



A quick guide to volunteer at Center:

By way of introduction, The Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Greater Cincinnati have made many changes to improve the appearance, comfort, equipment and systems that serve our guests. Yet, without good Volunteers - all of that doesn't matter! FAQs are a work in progress but are based on actual questions that have been asked of the Center.

If you are not a volunteer, and wish to volunteer or have additional questions after reading this material, please mail to volunteers@cincylgbt.com. (The staff@cincylgbt.com only works for email purposes if you are a current volunteer).

Please take the five minutes and read through this guide. If you find something confusing, or want to have a question/answer included in the FAQ's drop a note to: staff@cincylgbt.com. These FAQs are based on actual questions, issues our guests and volunteers have asked.

Why and role of Center in the Community? The Center was founded in September 1993 as an offspring of the organization called the Gay & Lesbian Coalition of Greater Cincinnati. Many people contributed over two decades to the founding of the Center in 1993. The Center is a tax-exempt organization 501c3 of the IRS code governing charities.

Purpose: The Center has three basic purposes: to serve as a meeting space, to serve as an informal resource, and to afford programs to advance the cause of GLBT equality.

What we are not able to do? A common belief is that the Center offers counseling, housing, legal services, employment services, tax advice, real estate and housing etc. even to afford free publicity, promotion for non-center events to the greater community.

We appreciate there are many needs but our founding scope and our purpose is to "supply information or referrals" to these agencies. Take a look at our on-line resources on our home page.

Who may volunteer? Anyone who is age 18 or over and is trained by the volunteer coordinator.

Volunteer Requirements? Basic Internet skills, ideally off-site Internet access to update or schedule volunteer time on our on line systems, receive updates on Center information for your role as a front desk volunteer. Also, you must have a telephone number, cell, or landline.



Volunteering as Community Service? No. We receive two types of requests in this category: individuals on court ordered probation required to do community service; and, students wishing to fulfill a graduation or course completion for academic credit. In either case, the Center has chosen not to take on the extra supervision and certification to an outside agency, which would be required of us.

What training does the Center afford volunteers? We schedule at least two trainings with volunteers over a short period of time. Both the volunteer and the trainer will decide when it is appropriate for the volunteer to open, run and close Center without additional help or supervision. We want to ensure our volunteers are comfortable in this role and can take responsibility for running the Center efficiently and safely. We expect volunteers to have a valid phone number and keep their information up to date on the volunteer list (you'll have access to it once trained!).

Where does Center keep its "Community Resources?" Not only are many groups represented by literature posted at Center, please consult the front page of the home page www.cincyglbt.com. There you will find most of the local and regional groups sorted by category. Please direct guests and callers to become acquainted with this feature of our web site.

Use of Center email account? Most volunteers are assigned a center domain email address to access our calendar, volunteer documents, and to receive specific information from us about the Center. If you lose your password, just drop a note to staff@cincyglbt.com and it will be reset. Also, keep in mind, the Center as "owner of the email account" reserves the right to suspend, delete account for any reason. Please do not use the account to store personal or other non-Center related business. The Center does not assume responsibility for deleting any information you stored in your Center account.

Who are the guests of the Center? Members of the GLBT community, friends, and allies are welcome. Underage (less than 18 years of age) folks are welcome so long as accompanied with a parent or legal guardian.

Greeting guests? We ask all our volunteers to greet people when they enter the Center. Try to get a first name (no ages, or other information is required on the "Volunteer Activity Log" within Google), and ask why they came to the Center. Of course, it is easy to skip this step for "regulars" but if you don't know the person or they seem unsure - take the time to engage them, i.e. how did you hear about us, what can I help you with etc. Keep in mind, this might be the first contact a person has with the GLBT community. Also remember, use one log line per guest, this helps us do our statistics.



Are underage folks allowed in the Center? Yes, so long as accompanied with an adult: parent or legal guardian. While we don't check identity, please ask if you are not sure. It is not uncommon that a parent will bring a child in to look at materials we have available at Center. If you are unsure, please ask politely. Please communicate with other volunteers if you discover a guest not following this rule by writing staff@cincyglbt.com.

Drugs and substance? None are permitted at the Center. Smoking is not allowed in the Center per the law of State of Ohio. Please note the posted no smoking signs at the front door and in the unisex bathroom. Also, note: The Center considers the use of "snuff, chew or spit" inappropriate inside the premises.

Safe environment? The Center by virtue of seeing many folks from different communities tries through its volunteers to be welcoming, greeting and asking how we may help. Hostile or threatening behavior towards anyone will not be tolerated.

Is the Center accessible for differently abled folks? The answer is "no." Our web site states that Center is not "readily accessible" by differently abled folks. The Center is a tenant in a building constructed in 1911. We cannot alter the premises. You will notice most of the existing properties in Northside are not required to comply with the current access laws as they were constructed before such legislation.

Opening the Center? Remember – if you are in the Center, at any time, the front curtains are to be open, and the sign and overhead lights on. (See "Volunteer-Open-Close-Clean" in volunteer documents section of Google.) After dark, a photocell located elsewhere in the building will turn on the "front porch light" over the front door of the Center. We do not have control of the porch lamp - but if you do not see it on after dark - please drop a note to staff@cincyglbt.com. We will check the light - if it isn't the light bulb - then we have to report it to the landlord.

Can I make long distance calls at Center? No, the Center does not have long distance telephone coverage. If you retrieve a long distance call from the voice mail, record details on volunteer activity log, erase the message. You have two choices – you may, if YOU WISH and you have long distance coverage on your cell attempt to return the call, OR if you wish, drop a line to staff@cincyglbt.com and we will return the call. As a matter of good practice and for your security, if you return a phone call on your personal cell or landline - we recommend you block your number.



Answering the Phone? The procedure for retrieving phone messages is in document in Google "Center Directions." Be careful and helpful. Remember – we do NOT afford counseling for mental health, legal issues, or employment counseling, resume writing, or employment referrals etc.

Many answers are at your finger tips – simply go to the our web site www.cincyglbt.com - and on the left side bar – you will be see posted the links to the most common organizations serving the general area.

Also, the Gay Chamber of Commerce "Listings" is free to give to our guests and to consult. (We have extra boxes of the "Listings" located behind the front desk under the shelf where the mail folders are located).

What greeting do I use when answering the phone? Gay & Lesbian Community Center is adequate, others say GLBT Center. How may I help you?

What if I can't make my scheduled day? The sooner you go on line and update the Google volunteer calendar, the better. This gives other folks a chance to cover the day.

Also, as a courtesy send a message to staff@cincyglbt.com this alerts all volunteers at the Center – the slot is open and needs filling. All volunteers will see your message when you write to staff@cincyglbt.com.

What if I am late? Don't panic - we all recognize this is a volunteer commitment. This most important thing is to show up if you are scheduled.

What if I am early? A volunteer if trained, can open the Center at other times (other than core hours) so long as the Center is open for business, drapes open, signs "on", door unlocked and you exercise the same good judgment and respect for the facility. Net, the Center must be open for business as though it were our regularly scheduled hours.

Presently, the core operating hours of the Center are M-F 6-9 pm, Saturday 12 Noon to 4 pm, closed Sunday.

Once I am trained may I share the door combination, wireless security code with anyone? The simple answer is "NO." Refer - those requests even from another volunteer to staff@cincyglbt.com. They may not have the most current information because we had to change it for security reasons!



Who can use computers and what about content blocking? All computers are free and accessible to anyone. All content is filtered on the computer, that is, underage and pornographic sites are blocked.

What else do I need to know about the Center's computers? They are free to use, but they are not to be used for downloading personal materials. The volunteer in charge will monitor use of the equipment to ensure everyone has fair access.

What written materials can people take from the Center? All newspapers and general group literature, including the Gay Chamber guide are available free of charge to anyone to take with them. The only items we do not give out are magazines (subscriptions paid for by The Center) that are for "inside use" at Center.

Posters? Someone brought in a poster, what do I do? It is fairly common that someone will bring in a poster to be placed either on our bulletin board or on the window glass.

Tell the person – we will review the poster the next time a board member available. We want to ensure the front of the Center is not papered with posters that are not relevant to our target community. Please place any posters in the "president's" mailbox. If they won't fit, store them near the front desk – and leave a note in the "president's mailbox" where the posters are stored. (Also, send a note to staff@cincyglbt.com if there is a poster needing approval).

Posters on outside windows? If the poster is approved for posting, DO NOT place it on the front window glass facing Hamilton Ave. Instead, place posters on the inside of the window glass to the right of the steps (porch) to gain access to the Center. The reason: most posters curl and are hard to keep in alignment and make the front of the Center look junky.

Where can I park? Parking meters are in effect until 6 pm Monday through Saturday near the Center. Sunday is free. There is some unmetered parking on the North and South side of Palm. Also, you may use the Northside Bank parking lot (access off Palm) after their normal business hours to park. Be careful: do not park in the gravel parking lot near the old Crazy Ladies Bookstore on the Corner of Blue Rock and Hamilton. This area is private parking owned by Ace Doran. They have a history of towing cars parked in that area.



Your safety? Lock your car doors, good advice under all circumstances. (Read FAQ on "where to park.") Keep your valuables out of sight both in your car and inside the Center! If you are alone in the Center, we recommend closing/locking the front door of the Center while in the bathroom or taking out the trash. We are in District 5 of the Cincinnati Police Department - non-emergency number is: 513-569-8500. Do not hesitate to call 911 if in your judgment anyone's safety, property, person is being threatened.

First AID Kit & Center Safety devices? A first aid kit containing simple supplies for an emergency is located directly behind the volunteer desk. There is an extra plastic box of bandages, wraps etc. Also, the Center has one fire alarm located on the north wall above the back door to the hall, and two carbon monoxide detectors - one on the shelf behind the volunteer desk, and one on a bookcase at the rear of the Center. There is also a fire extinguisher on the back wall of the Center next to the rear door.

Closing Center? Be careful! All space heaters off, and unplugged. Close drapes, turn off lights and lock door, and try the door to make sure it is locked. Over the past two years much effort has been put towards upgrading the Center. During summer months, turn off the room air conditioner. (See "Center Directions" in documents section of Google).

Do I need to turn off the computers? The short answer "no" all are set to sleep at a certain point.

Does the Center have a printer/why is that I see a printer next to the front desk? The Center is not the public library! The printer is actually simply a scanner and is NOT networked to the other computers in any event. It is for use of the Board/Volunteers to scan documents.

Checking supplies? We store garage bags, mops pads, toilet paper, paper towels, and other sundries either under the sink in the bathroom or in the storage shelf in the bathroom. Please check periodically – and if you see we are going to run out – please put the need on the "Supply Needs for Center" spreadsheet in Google documents. You might also shoot a note to staff@cincyncglbt.com. Cleaning activities are also covered in "Center Directions" at documents in Google.

Got a question or problem? When at the Center if something comes up that requires immediate attention –check the list of volunteers, contact a board member (board members are bolded on list). You can also write staff@cincyncglbt.com; all volunteers of record will receive your note in their private email. Also, the contact list "Center Volunteers" in documents in Google has every name, email and phone number of each person who volunteers at the Center.



Does the Center have a youth group? No, we refer all requests of youth to both PFLAG and GLSEN. (GLSEN Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network and PFLAG – Parents Family Friends of Lesbians and Gays). The web addresses for both are in on our front page, www.cincyglbt.com under “Community Resources.” GLSEN also hosts CYG (Cincinnati Youth Group).

What is Pride Night or Pride Night at Kings Island? For many years, Kings Island of Mason, OH has hosted a fundraiser for the Gay and Lesbian Community of Greater Cincinnati. The event is generally held in September of each year. The email for the event is: pridenight@cincyglbt.com where you can direct people with questions. Check the Center's web www.cincyglbt.com site will include a link to Kings Island store where folks will be able to buy tickets on line. Also, in advance of the event, we sell tickets at the Center - and that information will be posted elsewhere on Google Documents – Volunteer folder when available to our trained volunteers.

How do I handle media calls? Periodically, we might receive a call from local media asking for a comment on the issue "of the day." These days usually come during the day - and are out of date by their nature – either send the request out to staff@cincyglbt.com or direct the person to submit the request in writing at <http://www.cincyglbt.com/contact-us> he time we get in the evening. Nevertheless, if you receive a call of that

Someone wants to advertise, or buy an ad on our web site? Generally, the only advertising that we accept is associated with direct sponsorship of a special event such as Pride Night at Kings Island. In general, the answer is no. If there is a question, send it on to staff@cincyglbt.com or refer them to write us at <http://www.cincyglbt.com/contact-us>

A UC/Cincy State/ NKU student etc. called wanting to interview someone for a Sociology/Psychology class - what to do? This type of request is fairly frequent for Human Sexuality classes, Diversity, Social Work and Journalism courses. These types of interviews do not end up in the press, but are used as part of a students course work. We generally tell students to call during our normal core hours (M-F 6-9 pm and Sat 12 n - 4 pm) and see if anyone is willing to be interviewed. It is entirely up to you. You don't need to clear it with anyone.

A politician called wanting to...? Particularly during election seasons, primaries etc., we are contacted by politicians seeking endorsements (we can't do that) or asking to meet with the Board - which we don't do since that is a "business meeting for the Center." Refer them to our front page at www.cincyglbt.com community resources such as Equality Ohio.



Prank calls? Yes, sometimes we do get the periodic prank or pornographic call. Be careful. We do get calls for people looking for “parks” or “bars” to hook up. The Center does not answer those questions – we are not a dating service.

Other Pranks? Another potential prank we have experienced is someone calls wanting information to be "sent" to an address, however, only a name and street address are given, NO PHONE NUMBER or EMAIL is given. Unless a phone number is given or an email is supplied, please ignore. Candidly, in this day and age, we never send our information via the USPS. Isn't that what email does? If you don't know what to do, record the information on the volunteer log, and send a note to staff@cincyglbt.com and we'll sort it.

Where does the Center keep information for most common local resources? Please check the left side of our site www.cincyglbt.com - here we list the vast majority of common resources asked about by our guests.

Watch outs for information sharing? We are not a dating service, and you should feel comfortable saying that. We never answer questions about what parks or bars can I go to “hook-up.” Please remember – our job is to supply resources, not recommend resources. Need an attorney – either supply a list of people or refer them to the Center home page where they will find the listings guide! Need a bar – either supply a list of resources to them or refer them to our home page, e.g., gaybarmaps.com lists every bar in the country.

Snail mail? We use a PO Box 23159, Cincinnati, OH 45223. Please use this as our "mailing address." While we do have a mail slot to the left of the front door (from the inside of the Center), we found other tenants mail at 4119 Hamilton Ave delivered to us. (Suggest if you find someone else's mail - other than the Center's – on the floor by the front door - simply mark it - "not at this address" and put in the mailbox across the street.) If you find Center mail on the floor - please place it in the "president's" mail folder on the shelf behind the volunteer desk. We have posted a sign above our mail slot to USPS indicating this is "only for Center" and that mail for Apt 1 - 4 should be delivered one door north (looking at Center is the "middle door" labeled - 4119- 4121. Also, Apt 5 is located on the North side of our building (Palm Ave) - their mailbox is on the outside of the building.

Deliveries by UPS, FedEx? Because we are not generally open during the business day, you might find delivery tags stuck to the front door by UPS, FedEx. Please remove the tag, and send an email note to staff@cincyglbt.com - so we can arrange the pickup. Make sure to include the tracking number and additional information and supply that information in your email note, and place the door tag in the presidents mail bin. Should you be at the Center when someone tries to deliver, go ahead and accept the shipment and send a note to staff@cincyglbt.com so we can respond.

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Bundles of newspapers or other publications? Sometimes you will find various GLBT press and other items placed on the front stoop. Pick it up, bring it in – unbundle it. Look for the old material on the shelves or racks inside the Center – replace it with the new publication and throw out the old publication. Please, sometimes this creates a heavy bag of trash – so break it down into two or three bags and put it behind the building (back patio) where trash cans are located for the entire building.

Other deliveries? Sometimes individuals have a poster or other materials that might fit through our door slot and are not suitable for mailing or they simply can't make it during our regular hours. You might offer they could try to fit it through our mail slot with a note. Again, this option depends on how big the materials are, otherwise they will either have to mail or make to the Center during regular hours.

When does city pick up trash at Center? Friday, Landlord places trash cans from behind the building out on Thursday night on Palm Avenue.

Does the Center recycle? The short answer is “maybe.” We tried but folks were putting the wrong materials in the recycle box. Also, because we are not open during the morning hours, retrieving the green recycle box after trash pickup on Friday morning was impossible. **Please note, there is a recycle trash can at the rear of our premises (back of building) that you can use.**

What is Center's web site, preferred mailing? www.cincylgbt.com is the Center's web presence. Our mailing address is PO Box 23159, Cincinnati OH 45223. Our phone is 513-591-0200. Please check the Center's web so you know what is offered, including the calendar. If the guest wishes to directly contact us, direct them to our web page, at <http://www.cincylgbt.com/contact-us>. There they can submit a question and someone on the Board will get in touch with them.

Does the Center have a Fax/Fax number? No. If there is something that someone needs to fax - simply tell him or her to drop a note to staff@cincylgbt.com ...we can work something out.

What about books, CD, DVD or lending library? We no longer accept or maintain a traditional lending library of books or archival material. The Center has limited storage space. Our previous printed library was donated in 2010 to the GLBT office at the University of Cincinnati. If you



have books, you might try to donate them to the Ohio Lesbian Archives. Their web address is on the Center's home page, under community resources.

How to make a monetary donation to the Center? The best and easiest way is to you're the "Google store" with a credit or debit card on our home page. If the money donation is a check write to Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Greater Cincinnati and send to the PO Box. If it is a cash donation, which we discourage for security reasons, the volunteer on duty can write a receipt and give the donor a receipt, and then place the receipt and the cash in the gray box on the side of the volunteer desk. (Receipt book is generally in the president's mail bin, or in the top drawer of the volunteer desk, if you can't locate hand write a receipt.)

What is the gray box for on the side of the Volunteer Desk? Its primary use is for collecting checks and cash when Kings Island comes up every year in September. The Center sells tickets during its business hours. Prior to the Kings Island event we will publish information for you to use to sell tickets and collect money.

What primary fundraising event/s does the Center host in the community? The Center's primary external fundraiser is the annual Pride Night at Kings Island generally held on a Friday in September. The date changes each year – and we'll let you know when it is decided. Other smaller events are announced periodically.

What is OUTReels/Film Fest? OUTReels was the name of the GLBT film festival hosted by the Center in 2006 and 2007. Periodically, folks enquire about the program. Presently, the cnky scene is hosting a film festival. See our home page, community resources for their web address.

Is the Center a non – profit? Yes, the Internal Revenue Service granted the Center a 501(c)(3) status.

What are the Center events and where are they listed? All Center events are listed on the front page of our web site (select calendar icon) at www.cincyglbt.com.

When did the Center open? The September opened in September 1993 at Longworth Hall in downtown Cincinnati. We moved to our current location in Northside in 1999.



Who founded the Center? The answer is that many people over the 1970s and 1980s advocated for a Center. The predecessor organization was the Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Greater Cincinnati that had some 25 groups participating. It was in business as a separate entity from 1978 - 1994. In 1990, the Coalition formed a committee to study the feasibility of a Center after several public meetings. Ultimately, the Coalition organization was dissolved and folded into the Community Center.

By 1999, many felt the Coalition could still serve a purpose as a forum for communication between groups. The Center served as the parent host of the Coalition until that program ended in May 2012. The Board concluded based on attendance, often less than six groups, that Internet communication had replaced the need of most organizations to meet face to face.

What is the Wi-Fi web code at the Center? Yes, we do have Wi-Fi enabled at the Center; however, we only share the code with our regular volunteers. We insist our volunteers do not share that password with others, particularly any tenants who lives nearby. If you have a need, let staff@cincyglbt.com know.

Use of Furnace in winter? The furnace is regulated by a thermostat under a lock box on the North wall of the Center. It is set to deliver about 64/65 degrees F. If you need additional heat use only a heating device you find in the Center. Do not bring in your own heater. Please only use the heater in the receptacle where you find it. The reason: placing the heater in the same electric source as the volunteer computers or guest computers results in the circuit breaker tripping. Please make sure the heating device is turned off when you leave!

Furnace Caution? The right side (faces unisex bathroom) of the forced air furnace is the "air intake" side - if you pile chairs, tables, or poster against the furnace will malfunction. Leave at least 12" space between the right side of the furnace and storage items to facilitate airflow. Do not touch the light switch next to the gas line on the left side of furnace - doing so kills the power to the furnace and it will not operate. During the non-heating months, we may turn off the power and pilot light to the furnace. Your best bet is to "leave furnace alone." If there is an issue with the furnace not heating - consult the Center Volunteers list to call a board member.

Where are the circuit breakers located for the Center? In the rare event a circuit breaker trips, you may reset the circuit breaker at our box, located inside of the Center, immediately to the left of the bathroom door.



Front Door/Stoop - Winter Safety? During the winter months due to low humidity in the Center - the front door has a tendency not to close when someone enters. The same is true for the "transom" of window above the front door. Also make sure the transom is closed, and remind folks to close the front door behind them. There is a bucket of rock salt in the unisex bathroom - should you need to sprinkle salt on the front steps. If the salt is NOT out, ask a board member to bring it from our storage area on site.

Hot water heater? The landlord has an electric hot water heater in the basement of the building that serves the Center only. If you find the hot water not working after running the tap briefly, drop a note to staff@cincyglbt.com. The hot water heater is an electric 10-gallon type (adequate for hand washing and cleanup) and was installed new by the landlord in December 2010.

Use of Air Conditioner? There is a large capacity Samsung window on a 220-volt circuit on the south wall of the Center. You will notice a "switch" below where the AC is plugged in. The switch controls the current to the outlet. IF you want AC, that switch must be turned on. We usually leave the switch on - all year round, since the AC is operated by a remote control - left on top of the volunteer desk. Please leave the remote on top of the volunteer desk! The front desk might be slightly out of range of the remote - so it may be necessary for you to get up and move closer to the AC unit for it to respond to the remote. All we ask is that after your shift to (contd) TURN OFF THE AC with the remote control before leaving the Center. It is not necessary that you turn the AC window unit off at the wall.

Your Privacy: We expect the volunteers to use the phone numbers and email addresses supplied on the "volunteer list" with discretion. We asked for this information from you so that we can contact you and to facilitate communication about CENTER BUSINESS between volunteers. We do not share information with third parties, and if any of us is asked for someone's personal phone number or email - don't share it. If they are a valid volunteer at the Center they will have access to that information 24 hours a day on line.

Where in the world did some of these questions come from? Fair question, prior to us being entirely computerized and on line, we were forever re-inventing the wheel. These Q&A's are based on actual experience of volunteers from 2005 to the present day.

To sum it all up? If you treat the Center's property as a shared community resource you're well on your way to being an excellent volunteer.