

Dear Prospective Volunteer,

Thank you for taking the time to consider becoming an AA or NA Volunteer at the Macomb County Jail. This letter will provide you with the information you may need to help you decide if this opportunity is right for you.

The Macomb County Jail (MCJ) is located at 43565 Elizabeth Road, in Mount Clemens, MI, just off of Groesbeck. The website for the jail is <http://sheriff.macombgov.org/Sheriff-Home>. The jail moved to the Elizabeth Rd location in 1954. At that time, there were enough cells to hold a little more than 100 inmates. The jail has expanded many times since 1954 to keep up with the demands of a growing community and growing crime rate. Currently, the jail books over 20,000 inmates per year and has the housing capacity to hold 1,238 inmates.

Many inmates are only in MCJ for a short time and are eligible to post bond and return to the community while they await their court date. Other inmates are not eligible for bond and are detained until the outcome of their case can be determined. In general, people sentenced to serve time in jail are incarcerated for 1 year or less, and people sentenced to serve time in prison are incarcerated for over 1 year.

Inmates are classified to determine their security level and are housed accordingly. AA & NA meetings are offered in most housing units throughout the jail. Most of the female inmates are housed on floors 6/7. Most of the male inmates (with access to AA and/or NA) are housed in the tower section of the jail on floors 2/3, 4/5, 8/9 and 10/11. We refer to floors by a combination of the two areas that share classroom space, such as the inmates on floors 2 & 3 share a classroom, and we refer to that general area as "floor 2/3".

The Clinton Counseling Center Jail Program (also known as the "Jail Program" or "Substance Abuse") has provided free substance abuse programs to the inmates of MCJ since 1985. We are licensed and accredited to provide substance abuse prevention & treatment services to the inmates. Our programs include Fast Track, which is a 12 session/4 week long early intervention program and Extended Track, which is a 12 week long treatment program.

In addition to providing Fast & Extended Track, our agency is in charge of managing the AA & NA Meetings. We rely on volunteers to provide AA & NA meetings in the jail. The Jail Program processes the volunteer applications, provides Volunteer Orientations & security rechecks, keeps track of attendance, enforces volunteer rules, inspects and delivers donated literature to the AA & NA bins, acts as a liaison between the MCJ and the volunteer program, assists in problem solving and assigns long term volunteers to coordinator positions. Coordinators are in charge of overseeing the volunteers assigned to their area, including providing hands on training to new volunteers (or setting them up to come in with seasoned volunteers), setting up the rotation of volunteers for each week of the month and finding volunteers to fill in if other volunteers will be absent. The coordinators also act as liaisons between the volunteers and the Jail Program by reporting problems, assisting with orientation and attending Coordinator's Meetings.

The first team of AA & NA volunteers at MCJ were recruited and trained in 1988. Since then, hundreds of volunteers have helped to deliver the message of hope and recovery found in AA & NA to thousands of inmates. It takes a staff of 80-100 volunteers to provide 20 AA & 20 NA meetings each month. Our current volunteers include people who've been with the program for over 17 years to some who have just started. The average length of service for our current volunteers is 4 years.

So, now that you know the history of the program and how its set up within the jail, the next big question is, "is this right for me?" It's fairly common to have some reservations about coming into a jail as a volunteer. At the Volunteer Orientation, we address concerns about safety and review a set of rules and guidelines that were created to protect the safety & security of our volunteers, staff, inmates & institution. We've found that *most people coming in to the jail as volunteers know right away if this is something they want to continue doing*. Many of our volunteers have shared that they get as much out of the jail meetings as the inmates do and how gratifying the experience is.

If this sounds like something you'd like to check out, you are welcome to complete the Volunteer Application that is enclosed. You have your choice of how to return the application:

By Mail:

Clinton Counseling Center Jail Program

43565 Elizabeth Rd.

Mt. Clemens, MI 48043

ATTN: Lauren Piatek

By Fax: (586) 307-9305

By Email: (complete application, scan & attach)

See email addresses below

What happens next?

1. Once your application is received, it will be reviewed by the Jail Program.
2. If we believe that you may be a good fit with our volunteer program, you will be invited to attend a Volunteer Orientation.
3. Please RSVP to the Volunteer Orientation so we can get an estimate of how many attendees to expect. *If you can't make it, but want to be considered for future orientations, we will need to know that so that we retain your application.*
4. The Volunteer Orientation takes about 1-1 ½ hours. You will be provided with training regarding safety and security issues and rules. You will be asked to fill out a Jail Security Clearance Form, Volunteer Agreement Form and Meeting Selection Form. You will need to bring in your Michigan Driver's License or State ID Card.
5. Following orientation, you will be contacted and informed if you were "approved" or "not approved" to volunteer.
6. If approved, you will be assigned to a meeting and given the contact information for the AA or NA Coordinator that oversees your meeting. It will be your responsibility to make the first contact with your coordinator and set up your start date. Your first 6 months of volunteering will be with the coordinator or a more experienced volunteer.
7. We are asking for a 6 month commitment to volunteer, however, **if you give it a try and find that it is not for you, you are free to drop out**. On the other hand, if this "clicks" for you and you want to continue volunteering, you are welcome to do so, pending the renewal of your security clearance every 2 years.

Questions, please get in touch with any of us:

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