



Volunteer Handbook

EFFECTIVE DATE: OCTOBER 2017

Welcome!

We are so glad that you have decided to volunteer with Catholic Charities.

This handbook is designed to introduce you to Catholic Charities and to provide a basic overview of the practices and procedures which provide all of us – employees and volunteers – with guidance and direction. Much of the information contained here comes from our agency practices when using volunteers.

As volunteerism within the organization grows and changes, there may be a need to modify the practices, procedures, and other information described in this handbook. When such changes occur, you will be notified by an announcement or update. It is your responsibility to keep your handbook current and stay informed about practices and changes that affect you.

If you have any questions or need any clarification of the information contained in this handbook, please contact your supervisor or the Volunteer Services Coordinator at (515) 237-5045, or by email at Volunteer@catholiccharitiesdm.org.



About Catholic Charities

We help people face adversity and empower their success. We have been empowering generations of Iowans since 1924.

None of us know when adversity will leave us feeling hopeless. Catholic Charities serves the people of southwest Iowa when they find themselves in need of help. From basic needs of food and shelter, to empowerment programs that lead to housing, employment, and more. Professional counseling services help to sort out barriers that can keep people from being their best. Educational programs build client skills to help them thrive in the future. We continue to adapt to the needs in our communities so that we are offering services relevant to clients. At the base of it all, we build all of these services on the basis of Catholic Social Teaching, which is focused on social justice, dignity, and respect.

"I'm not Catholic, can you help me?" – Of course! Because our mission is based on Catholic Social Teaching, we are compelled to help ALL in need, regardless of religion, race, gender, or demographic. We partner with many other civic and religious organizations in the area to complement our services and strive for well-rounded care for those we serve.

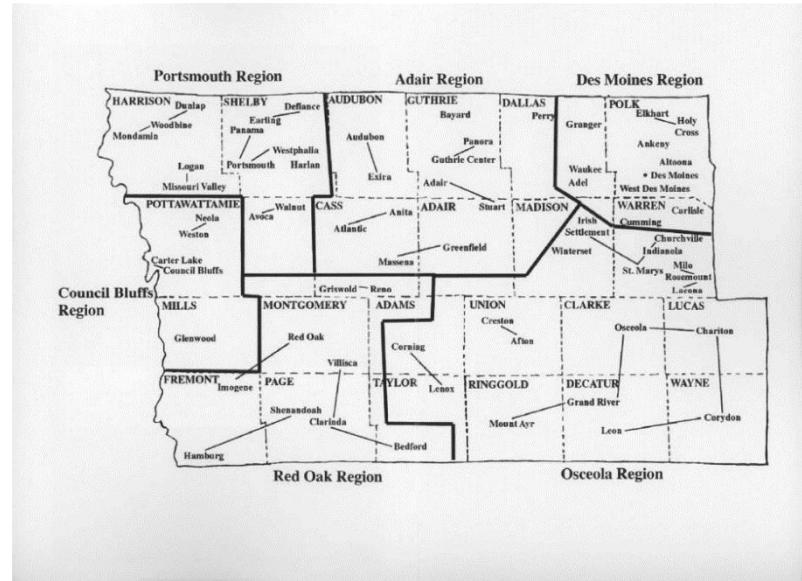
Our Mission Statement

Family Centered services that empower individuals and strengthen families

Our Origins



Who We Serve



Our Path to Empowerment

We work to break the cycle of multigenerational threats to families. We found that this approach yields substantially better results than traditional methods.

- 1 Adapt to current issues.**
Identify the root causes of poverty, anxiety, and need in our community, and understand systemic and cultural threats to families.
- 2 Build essential relationships.**
Ally ourselves with institutions and organizations that share our mission and values. Recruit volunteers and collect contributions from the community and beyond.
- 3 Address individual needs.**
Understand the immediate needs of each individual or family. Convey a transparent and meaningful relationship with the people involved in every case.
- 4 Develop sustainable solutions.**
Educate and connect clients with resources for a viable and successful future.
- 5 Create a ripple effect.**
Our solutions strive to empower individuals and families for generations and break the cycle of poverty.

Our Services

Counseling Program

Stress and anxiety are part of our daily lives, but what do you do when it gets to be too much? Professional therapy is one way to work through stress and anxiety. Our licensed, professional therapists work with clients of all faiths and backgrounds to address issues including depression, anxiety, stress, marital issues, relationship problems, child behavior problems, trauma, abuse and more.

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Program

Catholic Charities Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program provides services to anyone faced with these issues through a 24-hour crisis phone line, emergency shelter, court advocacy, empowerment education, support groups, and outreach to underserved populations. Our programs serve nine counties in southwest Iowa: Audubon, Cass, Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Montgomery, Page, Pottawattamie and Shelby.

Emergency Family Shelter

Catholic Charities Emergency Family Shelter keeps homeless families together during a very difficult time in their lives. Our experienced staff understands that homelessness is not a simple issue. While each family is expected to follow the same rules and expectations at the shelter, they are all provided individualized case management. The goal is to help each family leave the shelter with stable housing, financial stability, and empowerment to live a successful, sustainable life.

Food Pantry

Catholic Charities Outreach Center is one of 12 partner food pantry sites in the DMARC Food Pantry Network and provides nonperishable food items, along with daily donated food items, diapers and formula. Catholic Charities wants to help our clients fulfill their basic needs and help explore other barriers that our clients face. Our food pantry is located in our newly named Outreach Center (originally called St. Mary Family Center) where we hope to help our clients in a more complete way.

Empowerment Services

When a family does not have food, there are underlying needs that aren't being met. Catholic Charities Outreach Center wants to meet the immediate need of hunger AND empower clients for a successful future. Sharing educational and counseling opportunities, community resources, health and wellness information, among others, offer our clients a more complete service.

Empowerment Services include classes, resources, services, and local agencies to help clients get around barriers in their life. From basic financial management to professional counseling, we want to help anyone in need to succeed!

Refugee Resettlement

Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement works through the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the U.S. State Department. Our agency resettles clients that have family, or close friends living in our area. We have 90 days to settle families for their new life in Iowa. Every family is unique, and requires a variety of services. Health exams, job placement assistance, school enrollment, language classes, and bus training are just some of the many tasks that have to be completed during the first three months. We want to get the entire family off to a great start so they can be successful.

Adoption Search Services

When Catholic Charities was established in Des Moines in the 1920's, one of its main components was Christ Child Home. The facility was a temporary home for neglected, abandoned, and orphaned children. From 1925-1966, the home was run by Catholic nuns who cared for more than 3,000 children. During its history, 1,039 of the children were placed for adoption through Christ Child Home. Adoptions continued through Catholic Charities into the 2010's. Catholic Charities, Diocese of Des Moines remains dedicated to maintaining the records of all those placed for adoption throughout its history.

Volunteer Engagement Philosophy

Volunteers are one of the greatest resources we have at Catholic Charities. People like you, who give their time, energy, and talents to provide help and inspire hope, are essential to our ability to deliver quality services. We are committed to creating opportunities for the community to be involved in our work, and many of our programs would not be able to carry out their goals if volunteers were not involved. Our program volunteers and Board and Committee members are priceless.

Volunteer Engagement and Catholic Charities' Strategic Plan

Volunteer engagement is an essential part of the agency's strategic plan.

One of our agency's goals is "to build capacity to integrate, standardize, and optimize the use of volunteers to serve clients."

By engaging volunteers in direct and indirect service activities, we are able to expand the efforts of our programs and reach more and more people in need.

Our volunteers participate by:

- supporting the homeless
- feeding the hungry
- helping new refugee families
- assisting domestic violence and sexual assault survivors
- offering special programming at our outreach centers
- sorting through donations
- providing clerical support
- assisting with special events
- and aiding with many other programs and projects

Benefits of Volunteering



As a volunteer at Catholic Charities, you will have the opportunity to provide service in line with many of our agency's principles, including:

- Solidarity with the poor
- The importance of human dignity and fundamental human rights
- The priority of the common good
- The moral value of work

You will have the opportunity to use and enhance your personal and professional skills and perhaps gain valuable experience that will help you in the future.

We strive to provide our volunteers with a positive work environment, necessary training, supervision, evaluation, and recognition. In return, we expect you to honor your commitments to the agency, respect other staff members and volunteers, and perform your assigned duties to the best of your abilities.

A Message from the Executive Director

Dear New Volunteer,

On behalf of our Board of Directors and our dedicated team of staff and volunteers, I want to formally welcome you to Catholic Charities. You have decided to join an agency that has a rich tradition of serving the poor, vulnerable and marginalized in our communities across the great state of Iowa.

Regardless of the program or service you will be volunteering for, it is certain that these hallmarks are at the core of its mission:

1. Commitment to excellence,
2. Dignity for all people and
3. Compassion for those in need.

I trust you hold these same values in high regard and we are honored to welcome you to our dynamic team!

Sincerely,

Nancy Galeazzi
Executive Director



Definition of a Volunteer

You are considered a volunteer if you, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement for volunteer related expenses, perform a service at the direction of and on behalf of the agency. This includes participating in program activities or serving on the Board of Directors. As a volunteer, you will be accepted officially and enrolled by the agency prior to performance of your tasks.

Catholic Charities welcomes adults, youth, families, and groups to volunteer within our agency's programs and does not discriminate against any volunteer because of race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, or disability.

Employees as Volunteers

If you are already an employee of Catholic Charities, you may volunteer within any Catholic Charities program offering volunteer opportunities. Under no circumstances are employees expected to volunteer their time nor are they ever expected or allowed to volunteer for duties they normally are paid to do.

Catholic Charities employees are not required to fill out the formal volunteer application or have background and reference checks completed, as these elements were already completed as part of the hiring process. Employees should interview with program staff and will report to the program's designated volunteer supervisor. They are expected to follow the same service guidelines in place for all of our volunteers.

Family Members of Staff as Volunteers

Family members of staff may volunteer with the agency. When family members are enrolled as volunteers, they will not be placed under the direct supervision of family members who are employees.

Clients and Their Relatives as Volunteers

If you are a client of Catholic Charities, you may be accepted as a volunteer where such service does not conflict with provision of services to you or to others.

Relatives of clients may also serve as volunteers, but will not be placed in a position of direct service or relationship to members of their family who are receiving services.

Minors as Volunteers

Volunteers under the age of 18 who wish to participate in an ongoing volunteer opportunity must have written permission of a parent or guardian before they may begin service. The volunteer tasks assigned to a minor shall be performed in a non-hazardous environment and shall comply with all appropriate requirements of child labor laws.

Definition of a Volunteer *(continued)*

Group Volunteers

Many of Catholic Charities' programs accept one-time volunteer service from groups, including high school and college service groups, church groups, and employees on corporate service days. In these instances, the Special Event Volunteer Contact Sheet is used in lieu of the formal agency application, and no interview is required. Youth may participate in one-time group volunteering activities with the permission and supervision of their leaders. Group leaders assume responsibility for obtaining any necessary parent/guardian permission.

Volunteering vs. Interning vs. Service Learning

As opposed to most volunteer opportunities, internships are primarily educational experiences with an emphasis on learning academic or career-related skills. In accordance with COA standards, "interns will be directly supervised by licensed or otherwise accountable professionals." Interns may receive academic credit for their experiences if they arrange this with their school ahead of time.

Service Learning occurs when a class or group works with a community partner, such as Catholic Charities, on a plan to implement solutions for a student-identified community need.



Classification of Volunteers

According to the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, there are several ways to classify volunteers.

Ongoing Volunteers (Regularly Scheduled)

When a volunteer accepts a position with a regular schedule, s/he will be considered an ongoing volunteer after serving consistently for six months (or another pre-determined length of assignment, i.e., summer vacation).

Board and Committee members are also considered ongoing volunteers when they accept terms of service.

Special Event Volunteers (Occasional)

People who serve as volunteers only once or occasionally in an event situation are considered special event or occasional volunteers. Examples of this include when someone paints a wall, helps out at a golf tournament, or fundraising event.

Direct Service Volunteers

Direct service volunteers provide service directly to clients. There may be additional screening and training requirements for these volunteers.

Volunteer Team Leaders

Volunteer team leaders supervise other volunteers. For example, the volunteer who coordinates apartment set-ups in the Refugee Resettlement Program is considered a volunteer team leader.

Professional Volunteers

Professional volunteers are those who provide a volunteer service using their license, registration, or certification as required by the profession. These credentials must be current if they are providing that professional skill as a volunteer.

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Volunteer Opportunity Descriptions

As a volunteer, you will be given an opportunity description outlining the specific responsibilities of your role. It is your responsibility to read about your position, gain an understanding of the requirements, and seek any necessary clarification from your supervisor. Signing the Volunteer Agreement Form demonstrates that you are aware of the duties your position entails and agree to perform them to the best of your abilities.

Recruitment

Catholic Charities uses a variety of different methods to recruit volunteers. You may find us reaching out to potential volunteers via our agency website, through other internet volunteering sites and social media platforms, in print publications, and by word of mouth. We also encourage you to let your friends and family know about our volunteering opportunities.

Applications

As a volunteer, you will be required to complete the Agency Volunteer Application and provide emergency contact information. Specific programs may also require supplemental forms. If you are participating as a volunteer in a one-time event, you will need to fill out the Special Event Volunteer Contact Sheet, providing us with your contact information and emergency contact information.

Interviews

Most ongoing volunteer positions require an interview with the Catholic Charities staff member who will be supervising you. Interviews help volunteers clarify the responsibilities of the opportunity and help supervisors decide if the prospective volunteer is a good fit. If you are participating as a volunteer in a one-time event, then an interview before the event may not be necessary.

Background/Criminal Records Checks

In accordance with COA standards, volunteers for ongoing positions are required to undergo a background/criminal records check child abuse registry check prior to beginning service.

Driving records checks are required for volunteers who drive for their program or transport clients.

A State of Iowa DHS Child Protective Services Central Case Records Search is required on volunteers who will be working directly with children. Childcare volunteers also need to provide immunization records to their supervisor. Catholic Charities covers the cost of all background and criminal records checks for volunteers.

VIRTUS Training

Adult volunteers, at least 18 years old, who wish to be regular 'on-site' volunteers must complete VIRTUS training within 2 weeks of registering and prior to working with clients. Training information can be obtained from the volunteer coordinator.

Volunteer Agreement Form

To document that you have read, understood, and agreed to follow the Catholic Charities volunteer practices and procedures and feel comfortable with the responsibilities of your specific volunteer position, we require you to sign a Volunteer Agreement Form when beginning service.

Aspects of Volunteer Service

Initial Agency Orientation

All ongoing volunteers will be required to complete an orientation to Catholic Charities. Topics covered during orientation will vary depending on whether the volunteer is serving in a direct service or non-direct service capacity.

Program Orientation & Training

As a new volunteer, your program will provide you with its own orientation and the necessary training required for your specific volunteer position.

Supervision

As a volunteer, you will have a clearly identified supervisor who will directly oversee your role within the program. This supervisor will be available to you for consultation and assistance. One-time volunteers will also be informed of their supervisor in case questions or problems arise. While all suggestions are respected, please be mindful that operational and services decisions are made at a director's level.

The Coordinator of Volunteer Services is also a point of contact throughout the application and orientation process and to support agency volunteers throughout their service.

Corrective Action

In appropriate situations, corrective action may be taken following an incident or evaluation. Examples of corrective action include the requirement of additional training, re-assignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension of the volunteer, or dismissal from volunteer service.

Concerns & Grievances

Decisions involving corrective action of a volunteer will be reviewed for appropriateness by the Program Manager, Director of Programs, and/or the Coordinator of Volunteer Services. If corrective action is taken, the volunteer shall be informed of the procedures for expressing his/her concern or grievance. A volunteer has the opportunity to provide a written request to air his/her concerns to the Coordinator of Volunteer Services

Evaluation

If you are a volunteer with ongoing responsibilities, you may be given an annual evaluation in accordance with Council on Accreditation standards. Occasional or "casual" volunteers will receive evaluations only upon request of the volunteer.

Recognition

As a volunteer, you are an essential part of our program operations. Therefore, we believe it is very important to recognize the time and effort that you put into your service. Recognition opportunities will occur at the agency level, as well as the program level.

Aspects of Volunteer Service (continued)

Record Maintenance & Volunteer Time Reports

Keeping track of the time given by our volunteers is very important to us. Each program is required to record hours for each individual volunteer and report them to the Coordinator of Volunteer Services on a monthly basis. Some volunteer positions are more independent and require volunteers to keep track of their own hours which they must then report back to their supervisor.

Absenteeism and Punctuality

All volunteers are expected to be conscientious of their duties, the value of their time in our agency, and of the staff, volunteers, and clients who may be counting on punctual service. If a volunteer is unable to arrive on time or must be absent for a scheduled shift, they must let their supervisor know as soon as possible. Continued absenteeism from assigned shifts, trainings, or meetings, with or without notice may lead to reassignment of the volunteer or termination of the volunteer service

Participation Guidelines

Certain practices are in place to ensure positive and safe volunteering experiences at Catholic Charities.

Drug Free Policy

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is not allowed in Catholic Charities program sites. Additionally, volunteers may not be impaired by any substance while serving. Such action may result in your immediate dismissal from the volunteer position.

Tobacco Free Policy

Tobacco product or smoking by our employees, volunteers, clients, or vendors in any interior offices or spaces of any building occupied by Catholic Charities is not allowed. There is also no smoking permitted within 25 feet of any entryway, vent, or doorway to interior buildings. (Note: There is an exception to this at the Emergency Shelter for guests.)

Firearms and Weapons

To ensure that Catholic Charities maintains a workplace safe and free of violence for all employees and volunteers, the agency prohibits the possession or use of dangerous weapons on company property. All Catholic Charities employees and volunteers are subject to this provision, including clients on company property. A license to carry the weapon does not supersede company policy. Any volunteer in violation of this policy will be removed from volunteer service immediately.

Personal Involvement with Clients

If your volunteer position involves working directly with clients, it is important to maintain boundaries with them and to keep your relationship professional, not personal. Due to the delicate nature of your relationship, please refrain from initiating contact in public and/or photographing clients.

Participation Guidelines (*continued*)

Property Policy

As a volunteer at Catholic Charities, you will respect the property of Catholic Charities and the personal property of other volunteers and staff.

Safety

Catholic Charities is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for staff and volunteers as well as persons and families served. Each program will provide volunteers with information on facility safety plans and safety protocols related to the assigned volunteer position.

Each program will also coordinate annual training for volunteers if they might reasonably be expected to have exposure to blood borne pathogens while providing their volunteer service. Catholic Charities shall make available the hepatitis B vaccine and vaccination series to volunteers who have occupational exposure, and post-exposure evaluation and follow-up to volunteers who have had an exposure incident.

Any injury to the volunteer while fulfilling the duties of their position description must be reported to the supervisor immediately. A worker's compensation claim may need to be filed.

Confidentiality Policy

Catholic Charities recognizes confidentiality as a living principle based on the sanctity and dignity of the human person. Therefore, the agency will respect the privacy of personal information of those it serves or employs. You are responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all information to which you are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves staff members, volunteers, clients, or other people or involves overall program or agency business. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination or other corrective action.

Driving Policies

If you will be transporting clients as a volunteer driver, a Motor Vehicles Record check and a criminal background check must be completed prior to your start. Catholic Charities reserves the right to accept or deny you as a volunteer driver based on the findings of these checks. Please note that each program has specific volunteer opportunities, if you are interested in driving, speak with the volunteer coordinator.

You must be 21 or over to be a volunteer driver and follow all state and federal traffic laws. All passengers must wear seat belts. For safety and confidentiality reasons, when volunteers are transporting clients, no additional passengers are allowed in the vehicle unless they have been authorized by the program. Also, you are not permitted to use your cellular phone while the motor vehicle engine is running. If you have had a previous OUI conviction, three years must pass before you may be considered for a volunteer driving opportunity with Catholic Charities.

You must be providing service within the scope of your volunteer service description and have your own automobile liability and physical damage insurance (with a minimum liability limit of \$100,000/\$300,000) and must be able to show proof of coverage prior to performing driving services. We encourage you to consult with your own insurance agents regarding the extension of your personal insurance to include community volunteer work.

Reporting Accidents

To ensure volunteer, client and staff safety, report all accidents to the site supervisor immediately.

Participation Guidelines (*continued*)

Liability and Insurance

In May of 1997, Congress approved legislation (Volunteer Protection Act) that shields volunteers for nonprofit organizations from liability lawsuits. HR911 limits the occasions when volunteers, as well as directors, officers, and trustees, may be sued in connection with their actions on behalf of a nonprofit. While the legislation removes a volunteer (but not the nonprofit) from liability if an individual commits negligent acts or omissions while acting within the scope of his or her responsibility, it does not protect the person if such acts were caused by willful or criminal misconduct or gross negligence.

Sexual Exploitation of Clients

Catholic Charities serves many people considered vulnerable under the law and thus prohibits sexual contact between any volunteer and any client, regardless of age. Any suspected incident of sexual exploitation of an adult client involving staff or occurring on Catholic Charities' premises must be reported immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator. Such reports will be promptly reported to the proper legal authorities. Catholic Charities reserves the right to suspend or terminate volunteers, pending the outcome of the investigation.

Sexual contact with children who are current or former clients is strictly prohibited at all times and is a violation of the law. Catholic Charities fully cooperates with any law enforcement investigation involving the alleged sexual exploitation of a child.

Harassment Policy

Catholic Charities is committed to a work environment that is professional and harassment-free for all employees and volunteers. Harassment includes, without limitations, verbal, physical, visual, and innuendo. It also includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact and other verbal or physical conduct, or visual forms of harassment of sexual nature when submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of employment or is used as the basis for unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for employees and volunteers.

Volunteers should report any issues or concerns to their supervisor or Human Resources immediately.

Emergency Closings

Catholic Charities strives to ensure the safety of all volunteers. In the event of inclement weather, volunteers will be responsible for contracting their volunteer site to inform their supervisor that they will not be performing their scheduled service. If a Catholic Charities office should close, the Coordinator of Volunteer Services or supervisor will notify volunteers scheduled to perform service via phone of the closing.

Participation Guidelines (*continued*)

Holidays

The Catholic Charities main office and Outreach Center are closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Monday following Easter
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Half-day Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Day after Christmas
- Half-day New Year's Eve

There may also be days that volunteer services are not needed due to office closure for staff training days. Site supervisors will post closures.

Hours and Tax Information

If you would like a log of your hours, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator by January 15th.

Media Relations

All public relations or media concerns must be handled by the Communications team. No media contact shall be made or received by a volunteer. Any media contact received by a volunteer must be forwarded to a supervisor or Director of Communications.

Computer and Equipment Use

Use of Catholic Charities computers and equipment is intended for agency-related purposes. Volunteers are not permitted to use computers or equipment for business or commercial purposes unrelated to Catholic Charities.

Personal Cell Phones

Catholic Charities' goal for volunteers is to meet the needs of clients we serve and to provide the best experience possible. We ask that volunteers refrain from using their personal phone during their time volunteering with Catholic Charities.

Dress Code

As a volunteer, you are responsible for presenting a positive image to clients and to the community as a representative of Catholic Charities. You should dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of your duties. Please wear closed toed shoes when you volunteer.

Ending Volunteer Service

Resignation & Leave of Absence

Your volunteer position may conclude at the end of a particular project, event, or set time period, but you are also free to end your volunteer service with Catholic Charities at any time. Because volunteers are so important to the programs and agency, however, we request that you provide advance notice of your departure and a reason for your decision.

Termination

You may be terminated from your position as a volunteer for a variety of reasons. Some of these include: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of agency equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of clients or coworkers, failure to abide by agency policies and procedures, failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

Exit Surveys

When you leave your position, you will be given an opportunity to fill out an exit survey detailing why you are ending your service. The exit survey is also a great place to give us any further comments about your experience and to provide any potential ideas for improvements.

Once again, we truly appreciate your willingness to volunteer with Catholic Charities! For questions or more information about this handbook, please contact the Coordinator of Volunteer Services at (515) 237-5091, or by email at Volunteer@catholiccharitiesdm.org.