



Building Futures

1840 Fairway Drive, San Leandro, CA 94577

510.357.0205 • www.bfwc.org

free from homelessness and family violence

Thank you for contacting Building Futures about serving as a volunteer!

Since 1988 our agency has served women, children and individuals in need. Our mission is to build communities with underserved individuals and families, where they are safely and supportively housed, free from homelessness and domestic violence.

Last year, we provided tens of thousands of nights of shelter to women, children and individuals in our emergency shelters located in San Leandro and Alameda. Our homeless shelters are consistently recognized for leading our County in rates of linking shelter residents to permanent housing. Over the years half of residents have been babies, children and youth: 25% are ages 0–4 and 25% are children and youth ages 5–17.

- ✓ No woman is ever turned away because of the severity of the obstacles she faces. Space limitations are the only barrier to entry at our emergency shelters.
- ✓ With almost five thousand calls to our free 24/7 crisis hotline last year, we connected a record number of callers with help.
- ✓ Our Children's Program is available to every child at our shelters. Services focus on the physical, emotional, and social well-being of these vulnerable children.
- ✓ We serve domestic violence survivors in free support groups in the community at our shelters and supportive housing sites as well as provide one-on-one counseling.
- ✓ We connect homeless children and adults with housing through our rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing programs.

Read some inspirational [success stories](#) and learn more [about us](#).



VOLUNTEER POLICIES

Because of the issues faced by women and children surviving homelessness and domestic violence and the community setting within which we operate, all staff and volunteers must follow these policies regarding our interactions with each other and residents while at work. These policies are intended to ensure that residents are treated with respect, concern, and sensitivity, and that the safety of each person is strictly upheld. Toward these goals, we ask that you observe the following:

CONFIDENTIALITY

The shelter locations are confidential, and we do not allow visitors. Never give out the shelters' addresses or directions. If you know someone who would like to volunteer or make a donation, please feel free to refer them to (510) 357-0205, ext. 206 or direct them to our website. Always ask staff for permission before having anyone drive you or come with you.

Sister Me Home's confidentiality policies are even stricter than the shelters'. Outside of staff, residents, and trained and authorized volunteers, **NO ONE** may know its location. Please respect this policy to protect our residents' safety. If you do not drive, talk with your volunteer supervisor about arranging the best way for you to arrive at the safe house.

We invite you to learn more about our programs and services at www.bfwc.org.

CONDUCT

- For safety reasons, it is very important that you never confirm or deny any person's residency at a shelter to any outside person.
- To ensure fairness, all donations must be given to the program, not to individuals. Please do not give material goods or money to residents. If you wish to demonstrate your generosity, we would love for you to bring something that everyone can share.
- We do not allow alcohol or drugs on the premises or tolerate any person being under the influence while at our sites or representing our agency.
- Please refrain from comments or behavior that offend anyone's gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, veteran status, disability, ethnicity, or skin color, or that may insult anyone in any other way.
- If you have questions or concerns about shelter policy or about how a staff member handles a situation, please wait and ask the staff privately. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to the staff, please talk to your direct supervisor or volunteer manager, who can be reached at 510-357-0206, ext. 206. It is important that you not address these matters in front of residents.
- Please do not take any donations or other shelter property.
- If any situation arises that you are not trained to handle, that you are unsure how to handle, or that makes you uncomfortable, immediately bring it to the attention of the staff on duty.

INTERACTING WITH RESIDENTS

- Please do not inquire about residents' personal information. Residents may or may not be comfortable sharing personal information and will raise the subject if they wish.
- Romantic or sexual comments or relationships are prohibited.
- If you are acquainted with a shelter resident, you may not volunteer with us for the duration of her stay.
- Please do not discuss your personal matters with residents; they should be left outside the door. We are here for the benefit of the shelter residents.
- Volunteers may not get involved with any resident's recovery. Please do not invite them to your meetings or offer to be a sponsor.
- Volunteers may not offer rides to residents, nor accept if they ask.
- Please do not discuss staff, volunteer or other residents' matters with residents. However, if you become aware of any information that could jeopardize anyone's safety or recovery, or that maybe pertinent to a resident's case management, please share it with staff right away.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- If you will be unable to volunteer at your scheduled time, please call and notify us at least 24 hours in advance, so that we may schedule another volunteer or make other arrangements.
- Please be prepared to take your volunteer position seriously. We do depend heavily on our volunteers. Not showing, not completing your project thoroughly, or not holding yourself accountable to the above policies can be detrimental to the operation of our shelters.
- Each time you volunteer with our agency, please enter your name, task completed, time in and time out and total hours worked on the "Volunteer Sign-In Sheet" (ask the staff on site where to find this sheet). And if you are a dinner donor dropping off your meal, please provide us with the "Volunteer Sign-In Sheet" indicating the hours it took to make your meal. By tracking your service, you will help us demonstrate to current and potential funders the depth of our community support, which can significantly impact their funding decisions.

**We are very grateful for your interest and your help!
We look forward to working with you.**

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

(Note: Before applying, please confirm current volunteer needs)

DINNER DONOR PROGRAM

Our shelters rely almost exclusively on volunteers to provide our evening meals. Dinner donors provide a healthy, well-balanced meal for 30 women and children. These volunteers **deliver meals by 5:00 p.m. after preparing them at home, at their church, or at another facility.** If you need to drop off earlier, please notify staff so they can coordinate and are prepared to reheat. Individuals and groups alike fulfill this volunteer role, but of course coordinating a group reduces each individual's work load and cost contribution. Most volunteers **provide dinner at least monthly**, but we may consider other schedules.

PREFERENCES:

- Kid friendly: Keep in mind we have many young residents (0-10)
- American food options appeal to most residents

A BALANCED MEAL INCLUDES:

- Entrée with protein—chicken, lasagna, chili, casserole, meatloaf, etc.
- Salad—vegetable or fruit salad
- Vegetable / side dish
- Starch—rice, potato, pasta, bread, etc.
- Drinks—juice or milk (please, no soda). Extra gallons welcomed.
- Dessert—optional

PLEASE AVOID:

- Only meats and no vegetables (or vice-versa)
- Meat that is not thoroughly cooked (pink inside)
- Dishes that been cooked ahead and not refrigerated
- Meals too small to feed everyone healthy portions

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

At all of our residential sites, we conduct a structured program of activities for our young residents (ages 3 to about 14). The program occurs in the evening while mothers attend support groups. **Volunteers must also be at least 18 years old or older and must be committed to volunteer once a week for at least three months.** Activities include arts and crafts, gardening, and cooking, and are a part of a larger curriculum. Volunteers work closely with children, staff, and each other to create a fun and safe learning environment. For this program, volunteers should be

sensitive to children's needs; able to interact with both women and children in a warm, genuine, responsible and respectful manner; and open to and affirming of different cultural, class, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Due to the importance of understanding issues faced by survivors of domestic violence, those interested in the Sister Me Home Children's Program must have be certified in a **40-hour DV Counselor Training** and commit to at least **two evenings per week for five months.**

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

We sometimes need help with such tasks as bulk mailings (newsletters, holiday mailings, and invitations), photocopying, filing, and data entry. Other clerical tasks may be available.

AT THE SITES

Volunteer needs include **repair and shelter maintenance assistance, yard work and gardening, handling and sorting donations, hauling heavy items, serving meals, and cleaning/organizing.** We can schedule **one-time projects**, depending on the task. We often need volunteers with trucks or hauling vehicles to help us move heavy items and dump runs. If you have experience with services such as hair styling, massage, or exercise, we would love to speak with you about providing these services for our clients.

GROUP PROJECTS

Groups of volunteers, such as business or faith groups may schedule **one-time or quarterly projects.** Examples are painting, reorganizing our storage sheds, and preparing and serving meals such as a brunch or barbecue during a holiday. Groups are also welcome to **independently hold a drive for food** or supplies to give to the shelter. **Please contact us to discuss your project and complete paperwork one to two months before your proposed date.**

HOLIDAYS

The holidays can be a good time for volunteer groups or individuals to provide meals, entertainment, or educational programming. If interested, we ask that you **contact us to discuss your project one month in advance.** Visit www.bfwc.org/volunteer for a list of holidays and what we would like to provide for the residents.

INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

(If you are a group planning dinner donation, please use the Group Dinner Donor Application Form)

_____ Date

_____ First name Last name Birth date (optional)

_____ Work phone Home phone

_____ Address City Zip

_____ Email

_____ Name of employer Position/Job title

Available days/hours: (Please only include the times you would want to volunteer)

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN

Site: Community Office SL Shelter Safe house Midway Bessie Coleman

Health-related limitations: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

_____ NAME RELATIONSHIP

_____ DAYTIME PHONE EVENING PHONE

How did you become aware of and interested in our volunteer opportunities? _____

Please list any education, work, volunteer experience, and skills or interests that you would like to share.

Don't forget to complete the 2nd page!

OFFICE USE:

DATE REC: __/__/__ TASK ASSIGNED: _____ DATE SENT TO CO MID SLS SMH BCC : __/__/__

Please check the volunteer opportunity you are most interested in:

40-Hour Training—Please send me information!

Our 40-hour Domestic Violence Counselor training, offered semi-annually, is a prerequisite to volunteering at the Sister Me Home Safe House.

Children’s Program

Four nights a week at our residential sites, we conduct a structured program of activities for our young residents. Must be 18 years old or older! Activities include arts and crafts, gardening, and cooking, and are a part of a larger curriculum.

Dinner Donor Program

We have several available dinner slots. Dinner donors provide a healthy, well-balanced meal for 30 residents. Dinner donors deliver meals no later than 5:00 p.m. after preparing them at home, at their church, or at another facility.

Administrative Office

We occasionally need help with office tasks such as bulk mailings, copying, filing, and data entry.

Shelter Site Projects

Activities include painting, yard work, building shelves, reorganizing our storage shed, hauling heavy items, and cleaning/organizing.

Holidays

We rely on volunteer groups or individuals to provide meals, entertainment, or educational programming over the holidays. Please read Volunteer Opportunities for complete list of holidays.

Portrait and Event Photographer

Seeking a volunteer photographer for our quarterly publications, annual fundraiser, and special events.

Which volunteer opportunity is your primary interest?

By signing below, I attest that the above information is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that I have read and understand the agency’s policies with regards to confidentiality, alcohol/drugs, and interactions with residents, staff, and other volunteers. I agree to follow all of these policies, as well as any other rules or directions given by staff while I am volunteering. By signing below, I also grant Building Futures permission of the use of my name, picture, story, likeness, voice and words in television, radio, website, CD-Rom, newsletters or in any way to promote activities of Building Futures.

Signature

___/___/___

Date

This organization is not obligated to provide a placement, nor are you obligated to accept any position offered. We reserve the right to conduct a criminal background check for any volunteer applicant. Opportunities for volunteers are provided without regard to religion, skin color, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I agree that during my volunteer service with Building Futures, I will not disclose or release confidential information to any persons other than those legally authorized to receive same. I understand that I must not reveal the address of residential sites or client identities to anyone, including but not limited to friends and family members, persons who call or visit the agency’s main office and persons wishing to make donations.

I understand that I am bound by a “duty to warn” in the following circumstances: 1) If I suspect child abuse or elder abuse. 2) If a person is homicidal or suicidal. 3) If a person in any other way presents a danger to themselves or anyone else. In these circumstances, I am obligated to make a report to the appropriate legal authorities, including but not limited to: the police, child protective services, public health officials and/or a mental health professional.

I understand that it is a misdemeanor crime to maliciously reveal the whereabouts of a battered women’s shelter (California penal code section 273.7).

I understand that any violation of my agreement may result in my immediate dismissal without recourse and that further action as provided by Federal and State law and regulations or other legal recourse may be taken against me.

I further understand and agree that after any termination of volunteer service, I am still bound to observe all rules and regulations relating to confidentiality of shelter information and that legal action may be taken against me for violation of same.

I agree that clients must at all times be treated in such a manner to preserve individual dignity and the rights of individual privacy.

Signature

___/___/___

Date

Address

City

Zip

Printed name

Email

Phone number

Please return application to volunteer@bffc.org or 1840 Fairway Dr., San Leandro, CA 94577

GROUP DINNER DONOR APPLICATION FORM

(If you are an individual, please use the Individual Volunteer Application Form)

Group Name

Dates available

Site: San Leandro Shelter Midway Shelter in Alameda

Organization or agency your group is representing (if any)

Main contact name

Phone

Address

City

Zip

Email

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Don't forget to complete the 2nd page!

Adding names to this list indicates agreement to follow all policies outlined on the previous page.
 Main contact listed on page one is expected to share this agreement with those listed below.

VOLUNTEER 1	NAME	EMAIL
	PHONE	ADDRESS
VOLUNTEER 2	NAME	EMAIL
	PHONE	ADDRESS
VOLUNTEER 3	NAME	EMAIL
	PHONE	ADDRESS
VOLUNTEER 4	NAME	EMAIL
	PHONE	ADDRESS
VOLUNTEER 5	NAME	EMAIL
	PHONE	ADDRESS
VOLUNTEER 6	NAME	EMAIL
	PHONE	ADDRESS

Have more volunteers in your group? Please print additional pages.

Please return application to volunteer@bfwc.org or 1840 Fairway Dr., San Leandro, CA 94577