

# Wellspring House

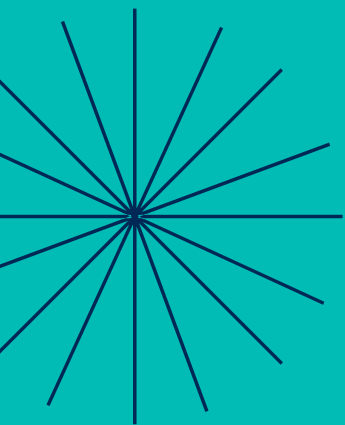


## Volunteer Handbook

MARCH 2023

Mary Hardwick, Community Liaison  
(978) 281-3558 x300





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# Welcome Message

Spring 2023

Dear Wellspring Volunteers,

Thank you for your willingness to give back to the community by volunteering at Wellspring. Volunteers are part of the backbone of Wellspring and we couldn't do the work without you!



With this handbook, I am delighted to share with you some background and information to help you maximize your experience as a volunteer. You'll discover information about Wellspring's programs and services and policies to help you engage as a volunteer safely and in ways that will best serve Wellspring's program participants.

If you have any questions about any of the subjects covered in this handbook or regarding your volunteering experience, please know you can always reach out to Mary Hardwick, Community Liaison at (978) 281-3558 ext. 300 or email [mhardwick@wellspringhouse.org](mailto:mhardwick@wellspringhouse.org). Thanks again for your dedication to Wellspring's community and for believing in the strength of community.

With gratitude,

Melissa A. Dimond, Sc. M.  
President & Executive Director







## Volunteer Mission Statement



Wellspring cultivates a vibrant space for community members to support local families and adults as they strive to become financially secure. In collaboration with staff and program participants throughout the organization, volunteers enjoy meaningful experiences while enhancing Wellspring's impact in the community.

# Wellspring Overview

## Our History

Founded in 1981, Wellspring House is a non-profit organization located in Gloucester founded in 1981 to offer assistance to families and individuals in crisis. Wellspring is guided by the vision of a just society where every member of our community thrives. We are an innovative and welcoming learning environment where people push beyond the limits of their lives to realize success and fulfillment.

In the early 1980's homelessness was emerging as a serious and visible problem across the North Shore, and throughout Massachusetts. Wellspring responded by becoming one of the first non-profits in Massachusetts to shelter homeless families. The families sheltered at Wellspring were both single-parent and two-parent families. They came because they had lost their homes, their sense of security and often their incomes. Rents were raised beyond their means, or they were fleeing abuse or overcrowding. At Wellspring they were able to re-group in a safe, supportive home to gain stability, education and training that would lead to jobs that would enable them to support themselves.

Now forty years later, Wellspring still shelters homeless families, but we also help families prepare for more positive and stable futures. In doing this work, we have placed hundreds of homeless families in new homes and graduated more than fifteen hundred low-income adults from our education and job training programs. Last year through all our programs and services, Wellspring provided assistance to 2,695 adults and children across Cape Ann and the North Shore.

## Our Mission

Wellspring inspires families and adults on the North Shore to achieve employment and financial security through stable housing, education, job training and career readiness.







# Wellspring

## Goals & Objectives

- 1) To help families recover from serious housing crises, avoid homelessness whenever possible, and move into stable housing.
- 2) To help adults use education, job training and career advising to gain the confidence, skills and credentials they need to succeed in jobs that will enable them to support their families.
- 3) To help families and individuals that lack supportive family, friends and neighbors create a "community of mutual support" by building trusting and meaningful relationships.

# Wellspring Programs

## Adult Education and Job Training for Better Jobs

Wellspring offers educational programs that enable more than 300 adults each year to improve their future job prospects and move their families toward more financially-stable futures.

Wellspring's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program is designed to assist adult students to communicate effectively with others as well as prepare for the workforce, job training or college. Our College Readiness Courses (Math, Writing, Computers) enable low-income adult students to update math and English skills and acquire new computer skills. Wellspring students can also avoid costly non-credit developmental courses and prepare for the Accuplacer™ college placement exam and we offer HiSET testing access for local residents who are pursuing their High School Equivalency. Our HOST/MediClerk Training Program provides job training and placement through a partnership with Mass General Brigham's Salem Hospital. Finally, Wellspring's Career Pathways team offers high quality career and educational advising and mentoring to help young adults and adults make viable plans for further education and job training.

## Homelessness Prevention, Shelter and Housing

Through case management, advocacy, referrals, and one-time cash grants, Wellspring screens, assesses and coordinates assistance to help over 1,500 parents and children each year. Our Family Shelter helps families who become homeless find housing and begin to get their lives back on track. Our Homelessness Prevention Line and Fund takes hundreds of calls each year (more than 1,000 this past year) from families in danger of becoming homeless and provides helpful referrals and small one-time cash grants. Our Family Stabilization Program provides 12 - 24 months of services and support to help families avoid either a return to or a first experience of homelessness. Finally, Wellspring owns and operates Chestnut Street, a Single-Room-Occupancy lodging house that provides safe, affordable homes to 11 extremely low-income local adults.



### Awesome Closet

THE source for career wear for our program participants!



# Wellspring Hospitality

## Wellspring Students & Families

In our Basic Needs work, we serve low-income families that are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, many of whom are headed by single parents. In our Education and Job Training work we serve low-income adults who are unemployed or underemployed because they lack the skills and the experience, they need to succeed in jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. All Wellspring services are provided without discrimination to any person's race, religion, color, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability, and most of those we serve have incomes in the lowest levels of the federal poverty standard.



## Wellspring Governance, Staff and Volunteers

Wellspring House, Inc. is a non-profit corporation governed by a 18-person volunteer Board of Directors. Board Members set policy and serve on a number of committees essential to the on-going work of the Corporation - including Audit, Finance, Personnel, Properties, Development, and others.

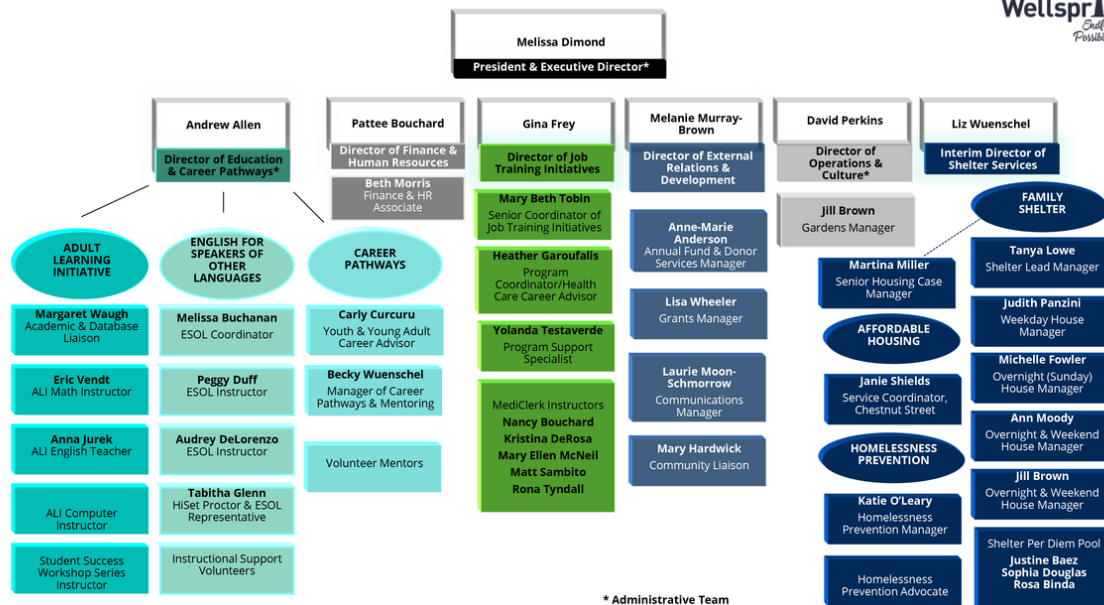
Wellspring has 22 full-time and 15 part-time employees. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors. Directors of Shelter Services, Adult Education, Career Pathways and Job Training Initiatives work with the Executive Director to develop and implement programs and services. The Directors of Finance, Operations and Development support Wellspring's day-to-day operation.

Volunteers are also essential to our work. Last year, 70 volunteers tutored students in our education programs, helped at events, or provided other valuable services to Wellspring.



# Wellspring Organizational Chart

Wellspring House, Inc. Organizational Chart – January 2023



\* Administrative Team



# Ways to Get Involved

Volunteer opportunities are mainly determined by Wellspring's needs, but if any individual or a group brings a particular expertise or skillset, there are ways to get creative! All active volunteers and groups will receive updates about new opportunities on an ongoing basis.

## Volunteer as an individual

Individuals can volunteer for recurring programs or special events. Volunteers are not limited and may commit to more than one opportunity.

## Volunteer with a Group

Groups can coordinate with the Volunteer Coordinator for gardening projects or design a new project.

## Volunteer Remotely

Volunteers do not need to be Onsite to make a difference. We have made remote programs available.

## Volunteer In-Person

Keeping in mind the need for fluidity, we have multiple, safe In person volunteer opportunities available to volunteers.



## Volunteer Benefits

As a volunteer you'll discover how you can enrich your own life while touching the lives of others! There are countless benefits from volunteering – make new friends, increase your social skills, establish a sense of community, improve your self-esteem, learn valuable skills, network with the Wellspring House community, boost your resume, and discover a sense of purpose.

*Thank  
you!*

## List of Volunteer Opportunities

The following is an overview of our volunteer opportunities as needed.

Call Mary Hardwick at (978) 281-3558 ext. 300 or  
email [mhardwick@wellspringhouse.org](mailto:mhardwick@wellspringhouse.org)  
if you would like to learn more.

### Opportunities Working with Program Participants:

Youth Mentor      ESOL Tutor      HiSET Tutor

### Opportunities for Groups and Individuals:

Garden projects      Special projects & events



# Support for Volunteers

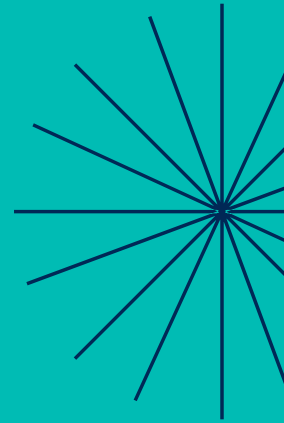
## Supervisor

Every volunteer will be assigned a supervisor, this could be the Wellspring House staff member in charge of the program you are volunteering in, a department head or an experienced volunteer. Volunteers are encouraged to use their supervisor as a resource to ask questions, bring concerns, or provide feedback. If you volunteer for multiple programs, you may have multiple supervisors.



## Volunteer Coordinator

The Volunteer Coordinator (VC) works with staff to recruit, train and onboard new volunteers. The VC and staff will assign every volunteer with an opportunity that matches their interests and skillset. Throughout the volunteer's experience, the VC will send announcements about new opportunities, share resources, hold bi-annual orientations and highlight all the great work that is happening! Volunteers should feel comfortable coming to the VC with any issues you may be having with the program you have been assigned to, your fellow volunteers or your Wellspring House staff supervisor.



# Training and Evaluation

## Orientation

Because we are committed to ensuring our volunteers have a rewarding experience with us, Wellspring House, conducts a bi-annual orientation. During our orientation we will provide a brief overview of our organization, review the Volunteer Handbook, introduce you to our staff and other volunteers, and provide an overview of volunteer opportunities. Additional training will be provided for specific positions

## Program Specific Training

Depending on the assignment, some volunteers may be asked to attend multiple trainings, so you feel equipped to do your job well.

## Ongoing Trainings

Volunteers are encouraged to sign up for and attend any trainings Wellspring offers.

## Convenings

We may ask volunteers to share experiences, best practices and feedback.

## Evaluation

We are always looking for ways to improve your experience as a volunteer. If you have any suggestions, feedback or questions, we would love to hear it!

# Volunteer Rights

- Do meaningful and satisfying work.
- You will work in a healthy and safe environment.
- You will engage in accordance with legislation regarding equal opportunity and anti-discrimination in the workplace.
- Your confidential and personal information to be protected.
- You will be matched with a volunteer assignment based on interests, skills and availability and with the needs of Wellspring House in mind.
- You will be provided with appropriate orientation, training and support to carry out your role.
- Be given a copy of the organization's volunteer handbook and any other policies or procedures that affect your role.
- Complete all forms related to the volunteer position.

# Volunteer Responsibilities

- Be courteous to participants, staff and other volunteers.
- Respect the confidentiality of our participants and not share their personal information with anyone.
- Undertake training (s) as required by Wellspring House depending on your volunteer position.
- Carry out the specified responsibilities of your position.
  - Ask for support when needed.
- Be open and honest with the organization about your expectations and abilities.
  - Be reliable!
- Complete all volunteer hour logs.
- Remember that you represent Wellspring House when volunteering.



# Staff Responsibilities

Ensure all volunteers rights are respected.  
Support volunteers in carrying out their responsibilities.  
Provide volunteers with clear expectations for specific tasks.

Volunteers will receive a thorough orientation training  
for the position and the program in which they will be performing.  
Provide volunteers with ongoing training as Wellspring House community  
members.

Provide volunteers with a point of contact and clear directions for addressing  
concerns. Inform volunteers when their shift will be canceled or of any other  
changes to their shift and role.

Use volunteer time efficiently.  
Maintain volunteer records: contact information, hours and activity.  
Inform the staff and participants when a volunteer has cancelled multiple times  
and has discontinued their service in a specific program.  
Complete a performance review.

# Volunteer Policies

## Basic Boundary Guidelines

1. Remember your role (professional v. personal), and your purpose to be helpful while staying safe.
2. Share your individual opinions/experiences by using general pronoun (e.g. 'many people say..')
3. Do not give participants money.
4. No smoking in the presence of guests/participants.
5. Volunteers are prohibited from engaging in the following activities with participants, guests or staff during the course of their volunteering time:
  - Advertising, promoting or selling products and services
  - Engaging in fraudulent activities
  - Proselytizing for political or religious purposes
  - Providing transportation
  - Providing physical or medical to anyone

## Attendance

Wellspring House tracks all volunteer hours and keeping accurate records is an important part of the documenting volunteer contributions.

Each time you volunteer, you are required to fill out the Volunteer Hour Log.

## Volunteer Hours

As a volunteer, we depend on you to complete your scheduled shifts. We do understand that situations may arise that prevent you from attending your one-time or recurring shift. The team can plan around your schedule.

In the event of an unscheduled absence, illness or emergency, please notify your supervisor at least 24 hours prior to your scheduled shift, or as soon as possible.



## Confidential Information Regarding Program Participants

The confidentiality of all present and former Wellspring House shelter guests, tenants, students and other program participants will be respected and maintained at all times. The fact that someone participates in Wellspring's programs, information about their progress at Wellspring, emotional, medical, social or financial affairs shall not be divulged to anyone other than those who 'need to know'. In the context of a volunteer's responsibilities, this means only sharing confidential information with Wellspring personnel who work directly with the program participant and/or who supervise the volunteer.

Wellspring requires explicit, written consent before sharing confidential information about program participants outside of the organization. If a volunteer suspects that confidential information may need to be shared with people outside of Wellspring, the volunteer should refer the issue to their supervising staff person so that the staff person can follow-up on the issue directly.

# Volunteer Policies

## Drug-Free Workplace

Wellspring House prohibits the use, possession or sale of illegal drugs and narcotics on its premises. A volunteer reporting to a volunteer shift under the influence of illegal drugs, narcotics, or alcohol will not be permitted to enter or remain on the premises. An incident of this nature will result in immediate dismissal.

## Dismissal

Dismissal of a volunteer may take place if a volunteer is unreliable, irresponsible, or disruptive, demonstrates inappropriate behavior, or fails to adhere to the policies and procedures of the Wellspring community. Before a volunteer is dismissed attempts to reconcile the situation will be made including a meeting between staff and the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Incidents

Wellspring House aims to be a respectful community where everyone feels comfortable and safe and has mutual accountability. If you experience disrespectful behavior towards you or someone else, please notify your Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator. It does not matter if it is a guest, participant, another volunteer or a staff member. You can always come to the Volunteer Coordinator and there will not be retaliation. We want everyone to feel safe and respected at our places of business.





# Communications & Social Media Policies

## Speaking on Behalf and Representing Wellspring House

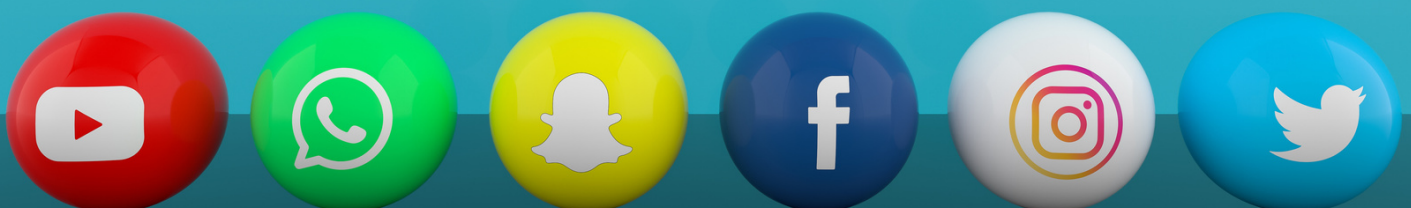
Volunteers should not presume to speak for, or on behalf of, Wellspring House on any matter concerning the organization to the media, press, or other parties without prior approval from the Executive Director. Should any incident occur that generates significant public interest or inquiries, all press releases and other statements of information should be directed to the Executive Director. Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Social Media Policy

Wellspring House, Inc. recognizes the value in social media to build relationships with our community and appreciates the efforts of volunteers to spread the word through their online social networks. When posting about Wellspring House on personal social media, good judgement and common sense are critical. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards involved. Keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow volunteers or staff, or Wellspring House may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Social Media Guidelines

1. Speak in the first person – Do not speak for Wellspring House, Inc. Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for Wellspring House, Inc.
2. Be transparent – if Wellspring House, Inc. is the subject of the content you are creating, be clear about your association with Wellspring House, Inc.
3. Be respectful – Wellspring House, Inc. policies on harassment, ethics and confidentiality extend to all forms of communication both inside and outside of the organization.





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