



Volunteer Training



GUEST
GLOUCESTER UNITED
EMERGENCY
SHELTER TEAM

Shelter, Help & Hope for People in Need

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of GUEST is to develop, sustain, and coordinate shelter and other needed services for the homeless citizens of the Middle Peninsula & Northern Neck in order to move the homeless population toward self-sufficiency.



Service Area

10 Counties of Middle Peninsula & Northern Neck

- Gloucester
- Mathews
- Middlesex
- King & Queen
- King William
- Essex
- Lancaster
- Richmond
- Northumberland
- Westmoreland

WHO DO WE HELP?

Shelter services are provided to homeless men, women, and families with children.



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In order to qualify as homeless, a person or family must be:

- **living on the street; or**
- **sleeping in a place not designed for regular sleeping accommodation; or**
- **living in a place with no electricity and running water; or**

- **living in a motel paid for by a charitable organization; or**
- **exiting an institution where they resided for 90 days or less and resided in a place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering institution; or**
- **going to imminently lose primary nighttime residence within 14 days.**

HOW DO WE HELP?

Day Shelter & Resource Center

Winter Shelter

Family Shelter

Motel Voucher Program

Housing Resource Advocacy

Rapid Rehousing

A Ride Home Program



Day Shelter & Resource Center



Shelter Intake
Showers & Laundry
Nutritious Meals & Food Pantry
Free WiFi
Search for Employment
Access Housing Resources
Apply for Benefits
Receive Case Management Services



Located at 6536 Moose Drive, Gloucester

Winter Shelter

- December through March
- Shelter for men and women
- Hosted by local churches for one week at a time, rotating to a new location each week
- Provides a warm, safe space to sleep and hot meals



Family Shelter

- Shelter for families with children under 18 yrs old
- Provided through motel vouchers
- Keeps the family unit together while connecting families to local support and housing resources

Motel Voucher Program

- Shelter for men and women when Winter Shelter is not available
- Limited availability
- Prioritization is given to persons with high risk of health and safety concerns, age 62+, and families with children under 18 years old.



Housing Resource Advocacy

- Help guests connect with resources to stabilize their housing crisis
- Assist clients in setting housing goals
- Research available rental units and application qualifications
- Provide budget and credit counseling
- Mediate between landlords and tenants



Rapid Rehousing

- Each guest's goal is to move into housing as quickly as possible
- Help locate and apply for rental units
- Provide financial assistance for rent, utilities, and security deposits based on level of need
- Assistance can be received for up to 24 months but requires re-certification every 3 months

A Ride Home Program



- Some guests have family and resources in other cities or states.
- Provide transportation through Greyhound buses to help reconnect individuals with family and housing opportunities.

April 1, 2020 – November 18, 2022

- COVID Motel Vouchers
 - 228 individuals
 - 169 adults, 56 children
 - 190 individuals moved into housing
 - 80 less than 30 days, 49 less than 90 days, 49 less than 6 months, 36 less than 1 year, 14 over 1 year
 - 15 entered an institutional setting
- Rapid Rehousing Assistance
 - 67 individuals
 - 43 adults, 24 children



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Donate

- Financial Gifts
 - www.guestshelter.org/donate
 - PO Box 1544, Gloucester, VA 23061
- Collection Drives
 - Cleaning Supplies
 - Paper Products
 - Non-perishable Microwavable Foods
 - Hygiene Items
 - Off Bug Spray/Sunscreen

Volunteer

- **Shelter Volunteers**
 - Day, Evening and Overnight Shifts
- **Transportation Volunteers**
 - Church Van/Bus Driver
 - Needed on Holidays and Weekends
 - (7 am & 6 pm)
- **Meal Volunteers**
 - Prepare and Serve Dinner (6:30 – 8 pm)

Day Shelter Volunteer Duties

- Sign-in/sign-out
 - Wear Nametag
 - Familiarize yourself with building and volunteer table

 - **Check-in Shift (7 – 11 am)**
 - **Afternoon Shift (11 am – 3 pm)**
 - **Late Afternoon Shift (3 – 6 pm)**
- Check-in guests
 - Front desk reception
 - Receive and sort donations
 - Offer to assist guests with housing/employment searches
 - Enjoy a game or share a hobby with guests
 - Help prepare/serve lunch
 - Monitor use of showers and laundry facilities

Winter Shelter Volunteer Duties

- Sign-in/sign-out
- Wear Nametag
- Familiarize yourself with building and volunteer table
- **Check-in Shift (6:30 – 8 pm)**
 - Check-in guests
 - Enjoy dinner and conversation
- **Evening Shift (6:30 – 11 pm)**
 - Give out beds and linens
 - Lights out at 11 pm
- **Overnight Shift (11 pm – 5 am)**
 - Perform fire watch every 2 hours
- **Check-out Shift (5 – 7 am)**
 - Call Bay Transit by 5 am
 - Wake up guests by 5:30 am
 - Set out breakfast
 - Ensure sleeping area, kitchen and bathroom are cleaned up and tidy
 - Store bedding and GUEST supplies

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Volunteers Agree to the Following:

- Maintain confidentiality
- Only work assigned shift
- Limit personal contact with guests
- Do not invite guests to your home
- Do not share personal information with guest
- Let guests take the lead when sharing
- Do not engage in preferential treatment of guests
- Alert GUEST staff of any interaction that makes you feel uncomfortable
- Requests of financial or in-kind support from guests should be shared with GUEST staff
- Allow staff to make decisions on the consequences of a guest violating expectations

Approaching a Guest

DO

- Introduce yourself and initiate conversation
- Be warm, friendly, and available
- Share your story and experiences as you are comfortable
- Let guests know you care
- Talk about sports, weather, movies, etc.
- Listen
- Have fun and be yourself

DON'T

- Try too hard
- Dig for personal information
- Ask a lot of questions
- Take it personally if a guest does not want to talk
- Push religion or politics
- Invade personal space if a guest is at their cot and wishes not to participate

Guest Expectations

- Attend to all personal care needs.
- Keep sleep area neat and tidy.
- Respect and take care of facilities.
- Treat one another with respect.
- No outside food or drink.
- Use of personal devices with headphones and dim screen lighting after lights out.
- One small bag of personal belongings permitted by bedside.

Guest Expectations

- **Check-in**

- Any person who leaves after check-in may not return for the night.
- Empty pockets and security wand.
- Lighters/matches/vapes/weapons checked at volunteer desk.
- Separate sleep areas for men and women with beds at least 3 feet apart.

Guest Expectations

- **Smoke Breaks**
 - Each church designates smoking area and break times.
 - No smoking after lights out.
- **Personal Belongings**
 - Take with you every day.
 - Belongings left behind will be held at Day Shelter for 30 days and then donated if not claimed.

Guest Expectations

- **COVID Updates**

- Local level of transmission will be monitored.
- Vaccination clinics will be offered.
- Mask wearing and physical distancing may be implemented for high level of transmission.
- Positive cases will be provided alternative shelter for isolation.
- Avoid handling client belongings or use gloves.
- Health screenings will take place at Day Shelter*.

Guest Expectations

No Weapons

No Alcohol/Drugs

No Violence

No Illegal Activity

No Visitors

Appropriate Language & Behavior

It is the **responsibility of the GUEST staff on duty** to address and enforce the expectations

Guest Expectations

GUEST staff will make every effort to deescalate disruptive or dangerous behaviors.

Dangerous activities include:

- Uncontrollable and destructive behavior
- Damage to host site property
- Verbal or physical harassment to staff, volunteers or other guests.

GUEST staff will attempt to locate other appropriate shelter services for persons who are disruptive or a danger to self/others.

In an emergency, GUEST staff will call 911 for assistance.

Shelter Operations

Day Shelter

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9 am – 2 pm

When Winter Shelter opens on December 26,

Day Shelter will be open 7 days a week from
7 am – 6 pm.

Winter Shelter

December 26 – March 27, 6:30 pm – 7 am

Contact Us

Mailing Address: G.U.E.S.T.

P.O. BOX 1544

Gloucester, VA 23061

GUEST Day Shelter: 804-792-5046

Email: kristieaskew@guestshelter.net

Website: www.guestshelter.org

[Facebook.com/GUEST.helpthehomeless](https://www.facebook.com/GUEST.helpthehomeless)