



Circle of Friends Volunteer Position Description

“The Circle of Friends has let me share my joys, worries and fears, and to have them offer their support and guidance. We all have some bumps in the road and it is comforting to know that we are not in the battle alone.”

*Wayne
Program Participant*

Volunteer Position: Circle of Friends volunteer through the MCC Ontario Circle of Friends program

Circle of Friends is a program that addresses the challenges faced by individuals experiencing poverty and homelessness, with a special focus on the impact of loneliness and social isolation on their lives. Personal well-being is at the heart of Circle of Friends’ approach, helping individuals maintain stable housing and a sense of belonging in the community. Rooted in the simple yet powerful concept of “holding space,” Circle of Friends creates a supportive environment that fosters personal growth, healing and a profound sense of belonging within the community.

Primary population served: Individuals with lived experience of homelessness who are transitioning into, or working to retain, stable housing, with a primary focus on social inclusion

Geographic location: various public locations in Waterloo Region

Transportation: on bus routes

Skills/knowledge/attitude requirements:

- must be an individual over the age of 18
- good listening skills and a non-judgmental attitude are essential
- an ability to work as part of a small team to balance support and accountability effectively is essential
- maintaining personal boundaries and reporting concerns are essential
- an ability to walk alongside a person rather than seeking to “fix” a person is essential
- compassion and empathy are essential
- an “Enhanced police information check” is required
- participation in training events is required
- an attitude of learning is an asset
- an understanding of mental health and addictions is an asset

Tasks and responsibilities:

- be part of a Circle of Friends group of three to four community volunteers and a staff person with one core member/program participant
- attend Circle meetings for your core member
- volunteers are invited, but not required, to attend other Circle of Friends’ events or leisure activities
- be willing to reflect on/discuss faith or spirituality with core members

Time commitment:

- approximately one to two hours per week
- a one-year commitment is requested
- invited to attend optional monthly program events



Circle of Friends Volunteer Position Description

“The Circle of Friends has let me share my joys, worries and fears, and to have them offer their support and guidance. We all have some bumps in the road and it is comforting to know that we are not in the battle alone.”

*Wayne
Program Participant*

Supervision: Circle of Friends staff

Training and development offered:

- initial face-to-face and online training required; ongoing training provided
- regular support from and debriefing with staff
- opportunity to connect with other volunteers
- volunteer liability coverage for all volunteers
- mandatory position-specific orientation will be provided
- additional training for volunteers is offered on an ongoing basis
- policy and procedure manual are available at all times

Key learnings for volunteers:

- join a team of volunteers and staff who are passionate about supporting those who are lonely and isolated
- contribute to community peace and justice work
- learn about the housing system in Waterloo Region
- develop meaningful relationships with those who have lived experience of homelessness

MCC Mission Statement:

All MCC volunteers are expected to be respectful of the MCC mission statement: *“MCC, a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, shares God’s love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice. MCC envisions communities worldwide in right relationship with God, one another and creation.”*

MCC Ontario

203-50 Kent Ave, Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1

Contact: **Claire Smith**, Restorative communities and supportive housing team lead

Phone: 226-898-3638

Email: clairesmith@mcco.ca

To apply online, click [HERE](#) or contact Claire Smith for more information.

Application process and requirements:

1. Completed application
2. Interview
3. Reference checks x 3
4. Enhanced police information check – paid for by MCC
5. Required orientation, trainings and signing forms

*Successful candidates must complete all steps before joining a Circle.