insured to an acceptable level for your volunteer activity, either individually or through a group plan, and will not be an encumbrance upon the Host Site.

20) Cancellation –

- a) *We, as the Host Site*, will give the Volunteer Group Representative at least two weeks' notice if it is necessary to cancel your reservations. In the event of cancellation, any donations made will be refunded.
- b) *You, as the Volunteer Group*, will give the Host Site at least two weeks' notice if it is necessary to cancel your reservations. In the event of timely cancellation, any donations made will be refunded.

21) Addendum –

SECTION 3: SIGNATURES

By signing below, the **Host Site Representative, Volunteer Group Representative, and Third Party Representative** each acknowledge responsibility for the above agreements on behalf of their respective organizations, formally recognize the limits and extent of the other parties' obligations, and pledge to uphold this agreement in good faith. Please note that the signature of both the Volunteer Group Representative and a representative of the volunteer group's organizational leadership are required (please sign twice, even if it's the same person).

Host Site Representative

Name:	Title:
Signature:	Date:

Volunteer Group Representative

Name:	Title:
Signature:	Date:

Volunteer Group Organizational Leadership Representative

Name:	Title:
Signature:	Date:

Third Party Representative

Name:	Title:
Signature:	Date:

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NOTES

NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM



VOLUNTEER GROUP FORM

This form provides information about the volunteer group to the host site.

Volunteer Group Leader: _____

Date: _____

VOLUNTEER GROUP INFORMATION

Organization Name: _____

Religious Affiliation: _____

Office Phone: _____

Office Email: _____

Arrival Date: _____

Departure Date: _____

Organization Address:

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____

Country: _____

Point of Contact:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Primary Phone Number: _____

Secondary Phone Number: _____

Group Overview:

Number of Adults (Men): _____

Number of Adults (Women): _____

Number of Youths (Boys): _____

Number of Youths (Girls): _____

Total Number of Volunteers: _____

Special Instructions/Requests: _____

Volunteer Group Leader Signature: _____

Date: _____



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NOTES

NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM



INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEER FORM

This form provides information about the volunteers to the host site. Please provide accurate, long-term information for each volunteer to ensure that emergent concerns may be addressed even after a work trip has ended.

Volunteer Group Name: _____

Trip Dates: _____

INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Volunteer Name: _____

Details:

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Liability Waiver Submitted? _____

Permanent Address:

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____

Country: _____

Email Address: _____

Emergency Contact:

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone: _____

Legal Guardian (if under 18):

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone: _____

Applicable Skills:

Notes (Dietary restrictions, allergies, etc.):

Volunteer (or Legal Guardian if under 18):

Signature: _____

Date: _____



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NOTES

NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM



SAMPLE VOLUNTEER PACKING LIST

This list consideration giving to personal safety and comfort during their stay as well as ensuring the security of the host site. Please refer to the packing list below as guidance for all individuals within the volunteer group.

SUGGESTED VOLUNTEER PACKING LIST:

- Sturdy work clothes (heavy pants and long-sleeve shirts)
- Work boots with ankle support and steel toes
- Sweatshirts
- Work gloves
- Dust masks
- Safety goggles
- Sunhat or safety helmet
- Sunglasses
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen
- First aid kit
- Insect repellent
- Hand sanitizer
- Personal medications
- Personal toiletry items
- Phone and phone charger
- Sleeping bag or a set of single sheets and pillows
- Towels, wash cloths, and shower shoes
- Sufficient debits cards, credit cards, or cash

OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- Tool belt
- Trade tools
- Pad lock for storage locker
- Books

PROHIBITED ITEMS:

- Firearms
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Prescription drugs which have not been officially prescribed.

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NOTES

NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING PROGRAM



INDIVIDUAL INDEMNITY AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

I, _____, (the Undersigned or Volunteer Group Participant), as a member of _____ (hereafter known as the Volunteer Group), will be participating in various

projects for the restoration and recovery of New York City resultant from Superstorm Sandy. As a Volunteer Group Participant, and in consideration of being permitted to reside in a Volunteer Group Housing Site, I understand and agree to the following:

I will be residing at a Volunteer Group Housing Site and participating in the above stated projects, of my own free will, as a volunteer, and at my own risk and responsibility. I understand and agree that all coordinating parties and their partners are not responsible or liable in the event of an accident, injury or illness, including death, occurring to me. In that regard I remise, release, indemnify, and forever discharge and hold harmless for myself, my heirs and assign all coordinating parties and their partners, members, volunteers, and/or employees from any liability, claim, suit, cause of action, or judgment whatsoever, arising out of or involved with my participation in the Volunteer Group and/presence upon the facilities of the Volunteer Group Housing Site.

I hereby state that I am in good health and have all the medications necessary to treat any known allergic or chronic conditions, and I am able to administer such medications without assistance. If at any time during my participation I require emergency medical care and am not able to give consent due to my physical or mental condition, I authorize the leaders of the Volunteer Group to make emergency medical care decisions on my behalf and to authorize treatment by a licensed physician or other medical professional in regard to my care. I specifically release the Volunteer Group Housing Site and the leaders of the Volunteer Group in making those emergency medical care decisions, from any and all liability associated with said decisions, even if injury or death is the result of the decision.

I understand that as a Volunteer Group Participant I will be performing certain tasks that could result in serious injury and/or death, including, but not limited to, debris removal, sorting and packaging relief supplies, and/or assisting in the repair and/or construction of personal residences, structures, and other project activities. I further understand and voluntarily assume any and all risks associated with any tasks I may perform as a Volunteer Group Participant.

The execution of this Agreement by the Undersigned further constitutes a waiver of any and all affirmative defenses which may be available by virtue of statute and as per the New York Rules of Civil procedure. The Undersigned shall be responsible for any and all damages to host site property, directly resultant from activities of the Undersigned, while said premises are being used for by the Undersigned for the specified activities. The host site reserves any and all remedies at law to collect any damages which may result from the use of said premises by the Undersigned.

The execution of this Agreement by the Undersigned further constitutes a waiver of any and all affirmative defenses which may be available by virtue of statute and as per the New York Rules of Civil procedure.

I agree to participate fully in the projects that are planned as well as in the Volunteer Group's activities and responsibilities. I understand that the use of tobacco products, alcohol, and drugs, not prescribed for me by a licensed physician, are prohibited on Volunteer Group Housing Site property. Finally, I also understand that violations of Laws or Ordinances of the City of New York or the State of New York will not be tolerated. If I fail to comply with these policies, I understand that I will be sent home immediately at either my Volunteer Group's or my family's expense.

The Undersigned expressly warrants that this Individual Indemnity and Waiver of Liability Agreement is to be binding upon his/her executors, successors, and administrators. It is further warranted by the Undersigned that no promise or inducement has been offered, except as herein set forth, and that the Undersigned or the Undersigned Parent or Legal Guardian is of legal age, legally competent to execute this Agreement and agrees to all the terms of this Agreement, making all warranties herein set forth and accepting full responsibility there for, and this Agreement is a full and final release of all claims known and unknown, anticipated and unanticipated.

The Undersigned has read this Individual Indemnity and Waiver of Liability Agreement and fully understands the same. The Undersigned agrees that his Agreement shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of New York. The Undersigned further agrees that in the event that any clause or provision of this Agreement shall be held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not otherwise affect the remaining provisions of the Agreement which shall continue to be enforceable.

We the Undersigned, individual(s) and/or as parents/guardians of the above named Volunteer Group Participant acknowledge that the above named Volunteer Group Participant will be staying at a Volunteer Group Housing Site and participating in a project or projects at his/her and my/our own risk. I/we on my/own behalf, hereby remise, release, indemnify and forever discharge and hold harmless for myself, my heirs and assigns the Volunteer Group Housing Site, its ministers, elders, session, members, volunteers, and employees from all liabilities for damage, injury, or illness including death to the Volunteer Group Participant or his/her property during his/her participation in or travel to or from any volunteer project or related event. We also understand and agree to all representations, commitments and warranties made herein.

Further, I/we authorize the Leaders of the Volunteer Group on my/our behalf and at my/our account to take such measures and arrange for such medical treatment by a licensed physician and hospital treatment as the Leaders of the Volunteer Group may deem advisable for the health and well-being of the Volunteer Group Participant without the need for further consent.

In Witness Whereof the Undersigned have executed this Release and Indemnity Agreement on the date or dates indicated.

Volunteer Group Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

NOTES

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NYC SUPERSTORM SANDY RECOVERY

✓ **FIND HOUSING FOR YOUR VOLUNTEER GROUP**

✓ **SIGN UP YOUR HOUSE OF WORSHIP AS A HOST SITE**

**CONTACT THE NYC VOLUNTEER GROUP HOUSING
PROGRAM STAFF:**

212.669.6100

OR

VOLUNTEERHOUSING@NYDIS.ORG

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT THE PROGRAM WEBSITE AT:

WWW.NYDIS.ORG/VOLUNTEERHOUSING



*NYDIS a 501(c)(3) faith-based federation of service providers and charitable organizations who work in partnership to provide disaster readiness, response, and recovery services to New York City. NYDIS and its members seek to mitigate human suffering caused by catastrophes and serve the most vulnerable and under-resourced households and communities affected by disaster.

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