



MUSTARD SEED  
CAFE & GARDEN

# VOLUNTEER MANUAL

UPDATED JANUARY 2020



Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to Mustard Seed Cafe and Garden! We are so happy that you are willing to join our team and offer your time in service to others. Since there are only four staff positions at the café, we are nothing without our valued volunteers who give generously of their time and talents - the heart behind our mission.

Given the many opportunities to serve in the community, we appreciate and thank you for choosing to be a part of MSC. Our goal is to provide a safe, friendly, enjoyable, and uplifting environment in which you can serve. While assisting at the cafe, not only will you be a blessing to the lives you touch, but your own life will be equally blessed by the good you are doing to make a difference in our community.

We love our volunteers and are humbled and privileged by the opportunity to welcome you into the Mustard Seed Cafe family and serve alongside of you in this awesome mission.

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”  
Colossians 3:17

With Deepest Gratitude,

Christi Brown

Executive Director

Carmen Estrada

General Manager

Hokyun Kang

Chef

Anna Parrish

Administrative  
Support

CONTACT INFORMATION  
Mustard Seed Cafe and Garden

201 E. Sunset Road  
El Paso, Texas 79922

915-440-SEED (7333)  
[www.mustardseedcafe.org](http://www.mustardseedcafe.org)

Volunteer Coordinators:  
Rosie Castro and Carolyn Hauser

**Please read this manual in its entirety and sign the signature page (p14),  
and bring that on the first day you serve.  
Ministry Description**

## **OUR MISSION**

We exist to:

Feed hungry people and care for their hearts

Be a genuine expression of the love of God in Jesus Christ

Introduce people to Jesus Christ that they might come to saving faith in Him

## **OUR VISION**

Mustard Seed Cafe envisions a God-centered community where men, women, and children flourish having been reconciled first to the Lord and then to one another by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

## **Driving Motivation**

### **Romans 12:12-13**

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show HOSPITALITY.

“In Jesus, we find ourselves now to be the enemy who has been loved, the sinner who is saved, the stranger who is welcomed. ‘God showed his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us’ Romans 5:8. And welcomed strangers should be quick to learn to welcome other strangers. Our love for outsiders runs deep as it flows from remembering ourselves to be outsiders who have been dearly loved by a lavishly hospitable God.” ~ *David Mathis* (“Hospitality & the Great Commission” [www.desiringgod.org/articles](http://www.desiringgod.org/articles))

How will the vulnerable, food-insecure, needy, and hungry be fed if we don’t feed them? We have this opportunity to continue the good work of feeding people who need the nourishment, not only for their bodies but also for their minds and souls. They need to be included, welcomed, and loved. We can do this in a safe, warm cafe. We offer them a needed meal, we offer friendship, and when possible prayer and practical assistance. Whether that’s a local businessman eating lunch with his colleagues, a UTEP college student wanting to give back to his or her community, a new soldier at Fort Bliss, a homeschool family wanting to serve and love by cooking in the kitchen, or a vulnerable single mom willing to work for an hour to be able to eat possibly the only meal she and her kids will have that day. This is showing our community Jesus, and it starts with a hot plate of delicious food.

## **Strategic Plan**

### **Feeding Hungry People**

Goal #1. Serve local, healthy, fresh food that is affordable to all

#### Objectives

- Establish partnerships with wholesalers, local restaurants, vendors, farmers, grocers, food pantries and food banks to access food at a reasonable cost /donation
- Manage food-related expenditures responsibly
- Recruit qualified staff and volunteers to prepare and serve food

Goal #2. Serve each guest with radical hospitality

#### Objectives

- Train staff and volunteers to serve each guest with intentionality - to treat every person with dignity and respect
- Create a safe, welcoming and comfortable environment where souls may rest from the busyness and at times crushing pressures of daily life
- Serve delicious, nutritious food to nourish the body and companionship to nourish the soul

Goal #3. Operate a garden on site to provide fresh produce for the cafe, build appreciation for local and fresh food, and provide programming that educates and motivates people to garden for themselves

#### Objectives

- Establish partnerships with local agencies, nonprofits, university and community groups to create and build the garden
- Recruit qualified volunteers for its maintenance
- Establish weekly routines for care and harvesting of produce
- Continue and expand educational programming for local schools

Goal #4. Provide the opportunity for patrons to “pay what they can” for their meal - they may volunteer with us in exchange for a meal, make a partial payment, pay the suggested price or pay it forward to help keep our doors open. (Hand Up not Handout)

#### Objectives

- Establish consistent community financial support through pay-it-forward -cafe patrons
- Set meal prices which reflect a balance of value and affordability

- Provide meaningful volunteer opportunities that do not require food handlers certification
- Invite the food insecure members of the community to take advantage of our weekly lunch service and Community Meals

Goal #5. Operate a community-focused kitchen

Objectives

- Establish partnerships to bring community chefs and local restaurant fare to the cafe
- Establish partnerships with local culinary programs, specifically EPCC and Career & Technical Education, EPISD, CISD
- Create a flexible menu to highlight local and fresh food
- Solicit favorite recipes from volunteers

Goal #6. Honor the Lord in our food service operations

Objectives

- Establish a kitchen that operates in compliance with El Paso Health Department requirements
- Train and empower volunteers so that they are confident in their assigned tasks and enjoy their time with us
- Watch food costs carefully so that we are good stewards of the funds we receive
- Exercise no-waste practices

## Caring for Every Heart

Goal #1. Treat every person with dignity and respect

Objectives

- Create a volunteer manual to establish consistent standards of excellent and intentional service
- Train staff and volunteers to serve others with intentionality, seeking to identify and meet physical, mental, and spiritual needs
- Establish a schedule for consistent ongoing training

Goal #2. Engage the most disadvantaged in our community

**(Disadvantaged:** *Those who experience discrimination, higher risk of poverty, social exclusion, and violence. Ethnic minorities, migrants, people with disabilities, isolated elderly people and children. Their vulnerability to discrimination and marginalization is a consequence of social, cultural,*

*economic and political conditions. They have limited access to protection, support and redress when their rights are violated.)*

#### Objectives

- Identify the vulnerable populations and needs within a six mile radius of the cafe
- Create a strategic plan to attract these groups and build trust
- Be intentional about establishing long-term relationships - giving them a sense of ownership and partnership with the Cafe

Goal #3. Offer outreach programming that addresses the felt needs of those around us

#### Objectives

- Create a strategic plan to identify the felt needs of the community within a six mile radius of the Cafe
- Appoint a volunteer to oversee and implement outreach
- Establish partnerships for the funding and volunteer support of outreach programming

Goal #4. Create community by connecting people from every walk of life to one another

#### Objectives

- Strategize methods (within the context of regular Cafe operations) of encouraging members of the community with different socioeconomic backgrounds to engage with one another.
- Plan and implement special events that bring people together - starting with weekly Community Meals
- Create the environment and expectation that everyone has something to offer

Goal #5. Strengthen community by connecting disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals with the resources they need to flourish

#### Objectives

- Listen to our neighbors and to Cafe volunteers and guests in order to learn of their communal and individual needs
- Develop partnerships with local agencies, nonprofits, and ministries that provide resources and services for those in need in our community
- Furnish resource and service providers with specific opportunities to connect with potential clients

Goal #6. Glorify the Lord in our dealings with every person who comes through our doors

## Objectives

- Make God's Word, God's guidance, and prayer the foundation of our work
- Commit ourselves to value every individual and serve him/her well
- Demonstrate the compassion and love of God in Jesus Christ
- Speak with humility and respect to hungry souls about new life in Jesus Christ

## **Products and Services**

The aim is simple: prepare and serve delicious, nutritious meals that are affordable to everyone. We want to feed hungry people and care for each of them.

### **Products**

- Pay-what-you-can lunch service three days a week
- Regular, evening community meals (no charge)
- Onsite garden with produce that supports the Cafe and programming

### *Unique Features of Our Food*

- Slow food, not fast food
- Seasonal, local foods whenever possible
- A wide variety of foods using recipes from different cultures
- Pay-what-you-can model which also allows guests to make a partial payment or volunteer in exchange for a meal

### **Services**

- Radical hospitality that affirms the dignity and worth of each individual
- A listening ear and practical help for people in crisis
- Opportunities to volunteer in service to the community
- Opportunity to volunteer in exchange for a meal
- Programming for the betterment of individuals and the community -
  - Educational enrichment opportunities for public, private and homeschool groups that revolve around the garden, nutrition, and volunteerism
  - Summer internships for high school students
  - Nutrition classes
  - Pastors Appreciation Lunch
  - Professionals offer information/education during weekly lunch service and the Community Meals with regard to:
    - Diabetes education
    - Immunizations
    - Nutrition

- Community connection point - for resource and service providers to connect with potential clients
- Food service training and reference for the unemployed
- Special events that bring people together as one community
  - Spring Festival
- Bible studies and outreach training for people who are interested
- Provide churches and youth groups from other cities a place to come, serve, and learn



## **Mustard Seed Cafe and Garden Meal Exchange Policy**

Mustard Seed Cafe is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that is committed to feeding hungry people and caring for every heart that comes through our doors. We use a pay-what-you-can concept so that a delicious, nutritious meal is affordable to all. In order to sustain the mission of Mustard Seed Cafe and Garden, we have established a Meal Exchange Policy that provides guidelines for meal exchange eligibility.

Our meal exchange guidelines are as follows:

- **Those who cannot pay** are asked to volunteer at the Cafe for one hour in exchange for a meal valued up to \$7.
- **Those working for class credit or court/judiciary community service are not eligible for a shift meal.** However, if you cannot make a monetary contribution for your meal, you may work an additional hour which will not count toward your class credit or court/judiciary community service in exchange for a meal.
- **Those donating their time.** If you can afford to make a monetary contribution towards your meal to cover the cost of food, we gratefully ask that you consider doing so. This helps us to continue providing meals to those volunteers and patrons who are not able to pay.

### **Mustard Seed Café Volunteer Standards**

1. Be on time.
2. Be fully present with fellow volunteers as well as with the guests you serve. People know when you are distracted. Please no cell phone use during volunteer shifts.
3. **Be fully present with fellow volunteers as well as with the guests you serve.** Yes, this is listed twice!
4. Be positive and encouraging, strive to create a safe and loving environment where the people you are serving see Christ modeled.
5. Maximize your volunteer time by always looking for some way to help and engage, especially during times when the task at hand is not clearly defined. If you are unsure of what to do, ask the General Manager, Chef, or Volunteer Leader for ideas.
6. You are responsible to find a substitute when you are unable to fulfill your scheduled shift. Get to know your fellow volunteers so that you can fill in for each other. Notify Volunteer Coordinator of substitutions.
7. Wear your nametag at all times during your shift.
8. Dress modestly. No shorts. (See General Information for full dress code policy)

## **Scheduled Volunteer Positions**

Please Note That All Positions Require:

- Current food handlers certification
- Closed-toe shoes
- Flexibility and willingness to serve wherever needed
- Minimum of a six-month commitment

### **Greeter/ Front of House**

**2 per shift**

**Wed - Fri: 10:30am - 2:30pm**

**Wednesday night Community Meal: 2 per shift 4pm - 8pm**

Core Responsibilities:

- Welcomes guests as they come through the door.
- Explains the Mustard Seed Café's mission and concept and how the dining experience works.
- Assists guests and helps keep the front of the house clean
- Step into the kitchen and serving line as needed.
- Ministers to the emotional and spiritual needs of volunteers and guests as God gives opportunity (with gentleness and respect ~1 Peter 3:15)\*

### **Dishwasher**

**2 per day**

**Wed - Fri: 1 from 10:30am - 1pm, a different one from 1pm - 3pm**

**Wednesday night Community Meal: 2 per shift 4pm - 8pm**

Core Responsibility:

- Proper washing of plates, pots, pans, silverware, glasses, and other essential food equipment in three-compartment-sink using sanitary procedure

### **Kitchen and Serving Line Crew**

**Tues: 5 per shift; 9am - 1pm**

**Wed - Fri: 3 per shift - 10:30am - 3pm**

**Wednesday night Community Meal: 10 per shift 4pm - 8pm**

\*You're welcome to bring your own tools to work with; we are not responsible for damage or loss.

Core Responsibilities:

- Food Prep
- Serving food and beverages to our guests
- Wash the pots and pans you use (Tuesdays)

**Cashier****1 per shift****Wed - Fri: 10:30am - 3pm**

Core Responsibilities:

- Accepts payments from guests and volunteers
- Serves as an extra set of eyes to help General Manager oversee the front of the house
- Completes daily income reconciliation and paperwork

**Garden Crew Leaders****Wed - Fri: 8:30am - 10:30am**

\*Does not require Food Handlers Certification

Core Responsibilities:

- Works in the garden weekly
- Leads volunteers (in the absence of the Garden Manager) in the doing of garden tasks for that work day

## **Walk-In Volunteer Positions**

These positions are filled by community members who

- Are exchanging volunteer service for a meal
- Are required by schools, probation departments, or the courts to perform volunteer service hours (must keep a record of their own hours)
- Are coming to see what the Mustard Seed Cafe is all about
- Are unable to make a scheduled commitment to volunteer service

### **Requirements for Walk-In Volunteers:**

- 1) Complete Waiver Form
- 2) Sign in and out on Time Sheet
- 3) Wear a Name Tag & Apron
- 4) Comply with the dress code
- 5) Report to the General Manager or Volunteer Leader for the day

### **Core responsibilities:**

- Serves as the face and the welcome of the Mustard Seed Cafe
  - Greet and Welcome guests as they arrive
  - Explain the mission and how the cafe works
- Assists guests as needed (not food or beverage service)
- Helps keep the front of the house clean by bussing tables, etc.

### ***Garden/Grounds Crew***

Wed - Fri

Core responsibilities:

- Helps keep the grounds around the cafe clean
- Helps with the garden as needed

Tell us your special skills and talents!

We hope you'll use those to help us at the Mustard Seed Cafe!

## **General Information**

### **Flexibility**

Although we will try to accommodate your preferred job assignments, when the Café is short staffed or exceptionally busy, you may be asked to pitch in where needed. Flexibility is the key in any food service operation! If you are unable to perform a task because of any physical limitation, please let us know at once so that we can accommodate your needs.

### **Sign-in & Sign-out**

All volunteers will report to the General Manager or Chef at the start of your shift and then immediately sign in to your shift. Upon completing your shift, please sign out. This is extremely important.

### **Schedule Lunch**

All Scheduled Kitchen and Serving Line Volunteers will eat lunch during staggered, scheduled periods (12pm - 12:40pm, 12:40pm -1:20pm, 1:20pm - 2pm). The General Manager is responsible for having the Scheduled Greeter/FOH volunteers take lunch breaks.

### **Tips**

As a nonprofit ministry that operates a restaurant with a mission of feeding all, we do not accept personal tips at MSC. If you are offered a tip, please direct the patron to our Donation Box as they leave the Café.

### **Parking**

Please use parking spaces at a distance from the Cafe entrance as we would like to make the closer parking spaces available to our customers with limited time or mobility.

### **Healthy and Safety**

Remember to stay hydrated throughout your shift. Please use covered drink containers and drink outside of food service areas. Do not continue performing a task if it is causing you any sort of distress. For example, dishwashing can be a strenuous activity! We want all volunteers to feel comfortable with their tasks. If you begin a task and need to switch later on, please let a supervisor know and we will accommodate you as best we can. Please leave valuables at home if possible. Personal items can be left in the cafe office.

### **Dress Code Policy**

In order to create a safe, sanitary, and professional work atmosphere, MSC asks that you please follow these guidelines when coming to volunteer:

- NO Excessively short, tight, or revealing clothing.
- NO Clothing with offensive language or displays of alcohol, tobacco, etc.
- NO Exposed midriff or undergarments.

- NO Excessively stained, ripped, or tattered clothes.
- NO Muscle shirts or tank tops.
- NO SHORTS.
- CLOSED-TOE SHOES REQUIRED.
- A comfortable shoe is recommended.
- Aprons and gloves are provided for you.
- NO JEWELRY ON ARMS OR HANDS (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SIMPLE WEDDING BAND) IN FOOD SERVICE AREAS.
- Avoid perfume and cologne.
- Long hair must be tied back in food service areas (a hat, head scarf, or hairnet must be used).

### **Groups**

We welcome groups of volunteers however we ask that you contact us directly to schedule a date as we cannot accommodate large numbers at one time. We may also be able to schedule your group to assist with special events that are held on weekends/ evenings.

### **Minors**

Any child under the age of 15 must be strictly supervised by an accompanying parent/guardian at all times. A minor release consent form must be filled out for any volunteer under 18. It is up to the staff's discretion to determine if the child is able to carry out the assigned tasks and if necessary adjust the amount of time one may volunteer at the Cafe with children.

## **Appropriate Conduct Expectations**

We feel it is fair and equitable to inform all prospective volunteers that this is a Christian nonprofit ministry, where our ultimate goal is to glorify God in everything we do. We feel it is acceptable to hold all of our employees and volunteers accountable to the Biblical values that are embodied in the Mustard Seed Café mission. These values are: honesty, integrity, fairness, respect for other people, courtesy, compassion, and excellence.

We desire to create a working atmosphere filled with mutual respect, kindness, and a drive to work together to create something of excellence that glorifies the Lord and is of great value to our community.

We reserve the right to ask any volunteer who refuses to meet these expectations to leave the premises.

### **The Mustard Seed Cafe and Garden Staff**

### **The Mustard Seed Cafe and Garden Board of Directors**

# Volunteer Waiver Form

- 1) I understand that my work is voluntary and that some risks may occur due to the nature of the work in the Mustard Seed Cafe, the Mustard Seed Cafe Garden, or at a Mustard Seed Cafe sponsored event. I understand and assume these risks and hereby release Mustard Seed Cafe and its officers, directors, employees, affiliates, and agents from any and all liability regarding my volunteer effort with Mustard Seed Cafe. I agree to save and hold each of them harmless from and against all claims, costs, expenses, demands, and actions with the volunteer effort.
- 2) I have read the **Volunteer Manual**, including the Appropriate Conduct Expectations, and I agree to these terms.
- 3) **Volunteer Health Policy and Agreement**

All Volunteers must report **symptoms** of illness.

I agree to report to the manager before volunteering when I have:

1. Diarrhea
2. Vomiting
3. Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and/or eyes)
4. Sore throat with fever
5. Infected cuts or wounds, or lesions containing pus on the hand, wrist, or any exposed body part, such as boils and infected wounds no matter how small
6. Any other potentially contagious illness

All Volunteers must report **diagnosed** illnesses.

I agree to report to the manager before volunteering when I have:

1. Norovirus
2. Salmonella Typhi (typhoid fever)
3. Shigella spp. infection

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Print Name

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Signature

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Date

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Volunteer Phone #                      Email                      Address

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Emergency Contact Name & Phone #

(If you have already filled out this page, please disregard)

**Volunteer...** Be a part and at the heart of what we do!