VOLUNTEER & DONATION GUIDE

Bethesda Project
A Caring Family for Philadelphia’s Homeless

CONTACT
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BethesdaProject.org
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ABOUT BETHESDA PROJECT

The mission of Bethesda Project is to find and care for the abandoned poor and to be family with those who have none.

Since its inception in 1979, Bethesda Project has created caring communities for homeless and formerly homeless adults in Philadelphia. Bethesda Project is focused on reaching out to those who are not only homeless, but severely isolated from society, typically stemming from untreated chronic mental illness, medical conditions and addiction. Many of these men and women come to Bethesda Project after years of living on the streets and are extremely reluctant to stay in any type of shelter. Supporting these vulnerable men and women requires long-term relationship building to address the underlying health and personal issues causing homelessness.

What makes Bethesda Project unique is the dedication of the staff to treat these individuals as family and work through challenges to ensure that these men and women have a place to call home. This patient and persistent approach has proven to be very successful.

The Problem & Our Impact

♦ Philadelphia has the worst poverty rate of the ten largest cities in the U.S.

♦ The Philadelphia Housing Authority has over 100,000 individuals and families on its waiting list for affordable housing.

♦ Bethesda Project operates 14 locations in Philadelphia, serving over 1,500 homeless and formerly homeless men and women each year.

♦ Services include emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing, case management services and community activities to help everyone reach his or her highest level of self-sufficiency.

♦ Bethesda Project coordinates over 10,000 hours of volunteer service each year. Volunteers are an integral part of building mutually rewarding and healing relationships with our guests and residents.

♦ Of Bethesda Project resident and guest populations: 65% have serious medical conditions including HIV-AIDS, cancer, high blood pressure, and diabetes; 60% have diagnoses of mental illness; 45% have histories of addiction; 31% are age 60 or older; 30% are dually diagnosed with mental health issues and histories of addiction.

♦ Bethesda Project facilitates over 200 positive moves to more independent housing each year.
HANDS ON VOLUNTEERISM

There are many great ways to make a direct impact in the lives of residents and guests at our shelters and housing sites. Below is a list of popular volunteer projects.

Serve A Meal
A great way to get to know the men and women of Bethesda Project is preparing and serving meals. Just like your home, our sites and kitchens range in capacity and size; it is difficult for us to accommodate more than ten volunteers on this task at once. We are always looking for individuals and groups to bring the food that they serve, although assisting with the preparation of food we have available is also an option.

Help Maintain Our Sites
As we strive to welcome the most vulnerable men and women in Philadelphia into our caring family, our sites require additional housekeeping and maintenance support from our dedicated volunteers in order to operate at our highest capacity. Individuals and group volunteers regularly assist with housekeeping duties including sweeping, cleaning kitchens, sorting donations, gardening projects, and much more.

Host A Game Day
Not all volunteer projects involve manual labor. In our mission to help chronically homeless men and women recover from the isolation of living on the streets, we rely on volunteers to bring a sense of family and community to our shelters and permanent supportive housing sites. Many volunteers find that organizing a game day is a great way to get involved. Volunteers bring and play a variety of games and activities at our sites including bingo, cards, karaoke, board games, and more.

Lead A Class or Art Activity
We are always looking for volunteers to utilize their skill sets to lead classes in skills such as applying for jobs or mindful meditation. Art provides a means for many people to explore feelings, reconcile emotional conflicts, manage behavior and addiction, develop social skills, reduce anxiety, and increase self-esteem. From creative writing classes to collages, we rely on volunteers to use art to help our guest and residents recover from the trauma of life on the streets. Bethesda Project’s resources are limited, so we rely on our art volunteers to provide supplies for their projects.
DONATE SUPPLIES

Bethesda Project opens its doors to chronically homeless men and women who are resistant to enter the shelter system. In addition to the men and women who sleep in Bethesda Project shelters and residences each night, many more connect with Bethesda Project during the day to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, toiletries and other essentials. Donating supplies to Bethesda Project is a great way to support individuals in the early stages of recovering from homelessness.

Prior notice of the date and time of your delivery is requested. Donations are welcome anytime, but are most easily accepted Monday – Friday 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. For questions, please contact communitylife@bethesdaproject.org or call (513) 280-2236. Please note that we are unable to pick up donations.

**High Demand Items March 2020**

- Hand Sanitizer
- Bleach
- Clorox Wipes
- Lysol spray and wipes
- Disinfectant spray
- Liquid hand soap
- Rubber and latex gloves
- PPE: Face masks (can be homemade), face shields, plastic gloves, gowns
- Forehead scanner and disposable thermometers

We are always willing to accept the following items:

- Accessories: wallets, belts
- Casual Men’s Clothes: Jeans, Shirts, Sweaters, Sweatshirts, Sweatpants (M-XXL)
- Men’s winter coats and jackets (M-XXL)
- New white men’s t-shirts
- Men’s boots and sneakers (all sizes)
- New twin-sized bed sheets
- Gift cards to Wawa, Walgreens, Dunkin Donuts, Target, CVS (from $5—$25)
- SEPTA keycards
- Flip flops/Shower Shoes
- Prepared/easily reheatable meals and packaged snacks
- Tissues, Paper Towels, and Toilet Paper
- Canned Food/Non-perishables

We are unable to accept the following items:

- Women’s clothing (other than new underwear and socks)
- Used linens and bedding
- Used underwear or socks
- Kitchen and Electronic Appliances
- Furniture of any kind, home or office
- Mattresses
- Home Décor
- Already opened food, including leftovers from large group gatherings
DONATE WELCOME OR MOVE-IN KITS

Each winter, Philadelphia’s most vulnerable and chronically homeless men and women come to Bethesda Project seeking shelter. These individuals often avoid the shelter system in the warmer months, many times due to untreated mental illness, histories of substance abuse, and past traumas. You can help welcome these vulnerable men and women into our caring communities by making and donating welcome kits.

Welcome kits contain the supplies needed for individuals coming into shelter for the first time after months, if not years, of living on the streets. We collect welcome kits all year long in preparation for the high demand for services we experience through winter.

Please package your items in a mesh laundry bag and label the size of items contained in the Welcome Kit. This will ensure guests at our winter shelters also have a convenient way to transport their laundry to the facility at our largest emergency shelter.

**Welcome Kit Contents:**
- Twin blanket, Twin Sheets
- Shampoo, Soap
- Toothbrush, Toothpaste
- Razors, Shaving Cream
- Men’s warm socks (all sizes)
- Men’s gloves (all sizes)
- Men’s winter hats (all sizes)
- Men’s underwear (all sizes)
- A note of support from you (optional)

Move-In Kits provide necessary items for our men and women moving from our shelters into permanent housing.

**Move-In Kit Contents:**
- Dishes: set of 4-8, including glasses
- Utensils: set of 4-8
- Pots/Pans: 2 frying pans, 2 pots, 1 soup pot
- Dish towels
- Bath towels/wash cloths (4 each)
- Bedding(queen size): 2 sets sheets, 1 blanket
- Pillows: 2
- Toiletries
- Shower curtain/liner
- Bathroom accessories
- Waste Baskets: 2
- Ice cube trays: 2
- Plastic Food Storage Containers (i.e. Tupperware)

*Please deliver welcome and move-in kits to:*
Community Life, Our Brothers’ Place
907 Hamilton St.
Philadelphia, PA 19123
DONATE FOOD

Casseroles
Casseroles are used at least three times a month at each housing site for group gatherings, house celebrations, birthday parties and more. The experience the casseroles provide is an essential part of building community through family meals. Since many of our sites follow strict health code guidelines, we prefer store bought casseroles, such as Stouffer’s. If you are preparing at home, please follow steps below.

Preparing At Home
♦ It is important to follow the USDA Food Safety Guidelines found online at: https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/4-steps-to-food-safety
♦ Please label the casseroles, noting:
  1. Source (name of sponsoring organization or family name)
  2. Date of preparation
  3. Name of casserole dish
  4. Main ingredients
♦ Use 18" x 12" disposable aluminum pans and tape the lid securely
♦ Please do not include pork products, due to the dietary restrictions of many of our residents

Delivery
♦ Please deliver your casseroles to:
  Bethesda Sanctuary
  816 S. 20th St.
  Philadelphia, PA 19146
  (Near 20th and Christian)
  -OR-
  Our Brothers’ Place Shelter
  907 Hamilton St.
  Philadelphia, PA 19123

♦ To schedule a weekday delivery, contact the Sanctuary Residence at (215) 545-6178. For evening and weekend deliveries, please call on a weekday (Mon-Fri, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.), to arrange the delivery time. Please do not show up without pre-arranging delivery.

♦ Due to USDA regulations, we are unable to accept already opened food, including leftovers from large group gatherings.

Questions? Contact: communitylife@bethesdaproject.org
SHOP & GIVE

Shop Online with Amazon Smile
Smile.amazon.com will donate 0.5% of each of your eligible everyday purchases to Bethesda Project.
♦ Learn more and set up your account at smile.amazon.com
♦ Encourage your friends and family to join and help us make a bigger impact together.

Donate Supplies Online
♦ Purchase bulk toiletries online from National Hospitality Supply: www.nathosp.com
♦ Purchase items from Amazon Smile and ship them right to Bethesda Project!
♦ View an up-to-date list of needed items on our Amazon Wish List
https://smile.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/6LSY4INEPFYK?&sort=default

Please ship all items to:
Community Life
Our Brothers’ Place
907 Hamilton St.
Philadelphia, PA 19123

Make A Financial Gift
Supporting over 2,000 chronically homeless individuals each year would be impossible without the generous financial support of our volunteers and community partners. 85 cents of each donated dollar goes to direct program and services for those in need.
♦ Donate online at www.bethesdaproject.org
♦ Please consider becoming a monthly donor to create a lasting impact

Your Impact
$10 provides a SEPTA Keycard for residents to get to medical appointments and run errands
$25 provides a guest or resident with a bedbug resistant mattress cover
$50 provides three healthy meals for three days to one resident at My Brother’s House
$1,500 provides one month of heat to a Bethesda Project Permanent Supportive Housing site
ONLINE AND OFF-SITE OPPORTUNITIES

Bethesda Project was born through the love and care of volunteers. From the very beginning, we have relied on the kindness and generosity of volunteers to transform our houses into homes and to be family with those who have none. Volunteers prepare and serve meals, help clean and maintain our shelters and housing sites, and develop meaningful, supportive one-on-one relationships with our guests and residents. Following are a few great ways you and your community can help support our mission “to find and care for the abandoned poor and to be family with those who have none.”

Get Involved Online

We all hold the power to communicate the importance of ending homelessness for the thousands of vulnerable individuals struggling on the streets. Individuals, groups, restaurants, retailers, offices, all can play an important part:

♦ Like and follow Bethesda Project online on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. It sounds simple, but increasing our online presence makes a big impact.

♦ Share important statuses with your network. We use social media to help connect our needs with resources in the community. You never know when you might be that crucial link between a problem and a solution.

♦ Post information you think might help raise awareness of the work we are doing in Philadelphia.

♦ Sign up for our monthly newsletter to stay informed about what is going on at Bethesda Project.

Be A Champion of Philadelphia’s Homeless

♦ Organize a donation drive at your workplace or in your community. See page 5 for a list of useful items to collect.

♦ Coordinate with us to organize a fundraiser, happy hour, restaurant promotion, or other small event to benefit Bethesda Project.

♦ Advocate for the homeless. Please share the mission of Bethesda Project with your friends and family and encourage them to also connect with us online.
THANK YOU!

Your support will make it possible for us to continue providing shelter and supportive services to thousands of vulnerable men and women each year in Philadelphia. Thank you!

BethesdaProject.org