

Good Shepherd Volunteers Handbook



Embrace the World!

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I. GSV Mission Statement

Good Shepherd Volunteers collaborates with the Sisters of the Good Shepherd to provide full-time volunteers with the opportunity to work in social service ministries and to use their God-given talents serving women, adolescents, and children affected by poverty, violence, and neglect. Developing relationships with the marginalized of our world empowers volunteers to grow in knowledge and faith that inspire them to lead lives seeking justice.

II. Program Philosophy/Tenets

During their time of service, volunteers focus on the four tenets of Social Justice, Community, Simplicity, and Spirituality.

Social Justice: Volunteers have the opportunity to better understand the realities of poverty in our community and world through developing relationships with those they serve. Through increased knowledge and understanding of systemic challenges, volunteers will be a voice for positive change in our world.

Community: Volunteers live in an intentional community where they provide support to one another, share their experiences of service, and commit to building open and honest relationships. Volunteers work together to set community goals and challenge one another to live a life of simplicity in solidarity with those they serve.

Simplicity: Through personal commitment and creative use of resources, volunteers have the opportunity to develop a lifestyle that is socially and economically responsible. Volunteers may challenge one another to redefine their needs and live a conscientious lifestyle.

Spirituality: Volunteers have the opportunity to enhance their spirituality through reflection and action throughout their service experience. Through retreats, community reflection and other gatherings, volunteers can challenge themselves to put their faith into action.

III. History of Good Shepherd Volunteers

The congregation of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd was founded in France in 1835 by St. Mary Euphrasia and has grown into an international religious community, living and working in sixty-seven countries. St. Mary Euphrasia knew the pain and brokenness of humanity. Her vision was of human wholeness and insight into the dignity and worth of each person. This vision and insight inspires the worldwide efforts of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd mission today that extends mercy and care to people suffering injustice, oppression and alienation. Their spirit of reconciliation seeks to heal broken relationships and promote peace and justice despite the many conflicts in our worldwide community.

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd collaborates with a variety of professionals and those who share their values and commitment to uphold the dignity of each person. In this work, the sisters and volunteers have the opportunity to express their faith and spirituality through action while sharing in the compassion and care of those most in need.

In this spirit, Good Shepherd Volunteers (GSV) was established in 1992 to invite lay volunteers to share in the charism of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd by working in social service programs in the United States

founded and/or managed by them. From its early stages Good Shepherd Volunteers has been international, attracting volunteers from Europe and Africa. In 1996, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd challenged themselves to “make full use of our internationality. . . by networking with local, national, and international interfaith organizations in order to influence and change structures that create an ever-widening gap between the poor and rich.” With the support and encouragement of the congregation, Good Shepherd Volunteers extended its outreach to Paraguay, and later to other countries in Latin America. Today, Good Shepherd Volunteers collaborates with sisters and lay collaborators in the U.S., South America, and Asia.

The growth of GSV has responded to St. Mary Euphrasia’s call to “embrace the world” and assist women, adolescents, and children most in need. Collaborating with lay people to provide community care and outreach around the world strengthens the sisters’ mission and identity. Today, GSV has over 200 alumni throughout the U.S. and overseas. Many GSV alumni continue to share in the charism of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd through work in Good Shepherd-sponsored programs and in the fields of social work, education, and advocacy.

IV. Criteria and Responsibilities for Placement Agencies

Good Shepherd volunteers are placed in agencies either founded or sponsored by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, or by agencies that employ one or more members of the congregation.

Good Shepherd volunteers are not meant to be permanent staff at an organization. Because GSV does not guarantee the return of a volunteer in subsequent years, organizations are expected to have a working plan to staff the position without volunteer assistance.

Agency Financial Guidelines

Housing:

The agency (or agencies) must provide volunteers with appropriate housing and simple furnishings. The volunteers live in an intentional community and living expenses are shared equally by agencies. Housing should be simple and preferably located near the people served. It is to be safe, secure, and ready for occupancy when the GS volunteers arrive at the end of August orientation.

Rent:

Rent varies by living site; each agency pays an equal share of the rent based upon the number of volunteers working at agency. If all volunteers work at the same agency, the full cost of rent is allocated to the host agency.

Utilities:

All utility expenses must be covered by the agency. This includes: electricity, heat, water, local telephone charges, etc. Each agency will pay an equal share of the utility costs based upon number of volunteers serving at given agency.

Volunteer Compensation:

Stipend and Transportation

The agency is responsible for paying the stipend, transportation, and health/dental benefits while the volunteer is working at an agency site. Each month, the volunteer should receive a total of **\$200**: \$100 for food and \$100 for personal stipend.

All work related transportation costs are the responsibility of the agency. If the volunteer needs a car for her/his position, the agency must supply a car to the volunteer for work-related transportation; in addition, the agency is responsible for car insurance. In situations where the volunteers will use public transportation, the volunteers should be given the means, in addition to the stipend and food allowance, to cover the cost of their monthly commuter transportation card.

If a volunteer asks to use an agency vehicle for personal use, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to cover gas and toll expenses associated with his/her travel.

Health and Dental Insurance

The agency is to provide health insurance to cover the volunteer from the beginning of orientation, usually the 3rd or 4th week of August through August 31st of the following year. **The agency is responsible for all medical costs, including co-pays and prescriptions.** The volunteer should use only in-network physicians unless a medical professional deems otherwise. At the agency's orientation, the volunteer is to receive and complete medical insurance forms. **If for any reason a volunteer is denied health care coverage by the health insurance provider named by the placement agency (i.e. based on a pre-existing condition), the volunteer will be responsible for determining/finding another viable health insurance plan.**

The GSV office must be informed of the plans under which the volunteer is insured. If a volunteer chooses to remain on his/her previous (or family's) insurance plan, the placement agency must reimburse the volunteer for the co-payments and prescription costs associated with any medical care received, not to exceed the reimbursement allotted by the agency's own insurance plan. The volunteer themselves (or their family) are responsible for any medical expenses exceeding these costs, and they are also responsible for the premium of their own insurance plan.

It is the responsibility of the agency to assist, when possible, the volunteer in finding the proper in-network care for any health or dental needs. Any out-of-network services must receive prior approval from the placement agency supervisor and the GSV office.

If the volunteer requires out-of-network health or dental care which would cause heavy financial burdens, the GSV Director needs to be informed immediately, and if possible, prior to any health or dental appointments where these costs would be incurred.

Health and dental insurance is covered in most cases. However, exorbitant costs, costs for significant dental work while in (volunteer) service, or costs related to a chronic or pre-existing condition must be discussed with the GSV Director and the placement agency supervisor/human resources personnel. Expenses may be shared with the volunteers, as **the agency will not be responsible for all such costs.**

Vision insurance is not required by GSV. Vision coverage may vary; some agencies may offer vision coverage, while others do not.

In the case of any pre-existing health condition, mental health need, or dental consideration that is not covered by a site's medical plan, which requires prescriptive medicine, surgery, or any other form of care and **that was not made known to the placement agency prior to the beginning of the year of service,** the

placement agency is not responsible for the costs of the health or dental care, procedures, prescription(s) or appointments.

Taxes and additional benefits

The agency is not required to pay FICA taxes or offer additional benefits such as life insurance, long-term disability insurance, etc. to the volunteer as the volunteer is contracted on a volunteer and a limited basis (i.e. for one year). **GSV recommends that the placement agency have adequate liability coverage to ensure that a volunteer will have access to benefits if injured or harmed in the workplace.** GSV also recommends that the agency consult with its human resources professionals and/or insurance representatives to provide adequate compensation for the volunteers in addition to the stipend, transportation and health/dental benefits.

If the agency chooses to pay into FICA or additional benefits, the agency must tax the individual volunteer so that he/she receives \$200 a month (as mentioned above) after any deductions are withheld.

For more information, please consult the Department of Labor website at www.dol.gov and the state where the agency resides regarding compensation of volunteers. In addition, specific information regarding compensation of volunteers can be found below. Please refer to the Code of Federal Regulation, Section 553.106, for more information.

“...Volunteers may be paid expenses, reasonable benefits, a nominal fee, or any combination thereof, for their service without losing their status as volunteers. (b) An individual who performs hours of service as a volunteer for a public agency may receive payment for expenses without being deemed an employee for purposes of the FLSA....(c) Individuals do not lose their status as volunteers because they are reimbursed for tuition, transportation and meal costs involved in their attending classes intended to teach them to perform efficiently the services they provide or will provide as volunteers. Likewise, the volunteer status of such individuals is not lost if they are provided books, supplies, or other materials essential to their volunteer training or reimbursement for the cost thereof. (d) Individuals do not lose their volunteer status if they are provided reasonable benefits by a public agency for whom they perform volunteer services. Benefits would be considered reasonable, for example, when they involve inclusion of individual volunteers in group insurance plans (such as liability, health, life, disability, workers' compensation) or pension plans or “length of service” awards, commonly or traditionally provided to volunteers of State and local government agencies, which meet the additional test in paragraph (f) of this section...”

This text taken from the Department of Labor website:

http://www.dol.gov/dol/allcfr/Title_29/Part_553/29CFR553.106.htm

AmeriCorps Program

Good Shepherd Volunteers offers the AmeriCorps Education Award at some of our placements. Eligible members will receive an educational award stipend that they can use toward future education and/or paying student loans.

Additional Travel:

GS volunteers are responsible for travel costs to the GSV orientation. The agency is responsible for travel costs from orientation to the city of the agency and back home at the end of the year of service. In addition, host agencies are to cover travel costs to the three GSV retreat weekends and to the re-orientation at the

end of the year. If this is not geographically possible, alternative retreat opportunities need to be provided for by the agency in consultation with the GSV staff.

Relocation Expenses upon completion of service commitment:

The placement agency will be responsible for covering the costs of the volunteer's transportation home upon successful completion of the service commitment from the GSV Re-Orientation. For example, if a volunteer is returning home and requires a flight, the agency will reimburse the volunteer for a one-way or round-trip ticket home (depending on what is more affordable). If the volunteer is not returning home and will remain in the area where he/she serves, the agency will be responsible for offering a flat fee, not to exceed \$250 to assist the volunteer with his/her relocation expenses. If the volunteer will be using his/her own vehicle to return home, the agency will be responsible for gas and toll expenses and the volunteer must submit receipts for those expenses in accordance with the agency accepted policy.

Good Shepherd volunteers who are non-US citizens will receive a maximum of \$500 toward return flight home; and Good Shepherd volunteers who are US citizens will receive a maximum of \$375 for a return flight home.

Administrative Fee:

Placement agencies are assessed an administrative fee for each GS volunteer to cover recruiting, screening, placing, and preparing GS volunteers for service. The administrative fee is payable to Good Shepherd Volunteers by September 30th.

Agency Professional Guidelines

The GSV staff will recruit, screen, interview and recommend a volunteer for a placement site. Upon review of the volunteer's application, the agency supervisor will interview the candidate. The GSV staff will follow up with the supervisor and the candidate to ensure appropriate placement of the candidate.

Position Description

Each volunteer is to have a written position description with clearly defined expectations, responsibilities, and hours. The position description should cover a twelve-month period. Agencies that have years which end earlier (such as schools) should have concrete suggestions for summer work for the volunteer, and are expected to pay expenses for the volunteer through the summer.

Orientation

The agency and or work site should provide the volunteer with a local orientation upon his/her arrival. This should include sharing the philosophy and goals of the agency/program with the volunteer, introducing the volunteer to the rest of the staff, and introducing the resources and services available in the area that relates to the volunteer's work.

Supervision (please see further explanation under GSV Site Supervisor Guidelines below)

The volunteer must have a supervisor at the placement site. The supervisor must schedule regular meetings with the volunteer to provide ongoing opportunities for the volunteer to learn and develop skills. The supervisor is expected to connect with the GSV staff regularly.

Evaluation

The supervisor is expected to complete a written evaluation of the volunteer after the first 3 months of work experience. GSV will perform site visits within the first 3-4 months of the volunteer's commitment to ensure adequate adaptation, troubleshoot challenges, and work with the supervisor and volunteer to devise goals for the volunteer's progress. At the completion of the volunteer's service, the supervisor is responsible for a final evaluation.

Work Schedule, Vacation, Sick Time

The Good Shepherd volunteers' work schedule should be a typical 35-40 hour work week, following the general schedule of agency's employed professionals. The work week should not exceed 40 hours in a given week. If a volunteer is asked to work over these allotted hours, s/he must be compensated for the time to prevent burn out and early termination. The volunteer should be given time for personal and community needs. Volunteers must be able to make a weekly commitment to a night at home for "community night."

GSV may ask agencies to conform work schedules to certain hours. In addition, GSV may request assistance of the volunteer for recruitment opportunities or other events sponsored by the GSV office. These instances will be planned out well in advance and discussed with all site supervisors.

If a volunteer feels that s/he is working too many/too few hours, it is the volunteer's responsibility to advocate for him/herself by speaking with his/her supervisor.

Each Good Shepherd volunteer will be given a two-week vacation that does not need to be accrued. If the agency follows an alternative calendar (such as a school calendar), the volunteer will be allowed to use school breaks as vacation time. The volunteer must communicate with his/her supervisor to arrange a vacation that is acceptable to both the placement agency and Good Shepherd volunteer. The volunteer does not accrue sick time, but should be given sick time as needed. If the volunteer becomes gravely ill, or the volunteer takes inappropriate advantage of using sick days, the GSV staff must be contacted immediately.

Educational Offerings and Retreats

Agencies are expected to allow time for the volunteers to attend retreats and other GSV related gatherings. It will be necessary for the volunteers to take all Fridays before retreat weekends off for travel time to the retreats, which occurs four to five times per year. Time that the volunteer needs in order to attend GSV sponsored events is *not* to be considered vacation time. Volunteers will need to utilize an agency vehicle to attend these retreats, and must be responsible for signing out any cars or vans well in advance of retreats. The placement agency may be asked to cover travel related costs for volunteers to attend additional GSV gatherings throughout the year as the retreats are intended to help the volunteer's growth and development throughout the year of service.

In addition to retreats, the GSV program will periodically host events that the volunteers are encouraged to attend. One or two of these events may be day-long events. In such instances, the agency is asked to be flexible in shifting the volunteer's schedule.

Mental Health and/or Spiritual Health Resources

GSV encourages volunteers to take advantage of resources for mental and/or spiritual wellness that are made available to them. Some agencies have free counseling resources or free spiritual direction resources. Agencies are *not* required to offer these services to their volunteers, but in the case that they do have something available, we ask that the agency share this information with the volunteers.

GSV Site Supervisor Guidelines

The role of the Site Supervisor is **essential** in enabling the Good Shepherd volunteer to deliver the best possible service to clients in Good Shepherd agencies. Through supervision the volunteer can acquire the skills needed for better work performance and for his/her own professional learning and growth. It is expected that the Site Supervisor will provide the volunteer with supervision appropriate for a beginning worker in the human services field. This would include the following:

- An orientation and training program that will provide the volunteer with a sense of the agency's commitment to its mission and clients. The program should include the following: the agency's policies and philosophy; overview of persons and/or structures with whom the volunteer will be working; initial skills needed to perform his/her work; and the resources and agencies in the community.
- A working agreement, which should be mutually formed by the supervisor and volunteer regarding the conditions of their relationship, i.e., specify frequency and duration of supervisory meetings along with the content and process for evaluation. We recommend that supervisory sessions be held weekly and touch on administrative, educational, and supportive needs that the both the volunteer and the agency/program have. Administrative: ensuring the volunteer has acknowledge of administrative tasks and structure necessary to complete appropriate responsibilities; Educational: training the volunteer to meet work-related learning needs; Supportive: helping the volunteer deal with work-related stress while developing attitudes and feelings conducive to maximum work performance.
- A written evaluation of volunteer's work performance. These evaluations should be based on clearly defined criteria of the volunteer's work, e.g.: practical skills and service outcomes. It is suggested evaluations take place after three-four months and within the last month of service completion. Each evaluation will be signed by the volunteer and his/her supervisor and returned to the GSV office to be kept on file.

GSV views supervision as **critical** to the success of the volunteer's placement. We also expect the supervisor to function in an appropriate role as mediator in the workplace when necessary. We encourage the supervisor to get to know the volunteer's commitment to GSV and his/her interest and desire to embody the four tenets of the program: the conviction to work for **social justice**, the desire to live in an intentional **community**, the dedication to living a **simple lifestyle**, and the commitment to grow **spiritually**.

V. Responsibilities of the Volunteer

All Good Shepherd volunteers are expected to, at all times, demonstrate mutual respect towards others, and act in a manner which is compatible with the values promoted by GSV. GSV reserves the right to dismiss the volunteer from GSV if, in the opinion of the director, the volunteer's conduct undermines the effectiveness of the program, site placement, or community to which the volunteer is assigned.

Volunteers should enter into the GSV experience interested in exploring the four tenets of social justice, community, simplicity, and spirituality (please see Section II above). Volunteers should be committed to open dialogue with their community members, working out conflicts, and being open to compromise.

Volunteers will also be expected to plan and implement one community night and one spirituality night each week at a mutually designated time in each week and/or month, throughout the duration of their commitment to GSV. These evenings of reflection and discussion are intended to build community, openness and trust, and provide an outlet for sharing individual experiences of working with women, adolescents, and children in need.

Responsibility for Self Disclosure

During the application process, the applicant must disclose any medical information that may affect his/her term of service *prior* to placement in an agency.

In the case of a pre-existing medical condition, mental health need, or dental consideration that is not covered by a site's medical plan, and that was not made known to the placement agency prior to the beginning of the year of service, which requires prescriptive medicine, surgery, or any other form of care, the volunteer is responsible for the costs of the prescription(s) or appointments.

Stipend, Health Coverage, Mental Health Needs

Each agency that accepts a volunteer will be responsible for covering the volunteer's stipend, health/dental insurance, and transportation. Please see pages 2-6 above to learn more about the agency's commitment to the volunteer.

If the volunteer is feeling emotionally/mentally overwhelmed at any point in his/her experience and feels that professional counseling or mental health care would be beneficial, he/she is encouraged to contact the health insurance company, site supervisor, or GSV staff to discuss what resources may be available.

The volunteer's conduct and lifestyle are expected to reflect the mission of GSV and each volunteer is expected **to live within the stipend allocated each month** (\$200 total for food and personal items). The volunteer communities must pool their resources for food and household expenses each month. All Good Shepherd volunteers are expected to remain within the boundaries of the stipend provided for them by their placement agencies for the duration of their volunteer tenure. Volunteers are expected to notify their supervisors and GSV staff if they receive any additional funds (beyond their stipend) from the agency.

Appropriate Relationships and Boundaries

Good Shepherd Volunteers requires its volunteers to maintain professional and ethical boundaries in all dealings and interactions with participants both at the service site and outside of work. Good Shepherd Volunteers prohibits volunteers from engaging in any type of dating and/or sexual/intimate relationship with participants in Good Shepherd clinical, counseling, and other programs. Such involvements interfere with service delivery and are considered serious conflicts of interest.

Additional Work and Continued Education

Salaried part-time jobs and additional education, aside from supervisor-approved trainings to aid the volunteer in his/her placement, are not permitted.

Pets

Pets are not permitted in Good Shepherd volunteer communities.

Personal Belongings

The volunteers are responsible to secure their personal items. GSV is not liable for loss, theft, or damage of personal items. Volunteers should be mindful of living a simple lifestyle when packing and bringing belongings into their new communities.

Honoring a Year Commitment

All Good Shepherd volunteers are expected to commit to GSV for the *full duration* of the program, which is from Orientation to Re-Orientation.

Loan Deferment/Forbearance

All Good Shepherd volunteers eligible for the Americorps Education Award through the Corporation for National Service will fill out loan deferment/forbearance forms at orientation. It is the volunteer's responsibility to know his/her lender's information and have appropriate documentation prepared for orientation. If a volunteer is not eligible for the Americorps Education Award and would like to defer his/her loans, he/she is responsible for all paperwork involved and must inform GSV staff **before** orientation about any steps need to be taken by GSV to assist in the deferment.

GSV Program Assistance

Volunteers are asked in different points of the year to be involved in developing and sustaining GSV as an organization. This includes sharing one's story of his/her work on the GSV website, helping GSV staff with envelope-stuffing events (for NYC volunteers only), contributing to a newsletter, speaking with applicants to GSV via phone or email, occasionally writing postcards to potential volunteers, and/or hosting visiting college student groups who are on service trips. GSV staff works with volunteers to ensure that these tasks are not overwhelming and fit into the overall schedule and commitment of the volunteers.

V. Additional GSV Policies and Procedures

Early Termination

GSV staff retains the right to release a volunteer from his/her term of service at any time. If a volunteer chooses to leave GSV prior to Re-Orientation, whether by the volunteer's initiative, the site placement's initiative, or GSV staff's initiative, the volunteer forfeits their entitlement to Loan Deferment/Forbearance status and to the right of the Americorps Education Award, if applicable. **Two weeks notice must be given to all parties involved prior to termination.**

The volunteer is responsible for notifying GSV staff of anticipated situations that significantly change at work or in community that would result in an early termination.

In the case where the volunteer is considering leaving their placement agency and the GSV program at any time prior to the completion of the service year, the volunteer must first discuss this with GSV staff and his/her agency supervisor, and as stated above, provide two weeks notice. The volunteer is expected to discuss and explore any and all ways of improving or resolving the existing situation prior to termination. If the volunteer does choose to leave the placement and GSV program, he/she forfeits all entitlement to the relocation reimbursements as described in the Section IV.

In the case where the volunteer is terminated by the placement agency, the agency will be responsible for transportation costs for relocating the volunteer in accordance with the "Relocation Expenses" guidelines provided within section III. The agency is additionally responsible for providing the volunteer with their full stipend until the effective termination date.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Pursuant to the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, volunteers are prohibited from unlawfully manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing or using a controlled substance.

As further required under the Drug-Free Workplace Act, a volunteer, as a condition of employment with GSV, must notify GSV if he or she is convicted of any criminal drug statute violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after the conviction.

Consumption of alcoholic beverages on the site placement property is prohibited.

Unlawful manufacturing, distribution, dispensing, possession, use of a controlled substance, or excessive use of alcohol, that may adversely affect a volunteer's site placement performance or participation in community life, or that may reflect unfavorably upon public or governmental confidence in the manner in which GSV carries out its activities is strictly prohibited. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination from GSV.

Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment Policy

Good Shepherd Volunteers does not discriminate in the selection and participation of members based on race, color, religion, sexual orientation, military discharge, sex, national origin, age, disability, medical information or any other characteristic unrelated to the ability to perform the essential functions or basic tenets of GSV.

Any member with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in their service site is encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor, superior, or GSV staff. If the service site is found to be engaging in such activities, removal of current member(s), and denial of future members at that service site, can result.

Good Shepherd Volunteers is committed to providing a safe work and community environment that is free of sexual harassment for all volunteers. Sexual harassment occurs when a person makes continued, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, to another person, against his or her wishes. Any incident of sexual harassment at a volunteer's placement is unacceptable and should be immediately reported through proper channels at the workplace and to the GSV staff. The GSV staff should be immediately informed if an incident of sexual harassment has occurred in community or at a GSV sponsored event. Any substantiated allegations of sexual harassment can result in the offender's expulsion from the program.

Reasonable Accommodation Policy

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

Programs and activities must be accessible to persons with disabilities, and the grantee must provide reasonable accommodation to the known mental or physical disabilities of otherwise qualified members, service recipients, applicants and program staff. All selections and project assignments must be made without regard to the need to provide reasonable accommodation.

Accommodations that impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the operation of the program or fundamentally alter its nature are not reasonable accommodations. However, the program must document and prove any undue burden. Similarly, a person who poses a direct threat to the health or safety to himself or herself or to others, where the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation, is not a qualified individual with a disability.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

Good Shepherd Volunteer has a grievance procedure which is intended to apply to service-related issues, such as assignments, evaluations, suspensions, or release for cause. Whenever possible, members are encouraged to resolve the matter informally with the other party in question and/or the Good Shepherd Volunteers program. If informal resolution is not possible, volunteers may take the following steps in the grievance process:

1) Statement of grievance

The volunteer must set out the grievance in writing and send it to the program.

2) Meeting

The program will invite the volunteer to attend a meeting to discuss the grievance. The meeting must not take place unless:

- the volunteer has informed the employer in writing of the grievance
- the program has had a reasonable opportunity to consider a response.

The volunteer must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.

The program must inform the volunteer of their response to the grievance and notify him/her of the right to appeal against the decision if he/she is not satisfied with it.

3) Appeal

If the volunteer wishes to appeal the program's decision, he/she must inform the program. The program must then invite him/her to attend a further meeting. The volunteer must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. After the appeal meeting, the program must inform the employee of their final decision.

Good Shepherd Volunteers who are participating in the AmeriCorps Educational Awards Program may also contact the AmeriCorps CVN-AEAP staff for informal complaints or concerns at 301-270-0900.