



**BJCC**  
**Volunteer**  
**Handbook**

## ***Welcome....***

*We are thrilled to have you as a Bronx Jewish Community Council Volunteer. You are now part of a unique group of people dedicated to helping our organization meet the socialization and concrete needs of our clients and improving the quality of life for the elderly and homebound, isolated and needy in the Bronx J community.*

## ***Your contributions will....***

- \* Enrich the often lonely and isolated life of an elderly or homebound*
- \* Serve as a link between a Friend at home and the Jewish community.*
- \* Enable you to perform acts of chesed.*
- \* Afford you the special opportunity to share the history and wisdom of an elderly or homebound person.*
- Use your skills to assist our agency to help those in need throughout the borough*

*In order that your work brings you the greatest satisfaction and our agency the greatest value of the greatest value, we ask that you read this Guide carefully.*

## **THE VOLUNTEER**

*It is not enough to merely exist. It is not enough to say  
"I am earning enough to live and support my family; I am a good mother, a good  
father, a good husband, a good wife."  
That's all well – but you must do something more.  
Seek always to do some good somewhere.  
Every man has to seek his own way.  
You must give some time to your fellow man.  
Do something for those who have a need of man's help....  
Something for which you get no pay, but the privilege of doing it.  
For remember you do not live in a world all of your own....  
Your brothers and sisters are here too.*

**Dr. Albert Schweitzer**

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#### **Section 1 Visiting and Escort**

##### **Who are Friendly Visitors?**

*Visitors* are volunteer men, women, seniors, teens, children and families. They are people who want to show they care about others. They are peopling who like people. They give gifts of their time to an elderly person or someone who might lonely or have difficulty leaving his/her home without assistance.

##### **Who are Friends at Home?**

*Friends at Home* are men and women who are mostly confined to their homes. They are isolated. They may be elderly, disabled or frail. As a result of limited mobility they are unable to continue their daily lives as they may have in the past. In addition to their physical isolation, they may also feel emotionally isolated because of the loss of independence.

##### **The BJCC Staff Support System for Volunteers**

If you need assistance with your visit any time of the day or night, you can contact either the *Volunteer Coordinator* or the *Supervisor* who made the referral for your Friend at Home. You will be provided both of these numbers when you are assigned your special Friend *at Home*.

##### **Tell Me More About The Elderly And Homebound.**

Older and homebound people have the same needs as everyone else. They need to be stimulated, have opportunities to be creative and to form and to maintain friendships. They need to feel secure while maintaining their self-respect and independence.

Many older and homebound people have been forced to adjust to dramatic changes in their lives. They may have suffered tremendous losses. These losses often include the death of a spouse, child, other family member, or dear friend, a change in physical function, the loss of employment, income or influence in the family and workplace.

If you understand these factors and respond with sensitivity, you will be a great help to your *Friend at Home*. You will also learn how to prepare yourself for you own aging and how to recognize and eliminate stereotypes about the aged.

Of course, you may also visit a person who has easily adjusted to growing old or frail and does not present any problem of this nature for you. In either case, you can expect that in a short time, your visits will benefit you as much as your *Friend at Home*.

## **A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR THE ELDERLY AND HOMEBOUND**

*The right to be treated as a person*

*The right to be treated as an adult*

*The right to have our say about our own life*

*The right to have a fair chance on our own merits*

*The right to have fun and companionship*

*The right to a future*

*The right to be romantic*

*The right to help in becoming interesting to ones self*

*The right to professional help when necessary*

*The right to be old*

**George Lawton  
“Aging Successfully”**

Dr. Albert Schweitzer

## **QUALIFICATION OF THE FRIENDLY VISITOR**

**Understanding:** You need to develop an understanding of the elderly or homebound person and their issues.

**Patience:** Be patient. Allow your *Friend at Home* the chance to handle the challenges. Stepping in too quickly robs your friend of dignity and independence.

**Tact:** Never dwell on limitations; only help when needed.

**Tolerance:** Do not be offended by someone's irritability. Allow for frustration, anxiety and anger.

**Dependability:** Disappointments are disabling. Be careful not to make promises you cannot keep. If your plans must change, keep your *Friend* informed.

**Honesty:** Admit mistakes. Never be afraid to admit what you do not know.

**Humility:** Be willing to learn and to accept criticism with an open mind.

## **Responsibilities**

**You are your *Friend's* link to the outside world.**

**You are also the BJCC's link to your Friend who has requested your visit.**

**Therefore, when you accept this responsibility you are undertaking a dual role: One, to your *Friend at Home*, and the other to the BJCC, an organization committed to providing the best possible care to the homebound and elderly.**

**Once you are assigned a *Friend*, you undertake the following responsibilities to yourself, the person you visit and to the BJCC.**

- 1. To remain a Friendly visitor for at least one year.**
- 2. To complete and submit (by fax or mail) a very brief monthly Visitor Form to the BJCC staff Supervisor after your visit. (Your form allows the BJCC to better meet the needs of your Friend)**

## **DO'S FOR A FRIENDLY VISITOR**

1. Listen and be responsive even if the same story is told repeatedly. Listening and acting interested is one of the most important things you can do. It reinforces the self-worth of a person.
2. Read aloud, if your *Friend* is interested.
3. Talk about the news of the day, to discover your *Friend's* interests and to keep him/her up to date on world events.
4. Help your friend to write letters.
5. Develop new interests, such as making a scrapbook, growing plants, knitting, drawing, listening to music, watching TV, getting involved in politics and community interests that you can share.
6. Help to revive old interests, talents and hobbies.
7. Bring objects from the outside world, such as flowers, plant cuttings, a news article or magazines.
8. Play games such as checkers, Scrabble, card games or crossword puzzles.
9. Admire and give importance to the possessions and person of your *Friend*.
10. Encourage pride in personal appearance by observing and noting his/style of dress.
11. Admire and give importance to the possessions and person of your Friend.
12. Plan projects together—perhaps going for a walk or shopping.
13. Surprise your *Friend* now and again, but remember an older person may not be adapted to big surprises.
14. Learn about you *Friend's* family and friends. You may be able to restore old contacts.
15. Keep personal information about your friend confidential. His/her daily life should not be a subject at your dinner table.
16. Stay alerted to the attention span of your *Friend*. A sense of time is sometimes clouded and fatigue may set in rather quickly in some elderly people. Know when it is time to leave.
17. Enjoy you visit. Cheerfulness is almost always contagious: your visit may very well be the high point of someone's week.

## **DON'TS FOR A FRIENDLY VISITOR**

1. Do not **be condescending or patronizing.**
2. Do not **bring your own problems** to your visit.
3. Do not be **evaluative.**
4. Do not **engage in arguments.** Avoid controversy.
5. Do not **make promises you cannot keep.**
6. Do not **become discouraged too quickly**—give it a good try.
7. Do not **advise your *Friend* on business, medical or legal matters without the advice of a BJCC staff person.**
8. Do not **administer medicine.**  
Do not **tire an older or frail person.** Know **when it is time to leave.**
9. Do not **push your Friend into an activity.** Encouragement is fine, but timing is important.

## **ESCORT SERVICES**

Our clients often need a person to escort them to medical appointments, to the grocery store or to an errand at the drugstore or post office. Volunteers are needed during daytime hours and a volunteer with access to a car is especially helpful. Otherwise, the BJCC can arrange for a car service paid for the Department of Aging or a taxi if the client can afford it.

## **READY, SET, VISIT**

**The *Volunteer Coordinator* will have either met or telephoned you to assign a *Friend at Home*. You will be given a brief history of the person you are about to visit.** This will include any health limitations the person may have, a description of the person's functionality, hobbies and goals, as well as information concerning BJCC's services and information on how to contact the *Supervisor* assigned to your Friend

**When you first meet your *Friend at Home*,** shake hands gently or touch in some way. Many people use a handshake to gain a first impression. It will also bring you physically closer to you *Friend*.

**Many of our *Friends* will prefer using their first names; however some older people may prefer more formality.** Be sensitive to this.

**At first you may feel** awkward, but not any more than your *Friend*. **Initiate conversation.** Begin with a compliment. Admire a shirt, sweater or hairdo. Comment on a possession, photo or piece of furniture. Something you notice is probably a cherished memento.

**Bring something from the outside world.** Talk about something currently in the news, but do not be too dismal. Bring some good news to your *Friend*, maybe something wonderful that has happened recently in your life.

**Your *Friend* may be very protective** of friends, family or the memory of loved ones. Never push. **As you get to know each other better,** your *Friend* may be willing to share more with you.

**Make lots of eye contact!** Many elderly or disabled people may have difficulty hearing. Observing your face will make conversation easier. **Speak slowly and distinctly. Move closer if your *Friend* is have any difficulty understanding you. Avoid shouting.**

**Ask questions that require more than one word answers.** Shyness may span all generations. **Be a good listener.** There will probably be some **wonderful stories waiting to be heard. Remember the names** that are mentioned. **Be attentive, alert, respect confidences and privacy.**

**Set a date for your next visit before you leave or schedule a time to call to set up your next visit. Do not make unrealistic promises!**

**Know when to end your visit.** Watch for signs of fatigue, failing concentration or restlessness. **A short visit may do just as well as a longer one.**

**If there is a reason that you do not wish to continue visiting this particular *Friend*,** please contact the volunteer Coordinator at the number proved on you Assignment sheet.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY!**

BJCC guarantees all of its clients' confidentiality. **Your *Friend at Home*'s address, phone number, needs and services are all confidential. Never share specifics** about your *Friend at Home* with friends, acquaintances or coworkers. You will be excited about your new *Friend* and will want to tell your friends and family all about him/her. Our policy of confidentiality forbids this. Rather, **channel your own enthusiasm to encourage others to volunteer as a *Friendly Visitor* themselves. \*\*\*\*You will find a confidentiality Form to sign in Section 3 (the Forms section of this guide**

### **GIFTS AND MONEY**

**Under no circumstances may you solicit or accept money from you *Friend at Home*.**

If your *Friend at Home* needs you to shop for him/her, **make certain that she/he is fully aware of the amount of money you have been given and the exact change that you are returning. Also0 make certain that your *Friend at Home* is aware of the price of every item you have purchased.** This is for your own protection.

**Your *Friend at Home* may wish to give you something.** Discourage this by emphasizing that the time you spend together is gift enough. However, every situation is unique. If you feel your acceptance is very important to your Friend and that non-acceptance may be perceived as rejection, discuss the situation with the Supervisor listed on your Assignment sheet. **The number to contact this individual is (718) 652-5500.**

Food often symbolizes affection. If your Friend at Home wishes to prepare some food for you, please feel free to accept it. Reciprocate if possible. However, please remember **to be sensitive to any special dietary or *kashrut* requirements your *Friend* may have.** If this becomes too frequent, please consult with the *Supervisor* at (718) 625-5500.

### **VISITOR NOTES**

Progress notes are essential as an evaluation of this program, documentation for our funders and are frequently used by the BJCC Social Service staff to better serve our client that has become your Friend at Home

The very brief form (see sample in the 3<sup>rd</sup> section of this Handbook) should be completed **each** time you make a friendly visit, Please send your completed note by fax (513-679-2429) or email to : ( [nMinkove@bjccconline.org](mailto:nMinkove@bjccconline.org) ) .

. Please **watch for visible mental or physical changes in your Friend at Home and share them with us.** You may see your *Friend* more frequently than any other BJCC representative. **If you are particularly concerned about a change, please contact us as soon as possible. In case of a real emergency you can reach the BJCC by calling (718)652-5500. 24 hours a day or call 911.**

**Your notes will be read regularly. They will be kept in your *Friend's* locked confidential file.**

**Thank you so very much for your attention to this very important matter.**

**If you have made plans to visit and your *Friend* does not answer the telephone or the door, remain calm. Your *Friend* may have forgotten the appointment. If**

a substantial amount of time has passed, please call the BJCC's 24-hour number at (718)652-5500.

If you are visiting and there is a medical emergency call 911 immediately. Remain with your *Friend*, until you are satisfied that he/she is safe or in good hands. Then contact the BJCC as soon as possible.

**WITH OUR THANKS**

*Mazel Toy you are now an invaluable member of our BJCC team of Volunteers  
We thanks you for your service and sincerely hope the experience will be both  
meaningful and fulfilling for you*

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## Section 2 Skilled Service Enterprise Volunteering

*We are thrilled to have you volunteering with us and helping us make a meaningful difference for our clients. We have a very wide variety of ways that you can serve and we hope that you will find whichever one or two that you choose to be stimulating and meaningful in your life.*

*We consider our volunteers as adjunct professionals in our organization. We therefore hope to treat you with the same courtesy and respect we extend to all of our staff. In return we expect you to treat this volunteer opportunity with the respect your important contribution deserves. Below you will find some guidelines to make this easier for you*

### DEPENDABILITY

We are counting on you. We hope that you will arrive in a timely manner and if you cannot make it you will let your staff supervisor know that you will not be coming.

### SUPERVISION and EVALUATION

Your staff supervisor will train you and be available to answer any questions you might have in regard to your volunteer commitment. Please use this relationship to make your work efficient and pleasurable.

After your first 2 weeks on the project your supervisor will meet with you to evaluate your working conditions, and progress and will repeat this every 3 months after that. Our staff is always accessible and we encourage you to communicate with them informally any time you have the need.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

BJCC guarantees all of its clients' confidentiality. **Your work may be sensitive or include information that must remain private. Names, home address, phone number, needs and services are all strictly confidential. NEVER share specifics** about your *work* with family, friends, acquaintances or coworkers. We hope that you will be excited about your contribution and will want to share that excitement and satisfaction with those close to you, but do not include any identifying names or details in your description... Our policy of confidentiality forbids this. Rather, channel your own enthusiasm to encourage others to volunteer themselves by sharing the satisfaction you are finding in your work. \*\*\*\*You will find a confidentiality Form to sign in Section 3 of this book. **All Volunteers and professional staff are required to sign and abide by this agreement**

## **CATALOGUE OF JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

### **WITH OUR THANKS**

*Mazel Tov you are now an invaluable member of our BJCC team of Volunteers  
We thank you for your service and sincerely hope the experience will be both  
meaningful and fulfilling for you*

**Section 3-- Volunteer Policies**

## Section 4 -- Forms

### APPLICATION

#### BJCC VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Volunteer Assignment \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer Position Sought \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATION \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like us to inform your employer about your volunteer service?

Organization affiliations (synagogues, other volunteer positions) \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you interested in volunteering? \_\_\_\_\_

Special skills and hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a valid driver's license and car? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be able to travel by public transportation?

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? (If yes, please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

REFERENCES (please list 3—name of person or organization, relationship to you, phone number and e-mail address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I am over 18 years of age and certify that the information in this application is true and complete to the best of my

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ -

**ONBOARDING FORMS**

**New Volunteer Onboarding Form**

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_

S.S. # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City / State \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. #: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B.: \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Race

Date Begun: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contract: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* (A = African American W = White H=Hispanic A = Asian N = Native American  
O=Other)

The purpose of the Data Records is to comply with government record keeping reporting and other legal requirements. Periodic reports are made to the government using this data. This data and reports are kept in a separate file from the employment files and are not part of the employee's personnel record.

For Office Use Only:

CENSUS CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

JOB #: \_\_\_\_\_

**PHOTO AND VIDEO RELEASE FORM**

**PHOTO AND RECORDING RELEASE FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby grant the permission, without reservation, to the Bronx Jewish Community Council to take or make and/or have taken or made photographs and/or sound/image/video recordings of me and to use to otherwise describe the same with or without my name or information about me, for promotion of good will, public education, fundraising and/or promotional activities, and other related activities of BJCC. I waive any right to inspect or approve the photographs(s), sound/image/video recordings or finished version(s) of works, including web site, incorporating the photograph(s) or sound/image/video recordings. No compensation is to be paid to me for the above, and I understand and agree that I am entitled to receive no compensation for the above.

I hereby hold harmless and release and forever discharge BJCC, each of its officers, trustees, agents, employees, independent contractors, licenses and assignees (including photographers), from all claims, demands, and causes of action that I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators or other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate now have or in the future may have, relating to the above, including but not limited to any photographs, or sound/image/video recordings described above.

I agree that BJCC, as applicable, will be the sole owner of all tangible and intangible rights or these photographs and sound/image/video recordings, with full power of disposition.

Please check one box:

I agree to have my photo take and used by BJCC. I agree that this release shall be binding on me, my legal representatives, heirs, and assigns. I have read this release and I fully understand its contents.

I do not agree to have my photo taken and used by BJCC.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## *CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT*

### Volunteer Statement of Confidentiality

I understand that in assuming my responsibilities as a volunteer for BJCC, I may have access to personal and medical information about some of the agency's clients. In keeping with the professional standards and ethics of BJCC, I will consider all client identifiable information, in whatever form I may receive it, to be strictly confidential and therefore not to be shared with or discussed with any unauthorized person, either inside or outside of the agency. I agree to abide by BJCC'S confidentiality policy and procedures.

X \_\_\_\_\_

*EVALUATION*

*VISITING NOTES:*