



Northern Virginia  
Family Service

# Volunteer Handbook

2022



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Dear NVFS Volunteers:

Welcome to the NVFS family! Thank you for choosing to volunteer with us. Volunteers are the backbone of NVFS and play an integral and unique role in addressing the critical needs of our community.

The purpose of this *Volunteer Handbook* is to:

1. Introduce you to NVFS history, mission, and values.
2. Answer common questions volunteers have such as dress code, scheduling, training and orientation.
3. Cover important policies including expectations, professional boundaries, codes of conduct and ethics.
4. Serve as an accessible, user-friendly reference and answer future questions that may arise.

This past year, nearly **2,000 volunteers** donated nearly **30,000 hours of time** – a value of **\$1 million** to NVFS. Your dedication and commitment to NVFS means the families we serve have an improved experience and are better prepared for success, staff have much-needed support, and more resources go where they are most needed – to the hard-working individuals and families determined to improve their lives.

We are delighted to have you volunteer your time, skills and talents with NVFS and we will do our very best to make it a fulfilling and rewarding experience. We look forward to working with you and welcome hearing from you!

Sincerely,



**Karen Horowitz**

Director of Community & Volunteer Engagement

## Meet the Volunteer Department Program Staff:

**Karen Horowitz**, Director of Community & Volunteer Engagement

571.748.2626 | [khorowitz@nvfs.org](mailto:khorowitz@nvfs.org)

### Community & Volunteer Engagement Team:

- **Navara Cannon**, Community & Volunteer Engagement Manager, [ncannon@nvfs.org](mailto:ncannon@nvfs.org), 571.748.2536  
*Greater Prince William Programs & Services*
- **Julie Martinez**, Community & Volunteer Engagement Specialist, [jrmartinez@nvfs.org](mailto:jrmartinez@nvfs.org), 571.748.2674  
*Homeless Services & Agency Internship programs*
- **Samara Weinstein**, Community & Volunteer Engagement Specialist, [sweinstein@nvfs.org](mailto:sweinstein@nvfs.org), 571.748.2876  
*Fairfax, Loudoun, Arlington and Alexandria Programs & Services*

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# Impact & Benefits of Volunteering

## Why are volunteers important to NVFS?

You—our volunteers—are vital to NVFS's success and are truly the backbone of our agency. We understand that it takes an investment of time and resources for NVFS volunteers to be successful, so we invest in you, our volunteer strategy, and our volunteer engagement staff to ensure volunteering is adequately supported, effective, vibrant and enduring. And the benefits are significant!



## What are the benefits of volunteering?

- **Volunteering connects you to others and to your community.** It's an opportunity to meet a variety of people from all walks of life and to learn from one another. Connecting with your community makes it a better place to live, work and play.
- **Volunteering is good for your health.** Studies show that volunteering contributes to and improves physical and mental health, especially in older adults. Volunteering also leads to greater life satisfaction and improved self-esteem; lowers the risk of depression, stress and disease, and even contributes to a longer life.<sup>1</sup>
- **Volunteering can advance your career.** Whether you are unemployed looking for work, want to advance your career or want to change careers altogether, volunteering can help you reach your goal. It's great for networking, developing new skills, and discovering new interests. Always include your volunteer experience on your professional resume—it's a fact that hiring managers take notice of applicants who volunteer.<sup>2</sup>
- **Volunteering is fun and feels good!** Choosing activities you already enjoy or have always wanted to try, and engaging with a cause or population that is particularly meaningful to you is a recipe for a great time. Plus, giving back and making a difference feels good.
- **Volunteering helps you learn more about yourself and recognize personal growth.** A common refrain from volunteers across the board is the feeling that they've received just as much, if not more, than they have given. It has taught them something about themselves they hadn't realized, helped them find a new passion, developed their empathy for others, and improved their self-worth and self-confidence.

## What benefits does NVFS offer volunteers?

- **We distribute a monthly agency e-newsletter and recognize volunteers** informally on a regular basis and formally through an annual recognition events and special volunteer gatherings.
- **Volunteers have an opportunity to apply for jobs at NVFS with extra consideration.** If a volunteer meets the essential requirements for the position they are applying for and includes their NVFS volunteer service on their resume, HR will alert the hiring manager.
- **We support volunteers in your personal and professional growth.** We can write recommendation letters and serve as references for volunteers applying for jobs, scholarships and professional training programs. We also offer training and learning opportunities within NVFS.

<sup>1</sup> Helping People, Changing Lives: 3 Health Benefits of Volunteering, Mayo Clinic Health System, <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/3-health-benefits-of-volunteering>

<sup>2</sup> 5 Ways Volunteering Boosts Career Development, VolunteerMatch.org, <https://blogs.volunteermatch.org/5-ways-volunteering-boosts-career-development>



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# Mission, Values and Guiding Principles

## Who We Are:

NVFS is a private, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to helping individuals and families find new paths to self-reliance and brighter futures. NVFS has been recognized nationally for its effectiveness in supporting families as they build their sustained financial and social independence.

## What We Do:

The breadth, depth and scope of NVFS services offer the resources and support necessary to ensure everyone, at every stage of life, maximizes their potential and fully contributes to a thriving Northern Virginia community. At NVFS, families can access a variety of support systems to overcome the challenges with which they are faced. We offer the essential building blocks for families to achieve financial, emotional, and physical well-being.

## Mission:

To empower individuals and families to improve their quality of life and to promote community cooperation and support in responding to family needs.

## Why We Do It:

Families are the fabric of our community. By investing in families and strengthening communities, Northern Virginia becomes a better place to live, raise a family, work and prosper.

## Values:

We believe that families are at the heart of our society and need to be strengthened and preserved. Services should be affordable, accessible and of high quality. Everyone should have access to adequate housing, health care, food and clothing. Communities should be supportive environments for families.

## CIRCA:

NVFS staff and volunteers are committed to contributing to our agency's positive culture. As ambassadors of our organization, we engage our community to advance the NVFS mission by:

- **Communication** – *exchanging information and ideas*
- **Integrity** – *conducting oneself in an honorable manner*
- **Respect** – *recognizing and understanding differences and diversity*
- **Collaboration** – *working cooperatively*
- **Accountability** – *meeting commitments*

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# NVFS History

**Since our earliest days, NVFS has helped to strengthen and empower families** because we believe that strong, healthy families create healthy communities – the kind of communities where we all want to live. This work continues today with major initiatives to:

- Address the issues of secure, affordable housing in a challenging economy.
- Provide access to necessary health care and medications for children and adults.
- Offer job training that improves quality of life and provides adequate support for families.
- Provide a safe, stimulating place for growing children to learn and play.

**Originally established in 1924** by volunteers in Alexandria, NVFS is in our Northern Virginia communities to help people in need. Those first volunteers in Alexandria noticed that children living in poverty had no coats and their families had no coal to heat their homes. NVFS addressed those basic, but critically important, needs.

**Nearly 100 years later**, NVFS continues to address the needs of many communities in our region – nearly 32,000 individuals and families each year – with a wide range of programs designed to deal with the challenges with which we are faced today. As needs and challenges change over time, NVFS’s programs adapt to respond effectively and efficiently. **We are proud of this legacy of responsiveness** and our long history of collaboration and partnerships with other agencies, and numerous community and government partners.

No one can accurately predict what the next 100 years may bring, though individuals and families will likely continue to be faced with shifting challenges and inequities, and NVFS will continue to play a pivotal role in addressing them.

**NVFS has built a steadfast legacy of support and service that we pledge to provide** through our mission to empower individuals and families to improve their quality of life, and to promote community cooperation and support in responding to family needs. With continued commitment of our partners and supporters, including a cadre of volunteers, we may all enjoy the benefits that come with that promise.

## Connect with us!

- [www.nvfs.org](http://www.nvfs.org)
- [www.facebook.com/novafamilyservice](https://www.facebook.com/novafamilyservice)
- [@NVFS](https://www.instagram.com/northernvirginiafamilyservice)
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# NVFS Service Areas



## Early Childhood Development

Every child deserves the necessary tools to build a healthy, successful life including early reading and math skills to be successful in school. And every parent or caregiver deserves support and resources to provide essential tools on the social and cognitive development that happens in early childhood.

- **Early Head Start (EHS):** Provides the tools and resources to parents and their children up to age three at home and at learning centers so they can build brighter futures for their families. EHS programs are in Arlington, Loudoun and Prince William counties.
- **Head Start:** Promotes school readiness for children ages 3-5 who may otherwise find themselves behind their peers when it is time to start kindergarten. The center-based program in Arlington enhances the social and cognitive development of children through education, health, nutrition, social and other services.
- **Healthy Families:** A home visiting program that promotes positive, nurturing, responsive parenting; improves child health and development; promotes school readiness; and prevents child abuse and neglect from pregnancy through age 4.

**90% of Early Head Start and Head Start children demonstrated school readiness.**



## Homelessness & Housing

Shelter is a basic need for everyone, and it's the foundation from which families and individuals can begin to build, or rebuild, stability and self-sufficiency.

- **Community Housing:** Several programs for residents of Fairfax and Prince William County families provide rental subsidy services, short-term assistance, affordable rentals, and emergency utility and rental assistance to prevent families from becoming homeless.
- **Shelter:** The SERVE Shelter in Manassas is a 90-bed facility that serves families and individuals. On average 40% of shelter guests are children. Guests stay an average of 39 days, during which time they have the right tools, knowledge and resources for lasting well-being and self-sufficiency.

**85% of housing clients transitioned to permanent housing.**



**Foster Care and Adoption** provides foster families in Northern Virginia and surrounding areas with the tools and support to build healthy, caring and therapeutic relationships with children placed in foster care. It also helps foster parents bridge the gap between the child and their biological parents. As a result, these strong support networks help ensure that foster children can thrive in a safe and stable home environment while focusing on permanency.

**89% of children in foster care remained in a stable placement throughout the COVID pandemic.**



### Health Care Access

Health care is critical to create a strong foundation for overall health and well-being. But not everyone in the Northern Virginia region can afford health care or dental insurance for preventative care and to treat ongoing health conditions. NVFS health programs remove barriers to medical care so families don't need to choose between, medical care, rent or food.



### Anti-hunger Programs

Proper nutrition education informs health decisions and helps families make good choices about what they eat. By focusing on how food affects their bodies, families can maintain better overall health and decrease the impacts of poor nutrition. This includes a Hunger Resource Center that ensures families have access to food essentials and nourishment needed every day.

**2,700** new clients accessed services at the Hunger Resource Center.



### Mental Health Services

Mental health and stability can be compromised by trauma, poverty, chronic stress and other tremendous challenges posed by cultural adjustment, homelessness or exposure to violence. NVFS provides culturally competent, language-specific mental health support for all ages in community, home and school settings.

**88%** of clients receiving mental health services showed marked improvement.



**Immigration Legal Services** provide affordable legal assistance for refugees and asylum seekers fleeing violence in their home countries, and for individuals pursuing green cards, work authorizations and paths to citizenship.



**Workforce Development** services help adults reach their fullest potential by enhancing the workforce skills needed to obtain higher-paying jobs with benefits and creating more opportunities for advancement.

**75%** of trainees obtain training-related jobs and experience an average wage gain of **65%** post-training.

- **Training Futures:** A nationally-recognized job training program with proven results that offers an innovative curriculum to help under- and unemployed adults secure professional careers with potential for advancement.
- **Escala:** Provides customized training and support to aspiring small business entrepreneurs through consulting, coaching and hands-on training so they can be successful while also contributing to the local economy.



**Youth Initiatives** programs provide teenagers and young adults with the skills and resources needed to build a healthier well-being at school, home and in their communities. This includes connections to healthy activities, coping skills, positive peer support and more through counseling, home visiting and through group counseling in the schools.

**97%** of youth participating in gang prevention programs improved their school performance.

# NVFS Client Profile at a Glance

NVFS serves nearly 32,000 participants and their families each year.

## Income Levels

Over two-thirds of clients live below the federal poverty level.

For a family of four annually, on average:

**70%** of NVFS clients live on \$25,100

**20%** of NVFS clients live on between \$25K to \$50K

**5%** of NVFS clients live on more than \$50,200

## Typical NVFS Client

Over two-thirds of clients live below the federal poverty level.

For a family of four annually, on average:

**40%** are two-parent households

**59%** non-insured

**78%** are renters

**66%** identify as Hispanic

**59%** female and **41%** male

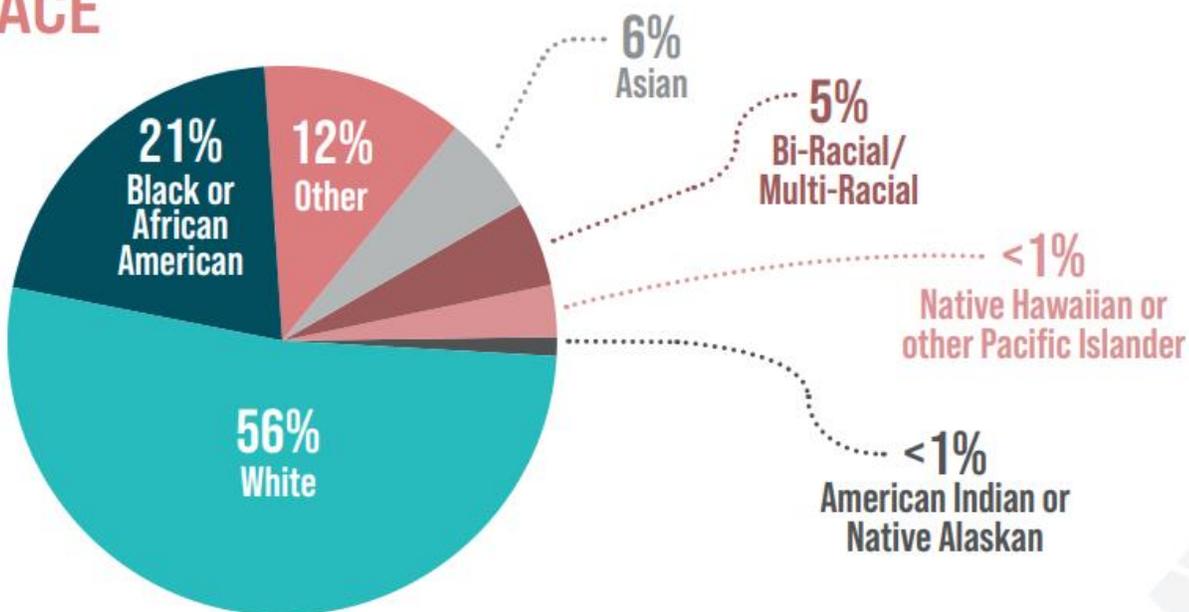
**28%** are 36-55 years old

**20%** high school education, no diploma

**39%** Fairfax County, **38%** Prince William County

**11%** Arlington County, **7%** Loudoun County

## RACE





# NVFS Volunteer Engagement Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

## Getting Started:

### What training is provided for volunteers?

All volunteers participate in an agency orientation which includes pre-recorded videos and one live orientation session with the Community & Volunteer Engagement team within the first three months of their volunteer service. Additionally, volunteers receive training specific to their volunteer roles from the programs in which they are placed. This varies based on the role and can include group training, shadowing staff and/or on-the-job training.



### What should I wear?

The agency dress policy is business casual. Although in many cases volunteers may dress casually, they should exert a certain amount of judgment in the choice of clothing. Please avoid clothing that is too revealing, has text or images that may make others uncomfortable or is too casual (i.e. workout clothes, sweats, etc.).

### EXCEPTIONS:

- Volunteers at Training Futures are encouraged to wear business attire. Training Futures operates in a simulated office environment where trainees are required to wear business professional dress. This business attire policy extends to volunteers and staff.
- Closed-toed shoes are required for volunteers in the Hunger Resource Center and Clock Tower Thrift Shop.

### Are there age restrictions for volunteering?

Most volunteer positions have a minimum age requirement of at least 16 years old due to the sensitive nature of most volunteer activities. There are limited volunteer roles for youth as young as 12 years old when accompanied by a parent/guardian; these are determined on a case-by-case basis. Since onsite opportunities are limited for younger children, NVFS encourages them to volunteer by coordinating mini-drives in their schools, churches, scout troops, etc. on behalf of NVFS and by attending special events as guests.

## Scheduling:

### Will I have a set schedule for volunteering?

In most cases, volunteers will have a set volunteer schedule so their shift(s) falls on the same day and time each week. The schedule is mutually decided by the volunteer and their supervisor based on the volunteer's availability and the program's needs. In some cases, the volunteer and supervisor may decide on a schedule week-to-week or as needed, depending on the program and project. Most volunteer positions do require a set schedule.



### What if I can't come for my scheduled volunteer shift?

Since a volunteer missing a scheduled shift can have a significant impact on the clients and staff, volunteers should **notify their site supervisor in advance if they must miss a shift**. A minimum of one to two weeks advanced notice is preferred.



We recognize unexpected, unavoidable reasons such as illness or a personal emergency may arise; in these cases, the volunteer should notify their site supervisor via phone and/or email **immediately** so adjustments can be made ahead of time.

### Is NVFS ever closed?

NVFS is closed for the following holidays each calendar year: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Election Day, Thanksgiving Day, day after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Offices close early on Christmas Eve Day if it falls on a weekday.

### What happens if there is inclement weather?

Decisions regarding NVFS facilities for inclement weather, in general, follow the Fairfax County Government. The exceptions are the Early Head Start and Head Start centers in Arlington, which follow Arlington County Public Schools and the Early Head Start centers in Manassas which follow Manassas City Public Schools. All other NVFS facilities, regardless of location, follow Fairfax County Government. If NVFS is closed or is opening late due to inclement weather, a message will be posted on the NVFS website ([www.nvfs.org](http://www.nvfs.org)) and social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter) by 6:30 a.m. notifying staff and volunteers of any closings or delays. If the office closes early, managers and supervisors are responsible for notifying their staff and volunteers who are affected. If NVFS is open during inclement weather and a volunteer isn't able to come because of road conditions or childcare, they should contact their site supervisor before their scheduled shift by phone and/or email to inform them of their absence. We don't want volunteers driving on the roads if they don't feel safe doing so!

## Logistics:

### Where should I park my car?

Most facilities have plenty of free parking available. If parking at the Head Start Center in Arlington is full, volunteers can park in the shopping center across the street and use the cross walk when walking to and from. The Early Head Start center at Arlington Mill has a 4-hour parking limit; if volunteers go over the limit, they can ask the center manager to stamp their ticket.

### Will I have a place to put my belongings when I'm volunteering?

While you can put your belongings in a break room or at your workstation, these are not secure locations. We strongly recommend that you only bring what is necessary to your volunteer site.



### What should I do if I need to take a break during my volunteer shift?

Volunteers are welcome to take brief breaks of about 5-10 minutes and up to 30 minutes for lunch during their volunteer shift, as needed and within reason. Please always notify staff *before* taking a break so we know where you are! In some cases, such as classroom settings, you may be asked to delay your break for a few minutes to ensure appropriate adult-to-child ratio requirements are met. Most facilities have break rooms, water fountains, refrigerators, microwaves, etc. Volunteers are welcome to utilize these resources. All facilities have access to restrooms.

### **What is the expectation regarding computer use?**

Volunteers who need to use a computer to perform their work will be provided with adequate equipment and workspace. Computer use should be limited to volunteer duties only. Phones, faxes and copier machines should be used for volunteer duties only. If you have an extenuating circumstance, please ask your onsite supervisor for approval.

### **What is the cell phone use etiquette at NVFS?**

Volunteers should not use their cell phones during their volunteer shift. Please switch your cell phone to silent mode or vibrate during your volunteer shift and only use it during a break. If prompt attention to your phone is necessary, please tell staff you need to take a brief break and step outside; these instances should be kept to a minimum.

### **Who should I notify if I need to stop volunteering?**

NVFS recognizes that volunteers can't stay forever! If you need to stop volunteering or need to discontinue your assignment for an extended period, ***please give your site supervisor and your Volunteer Engagement Specialist as much advance notice as possible*** (preferably two weeks or more). We greatly appreciate having sufficient time to prepare for the transition and recruit a new volunteer.

### **Are background checks required?**

Many NVFS volunteer positions require background checks. This varies depending on licensing requirements and the nature of the volunteer work. All volunteers may be subject to a sex offender search through the national registry. Volunteers who directly interact with clients are required to submit to a criminal record background check through Sterling Volunteers, an online platform. Volunteers interacting with youth clients are also required to submit to a Child Protective Services Central Registry Check; this is a paper form that requires notarization. Volunteers are notified of the background check requirements at their interview, before committing to a volunteer position(s). All background checks must be submitted to NVFS before the volunteer begins their service.

Volunteers for Early Head Start and Head Start must do a fingerprinting background check and must provide proof of a negative TB test (if positive, doctor note that the TB isn't contagious) annually.

### **Is there insurance coverage for volunteers?**

NVFS carries a Volunteer Accident Policy that has a \$50,000 Medical Expense Benefit to cover immediate medical costs in the event of an injury incurred while participating in approved volunteer activities that are part of the volunteer's role at NVFS. This is *excess coverage* so it is applied after any health insurance that the volunteer carries. Any volunteer who incurs an injury while volunteering should contact the Director of Community & Volunteer Engagement, 571.748.2626 or [khorowitz@nvfs.org](mailto:khorowitz@nvfs.org), as soon as possible after an incident for more details.



### **What happens to the forms I submit to become a volunteer?**

NVFS securely maintains files for all active volunteers in the Volunteer Engagement Specialist offices at the agency and/or e-files on NVFS's private, secure server. Files are retained for a minimum of two (2) years after a volunteer's service ends and then the files are securely shredded.

## **Recording Volunteer Hours:**

***NVFS uses VolunteerHub, an online platform for managing volunteers, scheduling shifts and reporting volunteer hours.***

### **How should I record my volunteer hours?**

This varies based on your volunteer role. For some roles, including at the Hunger Resource Center and thrift shop, you will check-in on a tablet or computer when you arrive for your shift and sign-out on the device at the end of your shift. (If you forget to sign out for a shift, please notify your Community & Volunteer Engagement contact so we can amend the hours

in your account.) For some roles, volunteers self-report their hours using their VolunteerHub volunteer account. Depending on the volunteer role and location, volunteers might also be asked to sign in and out on a paper log.

### **Why do I need to track my volunteer hours?**

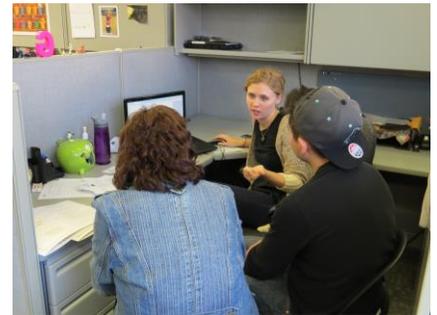
It is essential that all volunteers log all of their volunteer hours. NVFS needs accurate data to support grant funding requests and reporting, which represent 57% of the agency's budget. Some funding even requires an in-kind match, which we can reach with volunteer hours. Without your support logging your hours, we can't describe the program success and impact made possible by our volunteers or accurately report in-kind support to funders.

## **Guidelines for Engaging with Clients:**

### **What is the policy on client confidentiality?**

All volunteers must read and sign the agency's *Confidentiality Statement* before starting. It is critically important to follow all NVFS confidentiality guidelines to ensure the rights of our clients aren't being violated and to also be aware of the limits of confidentiality, particularly regarding child abuse/neglect. You can find the full *Confidentiality Statement* in the appendix of this handbook. Please contact your Volunteer Engagement Specialist if you have any questions. Here are some examples of situations in which someone's confidentiality is honored:

- Refrain from sharing a client's name and/or any identifiable information about the client verbally or in writing with anyone outside of the agency, and do not confirm or deny if someone is a client.
- Refrain from discussing a client's situation with anyone outside the agency, even if not using their name. It's safest to stick to general information when talking about your volunteer experience with others. Here are some examples: "I mentor a teen who has faced a lot of family challenges" or "I teach job skills to adults who are trying to advance their careers."
- Don't initiate contact with a client if you see them in a public setting. Instead, let them decide whether or not to initiate contact with you. If they say hello to you first, it is okay to greet them in return before continuing on your separate ways.



### **Can I share information about myself and/or my life experiences with clients?**

It's always best to keep the focus on the clients; let them do most of the sharing and talking. Your role is to ask open-ended questions and be an active listener so they know you care about them—this is the best way to build trust. Don't share with one client something that could be misinterpreted or something you wouldn't want to have shared with others. Before sharing, ask yourself, *How will sharing this help them? Does it maintain focus on the client?*

### **What should I do if a client asks for my email address or phone number or tries to connect with me on social media?**

Please don't share your personal contact information with clients or connect with them online through social media. If a client asks you for your information please tell them that, while you do care about them, NVFS doesn't allow volunteers to share personal contact information or be in contact with a client outside of their volunteer role.

### **Can I transport clients if they need a ride?**

Volunteers should *never* transport clients and are not authorized to do so for any distance or any reason, even if it's just driving them a couple of blocks to a bus stop. There is no liability insurance for volunteers who transport clients without approval.\* If a client is persistent in asking, please refer them to a program staff member for further assistance.

\* **EXCEPTION:** In very rare instances a volunteer position may allow client transportation for approved purposes only. Volunteers whose role allows for this must drive an agency vehicle, submit a driving record and read and sign a *Driving Agreement Form* before any transportation is provided. In this case, volunteers may transport clients for approved purposes only.

### **Can I bring gifts to clients for special accomplishments? Can I invite a client to my home for a meal?**

Volunteers must maintain professional boundaries to protect themselves, avoid perceived favoritism or unintentionally making a client uncomfortable. Volunteers should never give a gift directly to a client and clients should never come to your home (nor should your address be shared with them for any reason). While we understand these gestures are because our volunteers have generous hearts, this is a critical professional boundary in the human services field that must be maintained.

### **I noticed a client's shoes are worn through their soles. Can I bring them a new pair the next time I come?**

Volunteers should never give a donation or gift directly to a client. If you find yourself in a situation like this, always notify program staff to make sure they know of the client's need; staff have agency and community resources available to assist the client in these situations. While volunteers are welcome to make donations, the donation should always be given to the agency and never to a specific person or family.

### **A client is treating me disrespectfully, what should I do?**

If you are being treated disrespectfully, the client will respond best to measured reason. Calmly tell them that you don't appreciate being treated that way, explain why and then give them an opportunity to respond. If the client continues to treat you disrespectfully, let staff know so the matter can be further addressed. NVFS clients are often in crisis and the stress of a crisis can cause people to act out with anger, frustration, hopelessness, etc.

### **What should I do if I have a question about volunteer-client boundaries?**

Any time you are unclear about a volunteer-client boundary, please ask your staff supervisor to explain it to you. Also, if you have an interaction with a client and are wondering afterwards if you handled it correctly, please discuss it with your staff supervisor. We understand that boundaries are complicated and people—including staff—make mistakes. We will help you reflect on the interaction and come to a better understanding of how to communicate with clients in the future while maintaining those volunteer-client boundaries.

## **Your Opinion & Ideas Matter!**

### **How can I take on more responsibility and/or expand my role?**

We welcome this! Once you begin volunteering, if you see other or additional ways you feel you can support the agency or if you have special skills you'd like to put to use but aren't sure how, please talk to your site supervisor. Instead of casually mentioning it in conversation or in passing, we recommend that you set a time to meet with your supervisor. You are always encouraged to contact your Volunteer Engagement Specialist, too.

### **What is the best way for me to voice any concerns I might have?**

NVFS encourages feedback and takes volunteers' concerns seriously. Please begin by talking to your supervisor, especially if your concern is about a client or is specific to the program in which you volunteer. If you aren't comfortable speaking with that person, please contact your Volunteer Engagement Specialist. If you have a particularly serious concern or feel your concern isn't being addressed, please contact Karen Horowitz, Director of Volunteer Engagement.



### **Does your company offer a matching gift or time for employees who volunteer?**

Many companies offer their employees paid time off to volunteer, dollar matches for time volunteered, and/or dollar matches for donations employees make to their favorite charities. Contact your employer's HR department to see if your company offers any of these benefits so you can maximize the impact of your support! If your employer supports such programs, please contact your Community & Volunteer Engagement Specialist.

## Workplace Culture & Guidelines:

### Code of Ethics

NVFS employees and volunteers will comply with all laws and regulations that govern organizational practices. They must recognize that the agency established itself in a legal category responsible “to serve the larger public good.” It assumes a solemn public trust and, as such, receives the benefits of tax exemption and the opportunity to accept voluntary contributions and donations. The relationships that NVFS staff and volunteers have with clients, colleagues and community partners should be carried out with the highest regard for ethical values, principles and conduct.

### As appropriate to this moral and legal responsibility, each employee and volunteer pledges to:

1. Acknowledge that all organizational activities are in support of the agency mission and values that strive to support our clients and communities with a caring attitude.
2. Treat clients, colleagues and community members with respect, courtesy, fairness, and dignity, being sensitive to individual differences, focusing on the well-being of each other and clients, practicing under the rule of “do no harm.”
3. Offer services without regard to race, gender, age, religion, disability, national origin, marital status, veteran status, sexual preference, political affiliation or any other protected status.
4. Be responsible for conducting the business of the agency with honesty and trustworthiness in communications, behaviors, decisions, and professional practices.
5. Maintain a loyalty to NVFS and its clients; agreeing to represent the agency with professional integrity, safeguarding confidential information, maintaining objectivity, and avoiding actions that put personal interests ahead of the public benefit.
6. Strive for personal excellence, and a commitment to be a good NVFS citizen, making good use of agency resources for the benefit of the agency mission.
7. Observe and adhere to all **Ethical Codes of Conduct** associated with individual disciplines, and continually strive to improve competence and the quality of services.
8. Recognize that clients, staff and volunteers have rights and an established review and grievance process is in place for any violation of those rights. Grievances, executed in good faith, are received in accordance with policies, and free from interference, coercion, restraint, discrimination, penalty or reprisal.
9. Accept the obligation to know and obey all laws that govern agency operations and accept the legal obligation to report to authorities as outlined in agency procedures.
10. Commit to the highest possible standards of ethical, moral and legal business conduct, and take responsibility for reporting suspected violations through the proper (internal) authorities.

Additionally, in order to provide professional services to clients based on their needs while safeguarding personal information and the confidentiality of program decisions, each employee and volunteer pledges to:

1. Obtain the informed consent and participation of those we serve in decisions about their own service, care, and/or treatment;
2. Assure privacy and confidentiality for those we serve, and
3. Safeguard the right of consumers of our services to file grievances in accordance with prescribed procedures.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

NVFS is committed to a workplace free of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, mental or physical disability, national origin, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, veteran status, genetic information or other protected status and in compliance with all federal, state and local laws. Offensive or harassing behavior against someone based on protected status will not be tolerated. This policy covers all employees, clients, volunteers, vendors, and others who enter our workplace.

## **Workplace Boundaries**

NVFS employees and volunteers are expected to observe professional and personal relationship boundaries. Personal, non-business relationships within NVFS or between NVFS employees, volunteers, vendors, clients or third parties may arise; however, such relationships may not:

1. Create a conflict of interest
2. Improperly or adversely impact business decision-making
3. Create the appearance of such an impact

## **Rules of Conduct**

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, employees and volunteers are expected to follow the rules of conduct. This is crucial to protect the interests and safety of everyone. NVFS requires each individual, including staff and volunteers, to adhere to the *Rules of Conduct* in order to protect the integrity of the organization. Anyone found to not be observing *Workplace Boundaries* or the *Rules of Conduct* may face disciplinary action.

While not possible to list all forms of behavior considered unacceptable, the following list provides examples of some infractions of the rules of conduct:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment
- Causing physical injury to another person
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Unauthorized use of telephone, mail system or other agency-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential records
- Being dishonest including, but not limited to, deception, fraud, lying, cheating or theft
- Sabotaging agency equipment
- Engaging in indecent behavior
- Demonstrating gross misconduct or other serious violations of NVFS policies and procedures
- Crossing professional boundaries with client relationships
- Violating safety policies and practices

## **Political and/or Religious Activity**

As an organization receiving funds from federal agencies and in accordance with nonprofit 501(c)3 status, NVFS must administer programs in a politically and religiously non-partisan manner. NVFS must avoid actions that can reasonably be construed as intended to favor one political party or religious belief over another or to influence the outcome of any public election. The use of programs funds, provision of services and assignment of personnel must not result in the identification of NVFS with any activity that is designed to influence an election of a candidate for public office. Employees

and volunteers may not engage in partisan political or religious activities during their work time or while volunteering. However, they may do so as a private citizen on their own time and offsite.

**Problem Solving & Grievance Procedures**

NVFS strongly believes in an open door, open communication policy as an important benefit to the Agency and to employees and volunteers. The purpose of this process is to provide and maintain the best possible work conditions by securing equitable solutions to complaints and grievances that may arise. A volunteer has a right to submit a grievance if they honestly believe it to have merit. No employee or volunteer will be subject to any adverse action simply because a complaint is filed in good faith and the employee or volunteer honestly believed it to have merit. However, an employee or volunteer may receive disciplinary action if a complaint contains charges found to have been willfully or falsely made. Investigating, processing and other actions regarding a complaint are handled in as confidential a manner as possible.

<b>PROBLEM SOLVING &amp; GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES</b>		
<b>Steps</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
<b>Step 1</b>	Volunteer	Contact onsite supervisor in person or by phone or email.
<b>Step 2</b>	Volunteer	If the issue is not properly resolved after contacting your supervisor, discuss issue with their Staff Supervisor or your Community & Volunteer Engagement Specialist.
<b>Step 3</b>	Staff Supervisor or Community & Volunteer Engagement Specialist	Review incident to determine if further action is required and document that the issue has been raised.
<b>Step 4</b>	Volunteer	If the issue persists or is not adequately resolved, contact the Director of Community & Volunteer Engagement.
<b>Step 5</b>	Director of Community & Volunteer Engagement	Review complaint and provide a response to the person making the complaint, explaining possible resolutions.
<b>Step 6</b>	Volunteer	If the issue persists or is not adequately resolved, contact the EVP of Development & Communications.
<b>Step 7</b>	EVP, Development & Communications	Review and discuss response, and accompanying documentation, with appropriate individuals, potentially including CEO, to determine appropriate action to be taken to bring the issue to resolution.

**Role Assessment, Reassignment & Termination**

The Community & Volunteer Engagement department, in consultation with a volunteer’s site supervisor and the volunteer, may determine that a volunteer’s assigned role is not a good fit for the volunteer and/or the agency. In such instances, the Community & Volunteer Engagement Specialist, site supervisor and volunteer will meet to discuss concerns and determine the appropriate course of action. Such action could include, but is not limited to, trial periods, signed agreements, reassignment, or termination. Records of all discussions, meetings and other communication are maintained in the volunteer’s file.

## Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities

### As a NVFS volunteer I understand the following:

1. I am choosing to donate my time and services to the agency. Additionally, I understand that I am not entitled to compensation, nor do I expect to be compensated.
2. The volunteer services I agree to perform for NVFS are set forth in the applicable volunteer position description, which I have received and reviewed.
3. The tasks that I am agreeing to perform are traditionally reserved for volunteers and, by volunteering, I will compliment, not replace, a paid employee.
4. I am free to end my relationship with NVFS at any time and NVFS is free to end my volunteering efforts at any time.
5. NVFS volunteers are expected to act with honesty, integrity, respect, collaboration and accountability as volunteers for the agency.
6. NVFS will not tolerate conduct by any volunteer that harasses, disrupts or interferes with others' ability to do their work or that creates an offensive or hostile environment.
7. NVFS maintains a strict policy prohibiting sexual harassment and/or discrimination because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by applicable federal, state or local laws. As a volunteer, I agree to abide by such policy.
8. NVFS reserves the right to conduct background checks, with my consent, in order to ensure the safety of myself and others at the beginning of and periodically throughout my volunteer service with the agency.
9. If, in the course of my duties, I gain access to information or documentation that is confidential, I will not disclose or release such information (including, but not limited to, personal information, data, photos or videos) unless such action is approved in writing by authorized NVFS staff.
10. I may be exposed to potential hazards including, but not limited to, injury, accident, personal or property damage. I accept responsibility for my own acts and will hold NVFS and its employees blameless for any injury that I might incur while volunteering. I will advise NVFS of and may decline to participate in any task or undertaking that I do not feel qualified to perform or that I cannot perform without creating an unreasonable risk of injury to myself or others.

### As a NVFS volunteer, I can expect to:

1. Have my volunteer records, including personal information, confidentially and securely maintained.
2. Receive training, including a clear explanation of duties, responsibilities, expectations and requirements at the beginning of my service. Furthermore, ongoing guidance, support and feedback from a designated NVFS employee or volunteer will be available throughout my service.
3. Be respected, appreciated and affirmed for my efforts and be treated as a contributing partner with NVFS employees and fellow volunteers.

## Volunteer Statement of Confidentiality

### **NVFS Confidentiality Policy**

All NVFS records and information relating to NVFS, its employees, volunteers or its clients are confidential; employees and volunteers must therefore treat all matters accordingly. NVFS or NVFS-related information, including without limitation, documents, notes, files, records, oral information, personal/financial/medical information, computer files or similar materials (except in the ordinary course of performing duties on behalf of NVFS) may be not removed from NVFS's premises without permission from Division Vice Presidents/Chief Officers.

In addition, the contents of NVFS's records or information otherwise obtained in regard to business may not be disclosed to anyone, except where required for a business purpose. Employees and volunteers must not disclose any confidential information, purposefully or inadvertently (through casual conversation), to any unauthorized person inside or outside NVFS. Employees and volunteers who are unsure about the confidential nature of specific information must ask their supervisor for clarification. Employees and volunteers may only discuss confidential information to another staff member who has a work-related need to know.

Confidential records are to be kept in secure/locked files when not in use. Employees and volunteers who are accessing the NVFS network remotely or who are working from home are expected to maintain confidentiality of NVFS information. Employees and volunteers may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, for knowingly or negligently revealing information of a confidential nature and may be reported to their respective professional group or licensing board.

### **NVFS Client Confidentiality Policy**

Northern Virginia Family Service (NVFS) provides a wide range of services to children and families. As a volunteer, you play an integral role in the quality of service these clients receive. In the course of receiving services from NVFS, our clients must divulge private information about themselves and their families— ***information that they have a right to expect will be kept confidential.***

Private information includes but is not limited to: cards/documents of identification, case records, addresses, and billing information. Due to the sensitive nature of client information kept by the agency and its programs, it is imperative that each staff member, volunteer or other agency representative – whether paid or unpaid – understands and is committed to the important issue of confidentiality.

Our clients expect and deserve this confidentiality. We promise them the highest level of privacy, as determined by NVFS policies and by state and federal laws. The Code of Virginia states: It is unlawful for any person... or association to use any names or list of names obtained directly or indirectly through access to clients' records for purposes other than those intended by the organization or to divulge the name of any person receiving public assistance, and any person violating these provisions shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punished accordingly. In addition, any person or agency that fails to comply with the provision of The Privacy Protection Act will be liable for the costs of the action together with reasonable attorney fees as determined by the Court.

The right to confidentiality applies not only to written records, but also to video, film, pictures, use of a client's name in publications or discussions about clients in the hallway or elsewhere that are not directly related and necessary to providing services the client has requested. This pledge of confidentiality applies even after you and/or the client are no longer associated with NVFS. **Any and all names you may see or hear during your volunteer work, as well as any written material or correspondence or discussions regarding clients, are to be treated as confidential information. "Confidential" means that any information you receive about specific clients in verbal or written form is not to be discussed or shared outside of NVFS.**

Information including photos, videos, film, or a client's name can only be shared if the client (or guardian, for clients under 18) has signed an authorized "consent to release information" form and it is appropriately signed by the client or client guardian.

### **Limits of Confidentiality**

The following list represents potential limits to client confidentiality. Before making a decision to divulge sensitive client information in one of these instances, it is imperative that you speak to your staff supervisor or to another NVFS employee.

- *Legal Requests for Confidential Client Information:* Despite the agency's commitment to protect the client's right to confidentiality, records are occasionally requested for legal proceedings under a court order. Such requests should always be in writing in the form of a subpoena.
- *Child Abuse and Neglect:* Situations of child/adult abuse or neglect take precedence over confidentiality concerns, and reporting to authorities should conform to federal and state laws. **As an NVFS volunteer, you are considered a "mandated reporter" of suspected child/adult abuse or neglect.** Clients should be informed about your duty to report allegations of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Volunteers should consult with the staff supervisor about the need to report to authorities. All decisions must be clearly documented in the client file. If you have sufficient reason to believe that a victim is in imminent danger and your NVFS staff supervisor is not available to address the situation, you may contact the Adult Protective Services (888.832.3858) or the Child Protective Services (800.552.7096) hotline. For more information, please refer to the agency's Mandated Reporting Policy.
- *Harm to Self or Others:* Volunteers have an obligation to protect both the client and others if the client proves a threat. This includes suicide threats or other threats of self-harm. It also includes homicidal threats or threats of physical harm to another individual. If a volunteer receives information indicating that a client may be a danger to himself or others, the information needs to be shared with the NVFS staff supervisor immediately and, if the situation reaches an emergency level, reported to the police.

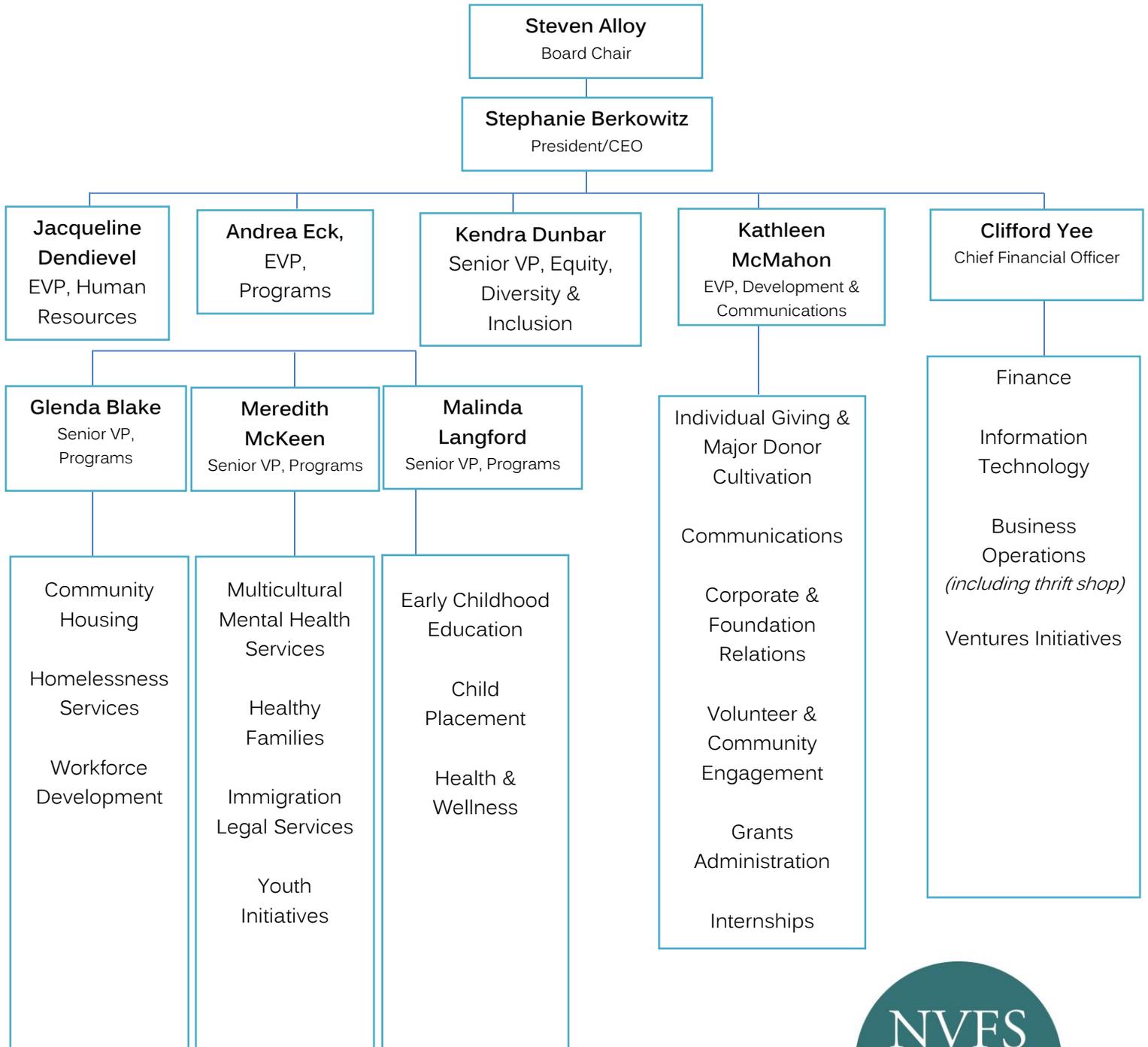
### **Acknowledgement**

I \_\_\_\_\_ [print name] will respect the right to privacy and to confidentiality of records of all clients, employees, volunteers and donors to whom I am exposed during my service as an NVFS volunteer. Additionally, I will not discuss or distribute any NVFS program or project-related information without the express written consent of the President & CEO or other appropriate authority. I agree to abide by this policy both during and after my service as an NVFS volunteer.

I have read and I understand the above statement regarding confidentiality and privacy. I know that I can ask my staff supervisor for clarification if I have any questions about the policy.

APPENDIX C

# Northern Virginia Family Service: Organization Chart



Northern Virginia  
Family Service

## APPENDIX D

# NVFS Locations Offices

### **Oakton – Administrative HQ**

10455 White Granite Dr.  
Suite 100  
Oakton, VA 22124  
571.748.2500

### **SERVE Campus**

10056 Dean Drive  
Manassas, VA 20110  
571.748.2600

### **Training Futures**

8603 Westwood Center Drive, Suite 300  
Vienna, VA 22182  
571.748.2860

### **Healthy Families**

Alexandria, VA  
571.748.2851  
Arlington, VA  
571.748.2711  
Fairfax County  
571.748.2706  
Prince William County  
571.748.2743

# Centers

### **Head Start Center**

2920 S. Glebe Road  
Arlington, VA 22204  
571.748.2700

### **Early Head Start**

**Georgetown South**  
9444 Taney Road  
Manassas, VA 20110  
571.748.2770

### **Multicultural Center**

6400 Arlington Boulevard, Ste. 110  
Falls Church, VA 22042  
571.748.2800

### **Early Head Start**

**Arlington Mill**  
909 S. Dinwiddie Street, Ste. 105  
Arlington, VA 22204  
571.748.2760

### **Early Head Start**

**Loudoun**  
571.748.2792

### **Early Head Start**

**Vermont Center**  
601 N. Vermont Street  
Arlington, VA 22203  
571.748.2760

### **Early Head Start Partnerships**

Wonderful Virginia Academy &  
Nikki's Christian Learning Center  
Woodbridge, VA  
571.748.2703

# Thrift Shop

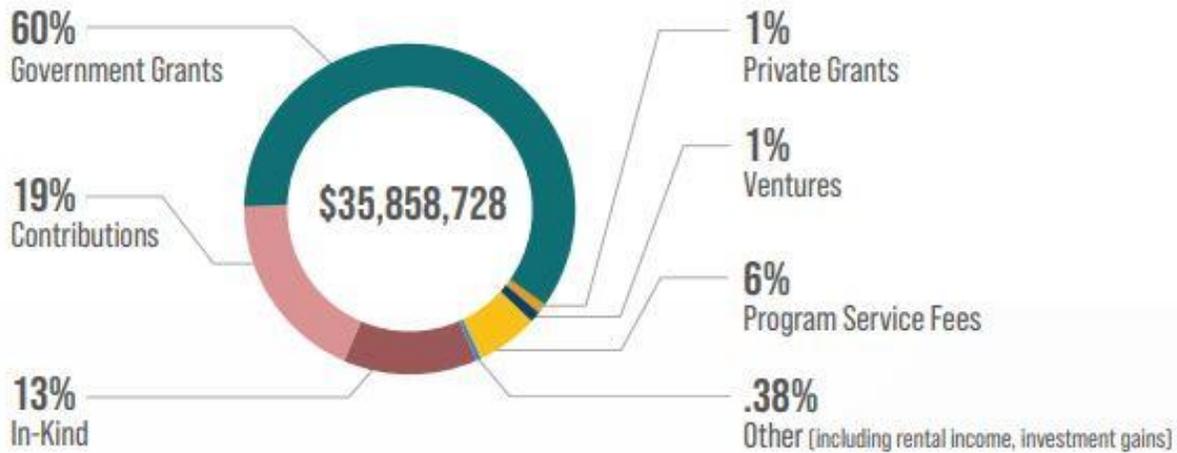
### **Clock Tower Thrift Shop**

2860 Annandale Road  
Falls Church, VA 22042  
703.237.1910

# FY2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Every dollar you contribute is important to us. We invest your financial support and other contributions in ways that best address the most crucial needs in our community. Because of contributions from our government, foundation, corporate, and individual supporters, we are able to respond effectively and efficiently to ever-evolving community needs.

## FY2020 SUPPORT AND REVENUE



## FY2020 EXPENSES

