

ACTION VC | [WWW.ACTIONVC.ORG](http://WWW.ACTIONVC.ORG) | (805) 987.0300

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



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**ACTION VC**

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# WELCOME TO THE MOVEMENT

## WELCOME TO THE ACTION VC COMMUNITY CHANGERS!

We are so excited you have decided to join our team of thousands of volunteers across Ventura County seeking to create change right in our own backyards! Your participation ensures that we will complete multiple projects throughout the year to help those who are under-resourced and most vulnerable in our local neighborhoods. You are an integral part of our team- we would not exist without people like YOU!

ACTION VC is a local nonprofit organization that is making an impact in our communities- one neighbor at a time. We exist to serve the most vulnerable in our county by partnering with agencies, empowering volunteers, mobilizing churches and businesses, and raising awareness of the social and economic issues in our communities. We want to see neighbors connected, relationships restored, and communities inspired. We are already beginning to see this change happening, and hope that you will join us in our mission to love our neighbors well in Ventura County!

You may be wondering: what types of projects does ACTION VC take on? We have 6 different programs geared toward meeting the tangible needs of our neighbors in Ventura County. They are Community Christmas Shoppe, Love VC, Local Love Days, NOW Projects, Accessibility Projects, and Emergency Services. For more information on these programs please visit our website: [www.actionvc.org](http://www.actionvc.org).

We would love to get you connected where your talents and skills will shine best! Please reach out if you ever have any questions or concerns. We are glad that you are with us on this journey and look forward to serving our communities TOGETHER.

Sincerely,

Natalie Pavia  
Executive Director

Looking for another way to contribute to ACTION VC? Give online!  
Visit **[www.ACTIONvc.org/donate](http://www.ACTIONvc.org/donate)**

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# INTRODUCING ACTION VC

## OUR PURPOSE

ACTION VC is a different kind of non-profit in Ventura County- we are individuals, churches, businesses and agencies who come together to serve the vulnerable in our communities. We believe that it takes a connected community to ensure that no vulnerable person falls through the cracks in our system. Together, we work to provide low-income seniors and persons with disabilities access to tangible service projects that improve their home safety and quality of life.

## OUR MISSION

We exist to serve the most vulnerable in Ventura County by partnering with agencies, empowering volunteers, mobilizing churches and businesses, and raising awareness of the social and economic issues in our communities.

## OUR VISION

Neighbors connected. Relationships restored. Communities inspired.

## OUR CORE VALUES

- **Connected Community**- We believe all systems within our community need to work together to create holistic care for the most vulnerable in Ventura County. That is why we work to unite all of us- schools, agencies, churches and businesses- to serve our neighbors in need.
- **Sustainable Service**- We provide tangible service projects that improve the quality of life and home safety for those in financial, physical, and spiritual need. By setting aside an hour of our time to meet a repair need for a neighbor, we remind them that they are cared for and loved.
- **Transformative Time**- When we take part in service projects for our neighbors on the margins, we become aware of social and economic disparities within our communities- and Ventura County. This awareness enables us to help our communities heal, grow, and thrive.
- **Sound Stewardship**- Every investment in ACTION VC has the power to be multiplied. Each year on our \$200,000 budget, we put nearly \$900,000 back into Ventura County in donated toys, project materials and volunteer labor. That is more than four times the initial investment!



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# INTRODUCING ACTION VC

## OUR TEAM

Meet the hearts behind the work that we do!



**NATALIE  
PAVIA**

Executive Director



**KAYLA  
SAWOSKI**

Project Coordinator



**JAVUAGHN  
FERNANDERS**

Development Coordinator



**STEPHANIE  
MONTENEGRO**

Event Coordinator

## OUR PROGRAMS

Our programs are designed to meet tangible, physical, and spiritual needs.

**COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS SHOPPE** → This fun and festive event serves under-resourced families by providing toys for Christmas. We partner with local schools and social service agencies to find families otherwise unable to afford Christmas presents for their children and invite them to “shop” for toys at no cost.

**LOVE VC** → Our annual event brings acts of service to under-served communities across Ventura County. On one day in June, thousands of volunteers complete hundreds of large-scale projects to meet critical needs for low-income neighborhoods and local organizations.

**LOCAL LOVE DAYS** → We help businesses, small groups, and schools give back to their cities through smaller, but specifically tailored, projects that they can do in one day! Local Love Day projects focus on improving neighborhoods and communities!

**NOW (NEEDS OF THE WEEK) & ACCESSIBILITY PROJECTS** → We help under-resourced seniors, families, and those with disabilities by meeting critical minor home repair and accessibility needs that restore their safety and improve their quality of life.

**EMERGENCY SERVICES** → Currently, our COVID-19 services provide essential help to those who can't leave their homes due to health concerns and don't have family or neighbors around to help them. We bring phone companionship to those living in isolation, deliver groceries for the immuno-compromised, and provide care packages for those unable to make ends meet.

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# WHO AND HOW WE SERVE

## WHO WE SERVE

With approximately 215,000 seniors, and over 76,000 low-income individuals in Ventura County, the goal of ACTION VC programs is to strategically connect volunteers with the individuals and families of those who need the most help. Numerous county agencies, hospital social workers, in-home caregivers, and other non-profits request volunteers from ACTION VC every day. ACTION VC responds by donating valuable time and talents to serve people in need. The generosity of ACTION VC volunteers impacts the lives of over 14,000 Ventura County residents every year.

## OUR TARGETED INITIATIVES

We focus on serving those who often fall through the cracks of care in our systems.

### UNDER-RESOURCED SENIORS

Seniors (65 and over) are the fastest-growing demographic in Ventura County, and 8% live below the poverty level. While most want to age in their homes, many live alone and can't take care of themselves on their own. By connecting our seniors to volunteers in their neighborhood, we can create restorative relationships, and meet critical needs that improve their well-being and safety.

### VULNERABLE FAMILIES

There are many families that are at risk of being stuck in the cycle of poverty. They live paycheck to paycheck but are too wealthy to qualify for gov benefits, they have been impacted by an unforeseen loss of a loved one and now parent alone, or have had an unplanned medical emergency. By acting as a neutral ground, we connect families with other resources in the community to assist them, therefore meeting a "spiritual need" as well as a physical one.

### PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

33% of the population are people living with one or more disabilities, and the majority are seniors. Persons with a disability are more likely to live in poverty compared to their neighbors. We tackle their accessibility needs so that they can remain independent and safe at home.

### UNDER-SERVED NEIGHBORHOODS

Economic disparity and Invisible poverty exist within our community, and we often do not see it because we are contained by our own bubble. By linking arms with our church, agency, the school, and business partners, we combine our efforts to impact our communities- and truly move the needle on change!

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# OUR PHILOSOPHY OF VOLUNTEERISM

## **VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF ACTION VC!**

ACTION VC donates over 20,000 hours of volunteer labor in the community every year. This donation of time and talents is possible solely through the generosity and dedication of nearly 4,000 volunteers. Every time an ACTION VC volunteer visits with a lonely senior or completes a small home repair, they display acts of service and embody a community that cares for their own. They are actively participating in the movement of serving our community- one neighbor at a time. In over 15 years of serving together throughout the Ventura County area, ACTION VC has established a legacy of giving back through volunteers' time and talents. **WE APPRECIATE YOU!**



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# OUR PHILOSOPHY OF VOLUNTEERISM

## WHY VOLUNTEER WITH ACTION VC?

Hear directly from the volunteers and clients who have been encouraged by serving with us!

"I have enjoyed serving with ACTION VC for years now, and appreciate this unique opportunity ACTION VC has given me to shop for clients' personal grocery lists & deliver groceries to their homes while they are isolating. You never know what type of impact you will make as an ACTION VC volunteer!"

**-HEATHER, COVID VOLUNTEER, NEWBURY PARK, CA**

"Friends at ACTION VC, thank you for sending one of your volunteers to my house to do repairs to my stucco. He did a great job and was a very nice person. I am glad that there is an organization like this to help people."

**-PAT, A DISABLED SENIOR, CAMARILLO, CA**

"I love you all for the help you are sacrificially making for my mom. God is faithful and will not forget your labor of love."

**-GREGORY, SON OF SENIOR RESIDENT, THOUSAND OAKS, CA**



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# VOLUNTEER ONBOARDING

## HOW WE ENGAGE, VET AND TRAIN VOLUNTEERS

There are many ways individuals from schools, churches, and businesses can come to volunteer with us. Here is how you can get started.

### VOLUNTEER PLEDGE & APPLICATION

If you are volunteering on your own, you can sign the volunteer pledge on our website, at [www.actionvc.org](http://www.actionvc.org). If you are looking to volunteer with your businesses, church, or school group, contact us at (805) 987-0300 to get started! Tell us what special skills you may have or what program you would like to be involved with.

### VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Please review the Handbook and Training Video before you volunteer with us. Every month, ACTION VC hosts a 30-minute virtual training to go over best serving practices- all volunteers are welcome to join! All volunteers must also sign a Liability Form before volunteering.

### PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

Our Volunteer Coordinator will contact you about local opportunities. Keep an eye out in your email for updates from the ACTION VC Team.

### CLOSING OUT A PROJECT

After a project is complete, we kindly ask that you would fill out a Feedback Form to let us know how the project went and to update the project details. The form can be found at our website at: [www.actionvc.org/project-feedback](http://www.actionvc.org/project-feedback).

### COMMUNITY CHANGER FACEBOOK GROUP

If you want exclusive access to our monthly training, and frequently asked questions by our volunteers and community, join our Facebook Group Community Changers. If you are a veteran volunteer or looking to serve for the first time, this group is the perfect resource to encourage you! Find out more at: [www.facebook.com/groups/actionvcvolunteers](https://www.facebook.com/groups/actionvcvolunteers)

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# VOLUNTEER/CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

## WE ASK ALL VOLUNTEERS TO UPHOLD THE FOLLOWING:

**DO:** Obtain consent for collecting, using, and disclosing personal information, except when appropriate (for example, in an emergency). The ACTION VC Liability Release Form can be signed to obtain written consent from each person serving and/or receiving volunteer services.

**DO:** Use and disclose personal information only for the purposes for which it was collected (for example, Name, address, primary contact phone number to arrange the service project.) ACTION VC retains this information only to connect volunteers with the people they serve.

**DO:** Ensure that all information obtained remains SECURE, and is kept only until the completion of the service project.

**DO NOT:** Ask overly personal questions (for example, the person's age, income, work status, family structure, or personal history). These questions may be viewed as INTRUSIVE and are not required to complete the volunteering experience.

**Please be considerate of others' emotions and privacy!**

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# VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

## WE ASK ALL VOLUNTEERS TO STATE THE FOLLOWING:

### AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF MY COMMUNITY AND ACTION VC, I WILL

- Commit to serve seriously and perform to the best of my abilities. I will be prepared and bring any necessary materials for the service project.
- Take breaks and stay hydrated while serving and encourage others to do the same.
- Respect the mission and vision of ACTION VC while serving the community.
- Follow through on commitments I have made and will promptly inform ACTION VC if I am unable to serve as scheduled.
- Obey and follow all local and federal laws.
- Respect the property of the individual.
- Be courteous, friendly, and cooperative with ALL volunteers.
- Deal with conflict or difficulties in an appropriate manner.
- Offer constructive feedback about ACTION VC, my group, my organization, my church, and the persons served in an appropriate manner.
- Let ACTION VC know if I encounter an issue with the person you are serving or have concerns about the service project that you selected.
- Demonstrate respect for the direction and decisions of ACTION VC, my group, my organization, my church, the persons served.
- Treat ACTION VC staff, my fellow volunteers, people served and members of the public fairly and without discrimination.
- Not accept valuable gifts/money from those served. (Please send donations to the ACTION VC office)
- Not consume alcohol/drugs while volunteering with ACTION VC.
- Kindly say, "I am not able to do that" and/or recommend that the person call ACTION VC to request additional projects if I am asked to do additional projects for the person I am serving or anything I am uncomfortable with.

Note: This list is not exhaustive and may not cover every situation or provide you with a set of absolute standards. Please seek clarification from ACTION VC staff as needed.

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# NOTES ON SAFETY

## **MINORS AS VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers under the age of 18 who wish to participate in volunteer service must have a signed written consent letter or liability form of a parent or legal guardian before they may begin service. The volunteer tasks assigned to a minor shall be limited to age-appropriate activities and will be performed solely at the discretion and responsibility of the parent or legal guardian. Additionally, the parent or legal guardian is required to be present with the minor throughout the duration of the service project.

## **VEHICLE REGULATIONS/PARKING**

ACTION VC does not require the use of personal vehicles for the transport of passengers or goods. Use of personal vehicles in the performance of volunteer service is entirely at the liability and risk of the vehicle owner and operator. All California Department of Motor Vehicle laws and regulations apply.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

**IF YOU ENCOUNTER A SERIOUS EMERGENCY OR BODILY INJURY, CALL 911.**

Locations of local hospitals and urgent care facilities near your project site can be obtained through a personal online search prior to visiting your service site. Please be aware of your surroundings and take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of your person, fellow volunteers, and any other individuals nearby.

Note: If you are injured on the project site, an Incident Report Form **MUST** be filled out and submitted to ACTION VC via fax (805) 987-0334 or email ([action@actionvc.org](mailto:action@actionvc.org)).



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# THANK YOU FROM OUR STAFF!

## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR ACTS OF SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF VENTURA COUNTY.**

Because of your support, ACTION VC serves thousands of people in the community every year. There is much work to be done, but when you share your time and talents, you give hope to people who are struggling with loneliness, health concerns, housing issues, and other financial strains. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of so many!

Your donations keep ACTION VC serving. Your financial support means volunteers can purchase grab bars, construction materials for wheelchair ramps, non-skid paint, cleaning supplies, and other essential materials to make a difference in the lives of people in need.

To donate today, please visit [www.actionvc.org/donate](http://www.actionvc.org/donate).

If you own a local business and want to support ACTION VC through sponsorship, please visit <https://give.actionvc.org/sponsor>





# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Before you begin your service project, please complete your training reading through this handbook and by submitting the ACTION VC Liability Form. You may also check out the additional resources relevant to your project on the [www.actionvc.org](http://www.actionvc.org) webpage.

- VOLUNTEER LIABILITY FORM (**DIGITAL LINK-** [CLICK HERE](#))
- WE ARE ACTION VC (**VIDEO-** [CLICK HERE](#))
- SERVICE PROJECT HOURS LOG
- INCIDENT REPORT FORM