



Volunteer Information and Shelter Overview

Our mission is to provide safe, emergency shelter while working to end homelessness for each man.

Who We Are

- Men's Shelter of Charlotte (MSC) was founded in 1981 after three men died on the streets due to exposure in the winter months.
- We are the only emergency shelter for men in Mecklenburg County. We have capacity to shelter 404 men across two campuses, and more on inclement weather "overflow" nights.
- We provide basic needs, which include a bed, restrooms, showers, hygiene items, meals, laundry and supportive staff.
- Program services focus on increasing income and moving to more appropriate housing.
- We view a man's stay with us as temporary. As such, we refer to men as "guests."
- Learn more about us by visiting MensShelterofCharlotte.org.

Who Stays With Us

- We serve the entire spectrum of men experiencing homelessness, meaning that we have men staying with us of all ages (18+), ethnic, educational, and cultural backgrounds.
- Nearly half of our guests, however, have a disabling condition which could include mental illness, substance use, or physical challenges.

As You Arrive and Attire

- Dress comfortably and casually. But remember, you'll be spending time in a shelter with men experiencing homelessness, so please keep this in mind as you choose your attire.
- Please leave any valuables locked in your vehicle as we do not have secure lockers. Unfortunately, we cannot be responsible if your valuables are lost, stolen, or damaged.
- Check in with front desk staff to let them know where you are assigned to volunteer. Ask the front desk to announce over the intercom that "HERC is now open. There is a volunteer in HERC to assist with guest needs".



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Boundaries and Confidentiality

- Be sure to keep any information you learn about our guests confidential. However, if you learn information about one of our men that you believe staff needs to be aware of, please email elane.stinson@mensshelterofcharlotte.org.
- Please do not share information about guests staying at our shelter and receiving services.
- We know you want to be a resource, but please do not provide money or personal favors to our guests (e.g., cash, bus passes, rides to the train station).
- We recommend not sharing personal information such as your phone number, address, and social media connections with our guests.
- We understand that faith is a significant part of many peoples' lives. However, in efforts to respect the diversity of spiritual beliefs at the shelter, we ask that you refrain from preaching to our guests.
- Should an incident or uncomfortable situation occur, your first job is to remove yourself from that situation and notify staff immediately. Staff are always wearing MSC lanyards or shirts.

General Information

- The HERC is only accessible Tryon Street shelter guests. Statesville Avenue shelter guests will be served through a "Mobile HERC," and referred to the Public Library for computer use.
- Guests must present their shelter ID number or sign in with their bed number to access the HERC.
- There is an "Opportunities board" located in the TV room that includes employment information.
- There are six computer kiosks located in the TV room for general browsing (including social media).
- For volunteer questions, scheduling changes, or information about a guest that you feel is important for a staff member to be aware, email: elane.stinson@mensshelterofcharlotte.org



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Computers

- All HERC computer passwords are: Shelter2018 (the 'S' is capitalized). Volunteers must sign onto the computers. **Please do not give the password to guests.**
- When a guest is finished using a computer, make sure they have signed out of all their personal accounts (emails, job applications, etc.).
- If you are the last volunteer in the HERC, **make sure to log off every computer.** You can log off by clicking CRT+ALT+DEL. **Do not turn off the computers.**
- The computers in the HERC have stringent firewalls intended to block social media and non-housing and employment related use. If you determine that a valid site is blocked, email Volunteers@MensShelterofCharlotte.org with the URL and blocked "category". We need the specific URL to unblock it.
- Encourage guests to save documents to their personal Gmail or email accounts. Do not save personal guest documents on HERC computers.
- Each HERC computer is labeled at the top. If a specific computer is having issues, please email Volunteers@MensShelterofCharlotte.org with the specific computer and issue.

Resume Computer Software

- We have WinWay resume software installed on all HERC computers. You can access these programs from the "Start" menu.
WinWay Demo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nTvWMvbMxc>
- When creating or updating a resume for a guest, please remember the following
 1. Make the guest 4 copies.
 2. Send a copy to the guest's email.
 3. Save a copy on a USB drive (located in the bottom right drawer on the volunteer desk)

Please make sure the volunteer desk drawer containing the USB Drives is locked before you leave.



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Shelter Services

Housing and Life Skills

- Case Management
 - A Tryon Street shelter guests is assigned a Housing Specialist to help navigate resources, benefits, income, and housing.

- Housing Forums: See Walk-Up services or front desk for schedule.
 - Offers a chance for guests to speak with Housing Specialists and ask questions about the housing market in Charlotte.

- Ready to Rent Classes: See Walk-Up services or front desk for schedule.
 - Classes help prepare guests to enter the housing market and include tenant expectations, education, and responsibilities.
 - Sample of class is in the Volunteer Binder.

- Conflict Management (MSC Case Management Team)
 - Learn how to effectively communicate and manage conflicts as they arise.