

Jesuit Volunteer Handbook

2015-2016



JESUIT VOLUNTEER CORPS

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Mission Statement.....	3
History of JVC	3
The Four Values of JVC	3
Living as a Jesuit Volunteer.....	4
Support	4
Agencies.....	5
Local Formation Team.....	5
JVC Staff	5
Spiritual Directors and Pastoral Counselors	5
Former Jesuit Volunteers	6
Neighbors, Local Churches, and Community Organizations	6
JVC Formation Program	6
Retreats.....	6
Community-Based Activities.....	7
Additional Year Formation Program	8
Lifelong Formation.....	8
Everyday Choices	8
Living on the Community and Personal Stipend	8
Being Present to the Community	9
Living Simply with Technology.....	9
Physical, Emotional, and Mental Health Issues.....	10
Substance Use and Abuse	10
Commitment.....	10
Family and Friends of Jesuit Volunteers	11
When and How to Contact JVC Staff	12
Rights and Responsibilities of a Jesuit Volunteer.....	14
Confidentiality in JVC	15
Non-Discrimination Policy.....	15
Volunteer Group Health Policy: Sept 2014-Aug 2015	16
JVC Glossary	18
The Covenant of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.....	19

Appendix A: Program Calendar

Appendix B: Financial & Administrative Information

This handbook establishes the foundation for good relationships among the Jesuit Volunteer, JVC, and the local agency partners.

Introduction

Welcome to the Jesuit Volunteer Corps! By saying yes to JVC, you are joining hundreds of other men and women serving this year throughout the United States and around the globe, as well as the thousands who have come before you. Like them, you have opened yourself up to being transformed by your experiences at work, in your community, on retreat, and in your neighborhood. As with all things in life, you get out of your experiences what you put into them. We encourage you to enter fully into the experiences of the next year—to participate actively in your community; to form relationships with the women, men, and children with whom you work and serve; to challenge each other and our society to live more simply; and to trust that in all things, God is present and alive.

The following pages contain important and useful information to make your year as a Jesuit Volunteer successful. You are responsible for knowing and upholding the policies outlined within this handbook and for ensuring that your communities are working together to live out the mission and values of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

Mission Statement

Aspiring to create a more just and hopeful world, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps engages passionate young people in vital service within poor communities, fostering the growth of leaders committed to faith in action.

History of JVC

The Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC) is the largest lay Catholic full-time volunteer program in the world and has been a pioneer in the service landscape for 40 years. Over 10,000 men and women have served tens of thousands of individuals and families within hundreds of communities worldwide since its inception. Jesuit Volunteers have worked tirelessly for social justice, while exploring their spirituality and faith through a framework of Catholic, Ignatian values.

Today's JVC has its roots in JVC Northwest which began in Alaska almost 60 years ago. In the early 1970s, JVC organizations were established to encompass four additional regions in the lower 48 states as well as overseas. In 2009, four regional JVC programs and Jesuit Volunteers International united to form the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, while JVC Northwest remained an independent organization. Today's national JVC brings the stories of these five organizations into a shared history, values, and mission. JVC's longevity and stability locally and nationally brings deep institutional knowledge to our work, and fresh, innovative thinking to service and social justice.

The experience of Jesuit Volunteers is facilitated by staff, based across the US who understand community needs, maintain local ties, and provide strong personal and programmatic assistance, guidance and support in furthering the mission. The JVC national organization is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland, and is home to the office of the president and other administrative departments. JVC is governed by a board of directors.

The Four Values of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps

Spirituality

Core to the JVC experience is an **open**, honest **engagement** with spirituality and faith. The JVC program facilitates prayer, retreats, and other activities grounded in the Catholic, Ignatian tradition. JVC creates opportunities for volunteers to **reflect** on their commitment to God and social justice, find God in all things, and put their faith into action through service for the rest of their lives.

Volunteers are given the resources and time to reflect on their work and their community, as well as what is going on within themselves. The JVC program provides retreats, workshops, and other opportunities for volunteers to consider and share insights drawn from their work and communities, while deepening their

understanding of the program's values.

Simple Living

JVC creates valuable opportunities for volunteers to live a simple, practical life. Their basic needs met and living in solidarity with people who are poor and marginalized, they separate needs from wants and gain freedom from the material. As part of a supportive community, they learn to prioritize, put people before things, and make deliberate, intentional decisions about how to use their time, money, and talents. The JVC experience is a chance for volunteers to reflect on simple living, define it in their own terms, and explore how to carry it into their lives.

Community

JVC creates intentional communities that help people broaden their perspectives and confront boundaries. During their service, JVC volunteers are placed in peer communities that foster spiritual growth and engagement. Volunteers share meals, reflect and pray together, and live among the people they serve. They challenge and support one another, gain new insight into the realities of poverty and injustice, and commit to a lifetime of advocacy and service. By fostering communities built on accountability, respect, and mutual support, JVC helps volunteers understand their place in the world, and how they'll engage with it.

Social Justice

JVC makes a real impact in the world by increasing the capacity of local organizations to provide direct service to people who are poor or marginalized. JVC places volunteers alongside those who are disenfranchised so that they come to understand the realities of poverty and injustice faced by much of the world. They are transformed through reflection on these experiences, and by the close interpersonal relationships they form with those they serve. The JVC experience brings a global perspective on living and seeing the world that becomes a part of those who serve, and they spend their lives advocating for compassion, fair treatment, and structural change that addresses the root causes of injustice.

Living as a Jesuit Volunteer

JVC is a Catholic program, though those of all faiths are welcome. We approach our lives fundamentally from this faith perspective. Volunteers are expected to hold each other accountable, commit to growing spiritually both personally and communally, and to be open to listening and entering into dialogue about these matters.

Day to day, your experience unfolds at your placement—in the work you do and with the people you meet—and in your community. Jesuit Volunteers reflect and converse as to how their commitment to faith and shared values is most appropriately lived out in each of these settings.

SUPPORT

There are many types of support present throughout the JVC experience, both locally and from a distance. Each piece listed below outlines the various ways agencies, Former Jesuit Volunteers, Jesuits, local partners, and staff create the day-to-day learning environment of Jesuit Volunteers.

1. Agencies

JVC supports organizations that serve the physical and spiritual needs basic to human dignity. Agency partners are selected based on their organizational mission, the job description for the JV, and the nature of support available by administrators and supervisors. Agency partners are an integral piece of the formation program for JVs, as volunteers build relationships and gain valuable skills and insights to transform their perspectives throughout the year.

2. Local Formation Team

The Local Formation Team is comprised of Jesuits, Former Jesuit Volunteers, and others that have been asked by JVC staff to commit to accompanying and mentoring each JV community. The Local Formation Team is primarily responsible for the local support of Jesuit Volunteers for the program year. This team meets with the volunteer community, provides local resources and contacts to the volunteers, accompanies the volunteers' exploration of the program's four values, and collaborates with the JVC staff to foster growth for individual volunteers and the whole community. There are generally two **support people** for each community and one additional **spiritual liaison**. The local formation team voluntarily assists the JVC staff in educating, supporting and challenging JVs and their communities to live the four values and to develop an Ignatian-based response to the world.

Support people serve as facilitators, resource people, and companions. They assist with the initial community nights, provide advice on establishing community roles, moderate conflict situations, connect JVs with local justice and worship communities, and recommend fun and inexpensive entertainment options in and around the city. As companions, support people walk in solidarity with JVs—helping them make meaning of their experiences and providing a listening ear. Support people generously volunteer their time for this important role and are not JVC staff.

Where possible, Jesuit priests and brothers, religious women, or lay **spiritual liaisons** provide a connection for communities to the living tradition of St. Ignatius. Through conversations, dinners, liturgies, or reflections these mentors offer opportunities for JV communities to explore spiritual growth and guide them in becoming “contemplatives in action.”

3. JVC Staff

JVC staff members are available throughout the year as a source of logistical information and personal support. Staff members help JVs process the complex situations and emotions that arise and provide accompaniment for volunteers both in planned visits and regular communication over the course of the program year. In particular, each JV community works with a **program coordinator**, a staff member who accompanies them throughout the year, serves as a liaison to JVC staff, and visits twice a year. Program coordinators periodically call or e-mail JVs to find out how life is going; follow up on anything that emerged on a visit, retreat, or previous check-in; and continue to challenge JVs and their communities to deeper growth.

Every month, JVC also distributes an electronic newsletter called ***In the Field*** with contributions from current JVs, announcements, ideas for community nights, reflections, recipes, highlights of the formation program, job announcements, and other items related to living out the four values. *In the Field* is a space for JVs to share thoughts, experiences, and resources with other JVs across the country and around the world. It is an internal newsletter shared only among current JVs and JVC staff members. *In the Field* gets to the heart of the JVC experience, told first-hand by JVs. JVC staff encourages volunteers throughout the year to contribute material for *In the Field*, jesuitvolunteers.org, partner blogs, and other publications.

4. Spiritual Directors and Pastoral Counselors

JVC staff have established relationships with trained men and women to provide guidance to volunteers who wish to deepen their spiritual lives or who are in need of spiritual assistance.

Spiritual direction, sometimes referred to as spiritual guidance or spiritual friendship, is an ongoing relationship in which one person (the directee), desirous of being attentive to her/his spiritual life, shares his/her prayer experiences with another person (the director) in order to become more attuned to God's presence. The primary focus of the sessions is the directee's relationship with God as it is reflected and challenged by all aspects of that person's life. JVC requires all Additional Year volunteers to be in spiritual direction and recommends the activity for any volunteer seeking to deepen her/his spiritual response to the world. JVC staff can provide specific names or details if you are interested in this possibility.

Pastoral guidance and counseling can be useful during the course of the year, as events happen and issues arise that create various levels of discomfort or stress for an individual volunteer. Some volunteers choose to seek out a counseling relationship to help process these feelings. At other times, JVC staff may require volunteers to seek counseling if they are displaying behaviors detrimental to their work, community, or their own personal health. In each instance, JVC staff helps volunteers find the people and the resources to make counseling possible. This may include those available through JVC-provided health insurance and a list of local resources available in each JVC city. See page 17 for health insurance information.

There are distinctions between spiritual direction and therapeutic counseling relationships. In general, therapy and counseling deal primarily with problem areas of one's life and attempt to bring healthy resolution to issues. Spiritual direction is concerned with finding and responding to God (in the midst of pain or disorder as well as in the rest of life). Problem solving is not the primary focus of spiritual direction.

5. Former Jesuit Volunteers

The network of Former Jesuit Volunteers (FJVs) is vibrant, and FJVs can be found in many of the cities in which current JVs reside. FJVs are valuable resources for JV communities; they often provide advice and information about the city and can serve as role models for living the four values. As JVs begin their year, the Director of FJV Relations sends an e-mail to the FJVs near the community encouraging them to be supportive of the JVs throughout the year. If FJVs reach out to your volunteer community, you are expected to reply promptly and graciously.

6. Neighbors, Local Churches, and Community Organizations

Informal support networks abound in each city where a JV community is present. Sometimes communities of JVs have lived in the same neighborhood for several years and the neighbors have a good understanding of JVC. Local church communities are also often aware that the JV community exists in the neighborhood and are eager to be involved in the lives of the new volunteers. Additionally, many of the neighborhoods in which JVs live have community associations.

Participation in these associations enables JVs to gain a better understanding of the issues in their local community and to know their neighbors in a different capacity.

JVC FORMATION PROGRAM

JVC staff supports your growth with specific programs and through intentional outreach opportunities. All JVs must attend all retreats and be present for planned community nights and activities.

1. Retreats

During the year, JVC staff plans retreats for and with the volunteers to build and sustain a community of committed people. The retreats offer JVs the opportunity to reflect on the spiritual and apostolic aspects of their commitment and provide an atmosphere of support and challenge for the volunteers. These events include time for outside speakers to make presentations; for the volunteers to discuss issues related to their work, community, and faith development; to pray and reflect; and to socialize with each other. All volunteers must attend the JVC retreats.

Orientation

This retreat is an introduction to the volunteer year; to the values of spirituality, simple living, community, and social justice; and to the spirit of JVC. It is an opportunity for JVs to meet each other, the staff, and other friends of JVC. Local Orientation, a continuation of Orientation, occurs in the home city of each volunteer community and unfolds during the days immediately following Orientation. Agency administrators and Former Jesuit Volunteers (FJVs) arrange city tours and worksite (placement) visits and inform about local resources (banks, grocery markets, libraries, churches, etc.).

Additional Year Retreat

This retreat in December gathers all JVs currently serving an additional year. The retreat focuses on the unique opportunities and challenges of Additional Year volunteers. More information about the Additional Year program can be found below.

ReOrientation

This mid-year retreat takes place in the winter. It recalls topics introduced at Orientation but moves the conversations to a deeper level using the pastoral circle, a tool for volunteers to evaluate issues they have witnessed in their work and cities. Staff and presenters guide reflection upon the structures of oppression and injustice that JVs have encountered and move JVs toward discerning appropriate responses to address these issues.

Spring Retreat

This silent, Ignatian-inspired retreat offers JVs the chance to get away from the busyness of their work and home lives and focus wholly on their personal and spiritual development. JVs have the opportunity to participate in individual and group prayer experiences, which make use of Ignatian meditation and discernment models found in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

DisOrientation

This end-of-the-year gathering provides JVs the opportunity to remember the gifts of the past year; celebrate the relationships formed among community members, co-workers, and clients; grieve the end of one experience; and move with excitement into a new experience, carrying with them the heart of the four values.

2. Community-Based Activities

Jesuit Volunteer communities spend two nights in reflection each week to develop their understanding of the four values and foster personal and spiritual growth. Volunteers are encouraged to be creative in planning their own nights according to the unique needs, gifts, and passions of their particular community. There are also many other opportunities throughout the year for volunteers to grow as a community. JVC staff provides volunteers with resources and various contacts for these activities.

Community Nights

Community nights allow JVs to examine the four values more deeply in light of their experiences at work and in their cities. These nights are planned by each member of the community, with some help early on from their support people. Activities might include sharing life stories, discussing current events, playing board games, volunteering at a soup kitchen, walking around the neighborhood, attending neighborhood meetings, or standing in protest. In reality, anything that enables the community to gather, challenge each other, develop communication and conflict resolution skills, and support growth is a successful community night.

Spirituality Nights

Spirituality nights bring community members together to explore and share their faith. The responsibility of planning and facilitating spirituality nights are shared by members of the community. Activities might include reading and reflecting on a scripture passage and reflecting together on its meaning, praying the rosary, sharing faith history, or exploring music and art that have a spiritual meaning. Support people, program coordinators, and the internal JVC monthly newsletter *In the Field* can be resources for ideas.

Area Visits

Program coordinators visit each community twice a year. These visits provide the program coordinator with opportunities to observe and experience each JV's day-to-day life as well as the life of the entire community. JVs meet one-on-one with their program coordinator during that visit, and (s)he will accompany them at work for a few hours. Area visits are also an opportunity for program coordinators to visit prospective JVC placement sites and find new partner agencies.

Day of Reflection

In the fall, in conjunction with the program coordinator's area visit, each community will participate in a Day of Reflection focusing on the value of community. During this day JVs engage in community-building conversation, reflection and activities.

Winter Conversations

Winter Conversations are opportunities for JV communities to connect with a local contact or organization to provide a social context for what the Jesuit Volunteers are witnessing and experiencing at work. The conversation enables volunteers to expand their knowledge of social justice issues on a local level, and continue to think about how to take action against these issues. JVC staff connect volunteers to a facilitator for the Winter Conversation.

3. Additional Year Formation Program

Serving an additional year in the United States with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps offers the opportunity to continue the transformational experience of living in community while working for peace and justice alongside the poor and marginalized. Through the Additional Year (AY) Formation Program, JVs across the country live out common expectations of delving deeper into the four values; providing an experience that is distinct from a JV's first year of service.

AYs further explore the four values by: building community with other Additional Year JVs through a PreOrientation retreat and a national AY retreat in December; engaging in spiritual direction on a monthly basis; exploring social justice advocacy more deeply; planning and facilitating a direct action in relation to a social justice issue as part of the Advocate for Change Program; and setting simplicity goals to more fully experience the freedom of a simple lifestyle.

4. Lifelong Formation

JVC is committed to engaging JVs and Former Jesuit Volunteers in a lifelong relationship with JVC, its mission, and its values. More than 13,000 men and women have served as Jesuit Volunteers, forming an extensive network that you become a part of after your volunteer experience. As a JV, you encounter FJVs in many ways, including:

- Serving on the local formation team of JV communities
- Presenting and lending logistical support at JVC retreats throughout the year
- Helping plan Local Orientation activities in your city
- Inviting volunteers to their homes or offering food or resources to communities

JVC develops opportunities for FJVs to connect with JVs and with each other, and will alert you to opportunities at times throughout the year and after your year or two of service has ended.

EVERYDAY CHOICES

Critical reflection on daily choices helps JVs have a better sense of the bigger picture of the mission of JVC. While JVs may not always see the fruits of their labor, their choices have implications for themselves and many others. By living intentionally, JVs contribute to the creation of a more just world.

1. Living on the Community and Personal Stipend

JVC asks volunteers to live a simple lifestyle—one focused on people and relationships rather than on objects and acquisition. JVs live on a restricted budget with minimal disposable income. JVC challenges volunteers to live on their personal stipend and not to accept funds from family, friends, or other sources of income. This challenge is not meant to impose austerity, but to help JVs experience a greater sense of solidarity with those for whom limited income is not a choice. Wise use of resources is also a way of showing respect to the agencies for which JVs work and the benefactors who support JVC.

Jesuit Volunteers do not live in poverty. While they do not live on a large amount of money, their budgets are created in a way such that the expenses of food, shelter and health insurance are covered, and they are provided with a disposable income. Persons in poverty do not enjoy these privileges.

The commitment to a simple lifestyle is more than attempting to live within a monthly budget; it is a shift of focus. Volunteers are expected to explore a simple lifestyle beyond keeping to a budget. Spending a year centered less on the consumption promoted by our culture can free the volunteers to revel in the value to be found in simple pleasures, conversations and their own creativity.

Living simply is not only an individual choice but also has communal dimensions. In community, JVs must come to consensus about how to best use available resources, food purchases, recycling, boycotts, appliance usage, and more. Simplicity of lifestyle comes into sharp focus when there is a whole group of people trying to define how to do it!

2. Being Present to the JVC Community

In JVC, community provides you with the support necessary to engage in the difficult work for justice. The first few weeks of living in community require a significant commitment. It takes time—formal and informal—to get to know each other, establish routines, set up schedules, and learn about the neighborhood. Volunteers are expected to make a sincere effort to develop and work at building community—to do what is necessary for the household to function efficiently, effectively, and lovingly during the course of the year

JVs should not travel for personal reasons or have overnight guests until the end of October. Giving your time to each other and to the community in these early months will set a firm foundation for the rest of the year.

When making decisions that affect your being present in and to your community, please reflect on the following questions:

- Am I focused on the here-and-now or am I only focused on my past relationships or future plans?
- How much time am I spending away from my community (on the phone, e-mail, graduate school applications or test preparations, making trips to visit friends and family)? How is this impacting my relationships with each person in my community?
- How am I balancing the support I am giving to and receiving from my community with outside resources (e.g. family, friends, a significant other)?

3. Living Simply with Technology

JVC recognizes the value that can be gained from technology but also sees the dehumanizing effect that “conveniences” can have on an individual and community, while also increasing the disparity between people of different income levels. Therefore, JVs should weigh the time and energy-saving benefits associated with certain conveniences (computers, Internet, e-mail, cell phones, iPods, cars, etc.) with the social and environmental impacts these may have. When determining use of technology (and even considering what to bring to JVC), reflect on the following:

- How could/does my use of technological conveniences (Internet, e-mail, cell phone, television, car, text messaging, etc.) add to or detract from my relationships with my community, my clients, my coworkers, my neighbors, and/or God?
- Is my access to technology a result of my privileged status? Does it distance me from living in solidarity with people who do not have access to these amenities?
- Is my community using any of these conveniences to escape relationships or issues rather than deal with them?
- Am I using these conveniences simply because they are there, or am I making conscientious decisions in regards to their use?
- Are these conveniences making my life simpler or more complicated?

- Is my reliance on technological conveniences interfering with opportunities to practice trust in God's providence?
- Am I using technology in an intentional way to uphold past and current relationships with an awareness of the effects that my usage has on the people around me?

JVC recommends that JV communities do not have internet in the JV community house/casa until the New Year. At that time the community should engage in a thoughtful discernment of how to proceed.

JVs should also consider that JVC houses are often in neighborhoods where it is not the norm to own expensive electronics, and volunteers should be careful not to draw unwanted attention to their homes. JVC is not responsible for the loss or theft of any personal belongings or valuables.

4. Physical, Emotional, and Mental Health Issues

The JVC staff helps Jesuit Volunteers live out the mission of JVC. Some volunteers encounter challenges related to their physical, emotional, or mental health that can make it difficult to participate fully in their work and/or community life. JVC staff will provide volunteers with a list of mental health resources in their area. If issues such as eating disorders, depression, anxiety disorders, or other health concerns arise for any volunteers during the year, JVC staff will work with the volunteer (and the community and placement if appropriate). When a volunteer or community member becomes aware of a health issue, it is important to communicate the issue to the JVC staff and, if appropriate, to the local support people. The situation will be addressed by the JVC staff to determine the support most suitable to the volunteer (and community).

Substance Use and Abuse: Drug and Alcohol Policy

Recognizing the widespread abuse of chemical substances in our society and its presence as a negative factor not only in many of the families JVs serve but also in many of their own families, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps has adopted the following policies about alcohol and drug usage:

At JVC and Agency Partner Events:

Volunteers must adhere to JVC staff instructions and/or agency regulations during all workshops and retreats regarding the use of alcohol. The use of illegal drugs is never permitted.

In JVC Communities:

While recognizing that Jesuit Volunteers are adults who make decisions for themselves, we also recognize the fact that choosing to be a Jesuit Volunteer implies certain lifestyle choices. One such choice is to put people before things. We challenge JVs to set their priorities accordingly, using moderation and respect for others as a guide when dealing with alcohol. Community conversations around drugs and alcohol, as all conversations, should be respectful of the varying personal and familial experience of the individual members. Specifically, JVC expects that community funds will not be used to purchase alcohol. The JVC staff expects that Jesuit Volunteers will live consistently with the mission of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, including in the area of alcohol use. If a volunteer is unable to do so, the staff will work with him/her to address possible addiction issues and his/her ability to continue as a Jesuit Volunteer.

The use, sale, or possession of illegal substances during the JVC program year is unacceptable and may lead to dismissal from the program.

COMMITMENT

A commitment to JVC is a commitment to a year-long experience of living out the four values in service to others. This commitment is three-fold; it is made by JVs to the agency partner, to their community and to the JVC program. When people leave JVC before the end of their commitment it has significant implications (financial and otherwise) for the agency partner and the people with whom the volunteer interacts on a daily basis. Obviously, emergencies arise, and JVC will work with each volunteer on a case-by-case basis to seek

resolution on these exceptions. Please contact your program coordinator as soon as you know of an issue that may affect your ability to serve the full year.

At Work

- Though you are a volunteer, you commit to act as a responsible staff member for your placement. This means you are expected to work your full weekly schedule and to work for the entirety of the JVC program year.*
- You will have a minimum of 10 vacation time during the year. JVs are expected to schedule extended vacation time (3+ days) with the placement supervisor and program coordinator at least 2 weeks in advance or as soon as possible. Volunteers should not make assumptions about how and when you can use that time (e.g., Thanksgiving, Christmas) because of possible community and job commitments.

In Community

- Volunteers commit to living in intentional apostolic community. Thus, volunteers are expected to participate in weekly meetings and gatherings, share household chores and responsibilities, and support one another in their work and in living out the four values.
- Volunteers also commit to living in an interdependent financial arrangement in which each community member shares funds, with the exception of the personal stipend and work transportation amounts. The community members depend upon each other to keep the bills paid. The volunteer's agency partner depends upon the community staying together to keep the overall costs down.

To JVC

- Volunteers commit to attend all retreats and organized meetings at the house, and commit to being present for the program coordinator's area visit.
- Volunteers are expected to cooperate when asked to represent JVC at JVC fundraising events and recruiting opportunities.
- Volunteers are asked occasionally to assist with telling the JVC story by submitting photographs, blog entries, reflections, and articles about their experience.

Early Departure from JVC: Please review Program Agreement regarding parameters and procedures in the event of an early departure from the program year commitment. If a volunteer is considering the possibility of an early departure, a JV must discuss it with the program coordinator first.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF JESUIT VOLUNTEERS

As a member of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps you have entered into a relationship with our staff and with our agency partners. The JVC staff and agencies have a primary and singular relationship with and responsibility toward you. While you are a Jesuit Volunteer, except in the case of an emergency, we will not contact your parents, guardians or friends in regards to your personal experience in the program. Since you are an adult, we also do not consider it our responsibility to discuss your personal experience in JVC with anyone other than you should another person contact us directly.

Many of you are doing JVC as a direct result of the values passed on to you by your family and close friends. To that end, we strongly encourage you to share your experiences with them. Call your parents, e-mail your friends, send letters to your grandparents. Let them know what you are seeing and feeling and how you are growing this year. Be wise. Share what you know will help them understand your experience, and temper the information that may potentially cause anxiety and misunderstanding. To help ease the anxiety of your family it is good practice to provide them with specific information should an emergency arise and they need to contact you or the JVC office. We recommend sharing the following information:

* Exact JVC program year dates are outlined in the program agreement.

- Your JV Community phone number
- Your JV Community address
- The names of the people in your community
- Your JVC agency partner address, phone, and e-mail address
- The JVC staff phone and address
- The name of your program coordinator

A final note: JVC sends fundraising letters and a quarterly magazine to parents/guardians during the course of your volunteer year. If this poses a problem for you, please contact the JVC staff.

WHEN AND HOW TO CONTACT JVC STAFF

You will receive the contact information for your JVC program coordinator and other necessary JVC staff members at orientation. We invite you to call your program coordinator frequently throughout the year. JVC staff will do their best to respond in a timely manner, but we would certainly ask for your patience and courtesy in expecting a response. We ask that you contact your Program Coordinator especially in the following instances:

- Anytime you have good news to share: insights learned, a job well done, an excellent community night idea, etc.
- Anytime you are struggling to live out your commitment to JVC, to your agency, to your community, or to one or more of the values.
- At the first moment you think you might not be able to fulfill any of the commitments required by JVC. It is essential that you involve staff in this decision-making process. JVC staff always encourages conversation to ensure that volunteers are receiving the support they need through this challenging year.
- When you or a member of your community is seriously ill or has been injured in some way, especially if it involves a visit to the hospital.
- When there is an emergency situation in your neighborhood, city, or place of work (e.g. natural disaster, fire, major accident), especially if it is receiving regional or national attention. This call is equally important when your community, house, or agency is NOT affected. Please call the JVC office so we know what is going on and how you are doing, and so we are able to answer questions from other concerned people.
- When you experience changes at work: a new supervisor, new responsibilities, you aren't doing what you think you should be doing, etc.
- At the first instance of sexual harassment or inappropriate behavior at your place of work or within community.
- When there is a significant change in how a fellow community member is participating in community, and you believe the JVC staff has not been informed.

JVC staff will most often use phone and e-mail to connect with you regarding official JVC business. We use e-mail with the knowledge that most volunteers have access to a computer at some point during the workday. Our communication via e-mail will often be to set up times to talk with you, share information and/or to confirm plans for area visits. Our preferred method of "checking in" with you is by phone and we expect that you make time to be in conversation with us. Some of the most common methods of communication include:

Phone: When in doubt about which method to use, pick up the phone and call. It is the fastest, most reliable form of communication with JVC staff. It is acceptable and expected that you would be able to make any necessary calls to JVC staff during your workday.

E-Mail: This is a helpful method to clarify plans, confirm a phone call, share experiences at work (to be talked about at a later time), and/or to share *non-emergency* information. Many people find it easier to

express themselves through the written word, and e-mail allows for that. It is not appropriate, however, to use *only* this form of communication with your program coordinator. Open communication demands personal conversations and you are expected to be in dialogue with your program coordinator throughout this year. Talk with him/her early in the year to establish comfortable and healthy patterns of communication.

Program Coordinators' Personal Cell Phones: Your program coordinator will provide you with both an office phone number and a personal cell phone number. Personal cell phones should only be called in emergency situations or to communicate with a program coordinator when (s)he is on an area visit in your city. All other times, a personal cell phone number is to be used only as indicated by the program coordinator. Please check with your program coordinator to inquire if text messaging is an acceptable means of communication.

Facebook and other Social Networking Sites: Social networking sites should *not* be used for JVC-related communication with a member of the JVC staff. When posting to personal social media sites, volunteers should also consider their responsibility as a representative of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps program and of the JVC agency partner.

Rights and Responsibilities of a Jesuit Volunteer

RIGHTS

- You will have housing provided for you from the first day of Orientation through the last day of the program year.*
- You will have all program and work-required transportation costs covered from the last day of Orientation through the last day of the program year.*
- You will be paid in a regular and timely manner in order to pay rent, utilities, and all household expenses.
- You will be provided with a written job description with clearly defined expectations, responsibilities, and work hours.
- You will be provided with adequate training and ongoing supervision to ensure success in the workplace.
- You will have work schedules that allow for a weekly commitment to at least two evenings at home for dinner and community nights and that enable you to travel to and from JVC sponsored retreats.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Your conduct and lifestyle are expected to promote the welfare of the JVC community and the neighborhood in which you live, as well as uphold the mission and values of the sponsoring agencies and JVC.
- You are expected to live out your full year commitment to JVC and to your agency, which begins on the first day of Orientation, includes all JVC sponsored retreats, and ends on the last day of the program year*. This includes being fully present for your program coordinator's area visits.
- You are expected to explore the meaning of the four values of social justice, spirituality, community, and simple lifestyle and discover ways to live accordingly.
- You are expected to make all decisions in favor of your commitment to JVC, your community, your job, and the people with whom you serve (e.g. attending retreat instead of your college homecoming, helping with a fundraising event for your agency instead of going away for the weekend, participating in spirituality night instead of chatting with a friend from home).
- You are expected to show up for work on time, perform the tasks and responsibilities as detailed in your job description, and contribute positively to the overall work environment. Like any other employee of your agency, you should participate in "extracurricular" activities that, though maybe not defined in your job description, are complementary to it.
- You are expected to abide by all laws and guidelines around confidentiality in the workplace. It is the responsibility of the agency partner and the volunteer to discuss these during the placement orientation.
- You are expected to keep JVC staff, your community members, and the local formation team informed of any situations that significantly affect work or community life.
- You are accountable for the upkeep of house and bill payments, and you should inform the landlord in a timely manner about any problems or needed repairs. You are expected to maintain good communication with the landlord and your program coordinator or designated housing administrator regarding housing issues.
- JVC cannot be responsible for the theft or loss of any valuables during your volunteer year, and recommends that you do not bring valuables with you. If this raises concerns, JVC recommends you purchase a renter's insurance policy.
- You are expected to use alcohol appropriately (see Physical, Emotional and Mental Health Issues above).
- You are expected to pool all monthly expenses to foster community and to make the most efficient use of resources (work transportation and personal stipend not included).
- You are expected to be good stewards of your household finances. It is JVC policy that all accumulated savings at year end be left for the incoming community. At the end of the year, each community is responsible for ensuring that there is enough money to cover August bills and for the incoming community to purchase food and household incidentals.
- You are expected to live on your personal stipend without assistance from either family money or personal savings. You should not receive additional remuneration from your agency (i.e. overtime pay, bonuses, etc.).
- You are expected to commit fully to your work and community life. Therefore you cannot take employment outside your agency or pursue degree programs during your volunteer year.
- You cannot have pets in community houses.

* Exact JVC program year dates are outlined in the program agreement.

Confidentiality in JVC

As a Jesuit Volunteer you will have the privilege to hear the stories and witness the lives of the people with whom you work. During your work you may learn things of a highly personal and confidential nature. With this work and privilege comes YOUR responsibility to understand the scope of confidentiality and your obligation to maintain complete confidentiality in accordance with your placement's guidelines.

It is important to understand that all forms of communication (written, oral, electronic) are covered under HIPAA law. Be conscious of this as you discuss your work with community members, family and friends, neighbors, and others, through face-to-face conversations, email, phone calls, blogs, chatting online, etc. There are also protections around taking pictures at work.

Some background on HIPAA:

1. HIPAA: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. It is enforced by the US Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Civil Rights. HIPAA provides a floor of privacy standards to protect all Americans. *Confidentiality* protections are cumulative; HIPAA regulations do not preempt stronger state laws that are in effect.
2. Confidential information includes:
 - All individually identifiable health information held or transmitted in any form (including electronic, paper and oral).
 - Information that directly identifies the individual and that relates to an individual's physical, mental or behavioral condition; personal or family medical history; or medical treatment or the health care provided to that individual.

Note: An individual can choose to share their own Protected Health Information with you and others, but as a volunteer you have a responsibility not to share it. Even after a person's death, their right to privacy remains.

3. Information that may be considered restricted includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Names
 - Dates of birth
 - Postal/residential address information
 - Telephone numbers
 - Electronic mail (email) addresses
 - Social Security numbers
 - Medical record numbers
 - Health plan beneficiary numbers
 - Account numbers
 - Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers, including license plate number

Ask your supervisor during training about your worksite's guidelines on confidentiality including taking photos at work. If you are unsure about whether something is confidential, ask your supervisor first before disclosing the information. *Good rule of thumb: When in doubt, don't share!*

Non-Discrimination Policy

JVC does not discriminate in program admission based on race, color, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, age, disability, or any other protected characteristic.

JVC is founded and rooted in the tradition of the Society of Jesus. The program has a distinct Roman Catholic heritage, which all applicants will understand is the spiritual foundation of JVC. Yet, individuals of all faith perspectives are welcome to apply.

JVC will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities as long as the accommodation does not impose undue hardship on JVC. This policy governs all aspects of the program including selection, placement assignment, compensation and access to benefits and training.

JVC makes every effort to ensure that its placement agencies have similar non-discrimination policies. Any member with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in their placement workplace should bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor and the JVC program director. If the agency partner is found to be engaging in such activities, removal of current member(s) (and denial of future volunteers at that agency) can result.

Discrimination on the part of fellow JVC members will also not be tolerated. Anyone found to be engaging in any unlawful or harassing discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

Volunteer Group Health Policy, September 2015 - August 2016

1. Group Health Coverage: Subject to the provisions of subsections 3.a. and 3.b., Jesuit Volunteers are provided with 12 months of group health coverage beginning September 1 of the volunteer year and ending on the immediately following August 31. Unless the Volunteer waives coverage (as provided in Section 1.b.), the Volunteer will be provided group health coverage by the JVC through the Christian Brothers Employee Benefit Trust (the "JVC Plan"). Please refer to the JVC Plan outline for details regarding coverage, premiums, etc.
 - a. JVC Plan: JVC will provide group medical and dental coverage for the volunteer beginning September 1, 2015 and ending August 31, 2016 (the "Coverage Period"). Additionally, the JVC will pay or reimburse certain of the Volunteer's deductibles and co-pays up to a total of \$1,500.00 for the Coverage Period, *provided that* the JVC will not pay or reimburse charges for (i) elective procedures, (ii) procedures, services, prescription drugs, etc. that are excluded from coverage under the JVC Plan (i.e., procedures, services, prescription drugs, etc. that are not consistent with the position of the Catholic Church, such as contraception, sterilization, abortion, etc.), (iii) dental procedures after the Volunteer reaches Christian Brothers' Dental Calendar Year Maximum, (iv) other procedures, non- licensed providers, services or prescription drugs that are not covered under the JVC Plan, or (v) pre- existing conditions that are not covered under the JVC Plan. The JVC plan is a PPO plan under which reduced rates are available when the Volunteer uses in-network providers and/or maintenance prescription services to obtain refills for on-going prescriptions. If the Volunteer does not use an in-network provider where available or the maintenance prescription services where required, JVC will reimburse for co-pays, co-insurance and deductibles only up to the amount the Volunteer would have received if he or she had used in-network services and/or maintenance prescription services, as applicable. The Volunteer is responsible for paying any charges not covered by the JVC Plan, or not paid or reimbursed by the JVC. In no event will the total amount paid or reimbursed for the Coverage Period by the JVC with respect to any Volunteer exceed \$1,500.
 - b. Volunteer Plan: The Volunteer may elect to opt out of coverage under the JVC Plan, and continue coverage under another health plan, by signing a waiver declining coverage under the JVC Plan. If the Volunteer opts out of coverage under the JVC Plan, the JVC will not be responsible for paying for or reimbursing the Volunteer for any premium, co-pay, deductible, or any other medical or dental related charges incurred by or on behalf of the Volunteer during the Coverage Period.

2. Payment to JVC for JVC Plan Coverage

The Agency Partner where the volunteer serves (the "Agency") is responsible for paying a fee to JVC

that covers the cost of the Volunteer's group health premium, reimbursements and plan administration fees. JVC invoices the Agency directly.

3. Volunteer's Termination of Service

- a. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection 1.a., the JVC will not be responsible for payment or reimbursement of any deductibles, co-pays or other charges incurred by the Volunteer (i) prior to September 1, 2015, or (ii) after the date on which the Volunteer's service with the JVC ends.
- b. If the Volunteer's service with the JVC ends prior to the end of the Coverage Period, (i) the Volunteer's coverage under the JVC Plan will end on the last day of the month in which the Volunteer's service with the JVC ends, and (ii) JVC will not be responsible for payment or reimbursement of any deductibles, co-pays or any other charges incurred by the Volunteer after the date on which the Volunteer's service with the JVC ends.

4. Continuation of Coverage

The JVC Plan is not subject to federal or state COBRA laws. Therefore, continuation coverage is not mandated and will not be provided for those covered under the JVC Plan at the end of the Volunteer's term of service with the JVC.

JVC Glossary

Agency Administrator: The agency representative who manages the relationship between the agency and JVC. The administrator may or may not be your direct supervisor.

Agency Partner: The organization/school/nonprofit employing a Jesuit Volunteer. Sometimes simply called the “agency.”

Apostolate: A “mission endeavor or activity,” a ministry. Derives from the word apostle and refers to work that is inspired by and tied to the Gospel. While not specific to the Jesuits, it is used in Jesuit circles in reference to one’s work.

Apostolic Community: Apostolic community is a “mission community,” a group of people who live according to Gospel values and support each other spiritually, emotionally, and materially in their common endeavor.

FJV: Former Jesuit Volunteer; someone who previously served as a Jesuit Volunteer. “FJVs” offer support and encouragement to current volunteers and are often vital resources for learning how to live JVC’s four values.

The Four Values: Spirituality, simple living, community, and social justice.

The Jesuits: An order of Catholic priests and brothers, also known as the Society of Jesus, founded by Ignatius of Loyola in 1534. Jesuits support JVC by serving as spiritual liaisons, presenters at retreats, and consultants to staff. JVC incorporates Ignatian spirituality, especially the ideas of “contemplatives in action” and “finding God in all things.”

Local Formation Team: Jesuits, Former Jesuit Volunteers, and others that have been asked by JVC staff to commit to accompanying and mentoring each JV community. The Local Formation Team is typically comprised of two support people and one spiritual liaison. See “*Support People*” and “*Spiritual Liaison*.”

Local Orientation: A continuation of Orientation that occurs in the home city of each volunteer community immediately following Orientation. Agency administrators and FJVs arrange city tours, tours of JV worksite placements, and inform them of local resources (banks, markets, libraries, churches, etc.).

One-with-one: Intentional conversation between two individuals (e.g. program coordinator and volunteer or supervisor and volunteer).

Placement: The specific position or job title of a JV at an agency partner.

Placement Supervisor: The Volunteer’s direct supervisor. S/he is in regular contact with the JVC program staff in regard to the Jesuit Volunteers work and professional growth.

Program Coordinator: A staff member responsible for implementing JVC’s program and outreach, including retreat planning, recruiting, placement development, and local formation. Primary in the program coordinator’s job is outreach to volunteer communities and sponsoring agencies.

Program Director: A staff member who is part of the Leadership Team responsible for the oversight, planning, and development of the full JVC program. The primary responsibility of the program director is to supervise and support the program coordinators in their work with volunteers and agencies.

Social Analysis: Critical evaluation of the social, economic, political, and religious structures which create oppressive situations.

Solidarity: The practice of standing with or accompanying others, of sharing responsibilities, interests and concerns in order to foster greater understanding of the issues, obstacles, and hardships facing others.

Spiritual Liaison: A Jesuit priest or brother, religious woman, or layperson designated by JVC who links communities to the living tradition of St. Ignatius. The liaison is a member of the Local Formation Team.

Support People: Persons, often FJVs, designated by JVC who have agreed to facilitate regular sessions with the volunteer community at the beginning of their year. Support people live near the volunteer community and are available as resources to advise and guide members of the community. Support people are members of the Local Formation Team.



Covenant of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps

Aspiring to create a more just and hopeful world,
the Jesuit Volunteer Corps engages passionate young people in vital service within poor communities,
fostering the growth of leaders committed to faith in action.

With respect to individual freedom and growth, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps is committed to certain common values. We are called to support and challenge one another to grow in the areas of Social Justice, Community, Spirituality, and Simple Living.

As a Jesuit Volunteer, I agree to uphold the following, to the best of my ability:

Social Justice: In order to work for justice we must become aware of our role in society. We are called to challenge attitudes and structures, both personal and societal, which create poverty and oppression.

- I will labor in a spirit of solidarity with the poor and marginalized toward the goal of personal and structural change that promotes the dignity of all.
- I will strive to be just in my thoughts, language, and actions so that my work for justice will have credibility.
- I will embrace the commitment of JVC to engage in anti-racism work which seeks to recognize and stop perpetuating racial injustices.
- I will actively seek to know the truth of situations, rather than relying on prejudices, assumptions, rumor, and incomplete information.
- I will honor my commitment to work at my agency for a full year.

Community: Communal life allows for mutual support and encouragement of each other in our work and in living out the four values. It challenges us to be open, compassionate, and willing to grow. We learn that our lives are interconnected and that we have responsibility toward all members as they do to us.

- I will be open and honest with my community members, willing to share my joys and struggles, and listen with care to the experiences they share.
- I will participate fully in community activities, including but not limited to Community Nights, meetings, shared meals, and reflection.
- I will evaluate my behavior and decisions in light of their effects on my community, the agency and locale where I serve, and the JVC program. I will not make decisions affecting my community, the agency where I serve, or JVC without appropriate consultation.

- I will commit to the numerous communities I am part of – households, neighborhood, and city. I will work to gain a greater understanding of these communities throughout the year.
- Recognizing I am part of a larger JVC community, I will regularly communicate my needs, concerns, and joys with the JVC program staff and local formation teams.

Spirituality: Spirituality is both the awareness of and our reaction to God’s presence in the world. JVC is rooted in the Catholic, Jesuit tradition and invites volunteers to explore and deepen their relationship with God and their spiritual lives, both individually and communally. The Ignatian emphasis on being “contemplatives in action” guides us on the journey.

- I will regularly spend time in personal reflection or prayer in order to grow in my relationships with God and others.
- I will attend all weekly Spirituality Nights and other community times of prayer or reflection, by contributing my own gifts and cherishing the gifts of others.
- I will participate fully in JVC retreats and formation opportunities, by being on time, following all policies set in place, and being wholly present to the larger JVC community of volunteers.

Simple Living: Honoring simplicity allows us to free ourselves from that which keeps us separated from others and commit to a life focused on people, not possessions. Commitment to a simple, sustainable lifestyle contributes to the flourishing of all humanity and all of God’s creation. As a sign of solidarity with those in my communities, I will live on the JVC stipend of room and board, in addition to my personal monthly stipend. I will not accept funds from family and friends, work second jobs, or seek other sources to supplement this amount.

- I will strive to live life focused on people and relationships, rather than objects and acquisitions.
- I will seek simplicity in my use of time, energy, and resources, and thereby avoid distraction, busyness, and materialism.
- I will socialize and recreate in ways that emphasize creation over consumption. I agree to continually reflect on and thoughtfully limit my use of objects and technology, such as cars, TVs, DVDs, cell phones, computers, social media, and other electronic devices or gaming equipment, as well as other products of popular culture in the U.S.
- I will consider the toll alcohol takes on the people I serve when making decisions about alcohol. Aware of the personal, social, and economic costs of illegal drug use in under-resourced neighborhoods, I will not use illegal substances during my JVC year.
- I will reflect on economic privilege and the power it affords individuals in an effort to understand the impact of my actions in this world and in an attempt to lead a simpler life.

I have carefully read the above covenant and, in a spirit of solidarity with other volunteers, I enter into this year-long commitment.



I, _____, have read the
2015-2016 Jesuit Volunteer Handbook and agree to uphold the Covenant
and all aspects of the formation
program for the full year of JVC.

SIGNATURE

DATE

JVC City

Community Name

Please sign and return this page to your program coordinator. Keep the JVC Handbook for reference throughout the year.