



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK 2023



Welcome to Silvera, and thank you

Volunteers lift our communities!

Silvera's volunteers are a crucial part of our organization, serving the 1,750 residents who make their homes with us. We are deeply grateful you've decided to share your time and energy with them.

Silvera has provided affordable housing and services to Calgary seniors for over 60 years. During that time, volunteering has moved from being an exceptional initiative to a mainstream practice at Silvera's 27 communities across the city.

Thank you for becoming part of this important legacy. You are truly providing kindness and showing care by giving your time to Silvera residents.

Committing your time reminds residents that they truly matter.

We hope our supportive environment provides you with an enjoyable and rewarding volunteer experience. Volunteers, like you, are essential members of our team. We appreciate your caring, generosity and support.



Arlene Adamson, CEO





Who we are

With more than 60 years of service in Calgary, Silvera is a trusted leader in providing a diverse selection of safe, affordable housing and important services. We are a non-profit organization that serves Calgary seniors with differing levels of income. We have 27 locations in 22 neighbourhoods, 1,750 residents and 400 caring employees.

We work and advocate for Calgary seniors with the best of our hearts and minds. Yet, we don't do it alone. Silvera relies on the leadership, wisdom, commitment and generosity of many people, including our amazing volunteers!



Our purpose:
Live your best life.

We value:

Accountability

Honesty

Relationships

Innovation



About our communities of people

Silvera residents are mainly people of modest means who can live independently.

Silvera is not a healthcare provider, although home care is delivered daily to many residents by partners such as Alberta Health Services. We don't offer long-term care or assisted living. One exception is our Beaverdam community, which serves residents with early-stage dementia.

The average age of residents in our eight supportive living communities is 83.

About two-thirds of our residents are women.

We aim to build community for everyone who calls Silvera home. We celebrate the uniqueness and independence of each and every resident and embrace many different cultures, backgrounds, religious beliefs and ethnicities.

All residents have the right to their thoughts, feelings, philosophies, religious preferences and beliefs.

As volunteers, it is important to respect each resident and their individual choices.



Our collaborative commitment

Volunteers are a valuable resource and play an important role at Silvera.

We are committed to supporting our volunteers by:

- Offering a volunteer program that is well resourced and managed to ensure we provide a supportive setting.
- Clearly outlining volunteer position descriptions in order to set volunteers up for success.
- Ensuring every volunteer receives a thorough orientation as well as the opportunity to connect with our employees, ask questions and gain confidence with their responsibilities.
- Striving to create an environment with open communication, teamwork and respect for diversity.
- Providing continuous opportunities to learn, including experiencing volunteering in a variety of positions.
- Recognizing volunteers for their contributions to Silvera.

What we need from volunteers

- Attend volunteer orientation, as well as ongoing development opportunities.
- Act as an ambassador of Silvera by demonstrating sound judgment, responsible decision making and always keeping the wellbeing of residents in mind.
- Ensure consistent communication with employees by providing updates and noting residents' feedback about programs, including any comments or concerns.
- Respect and value the diversity of residents and their opinions as well as work together to deliver successful programs.



What Silvera volunteers need to know

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every volunteer must sign a confidentiality agreement before volunteering at Silvera.

PROTECTION FOR PERSONS IN CARE ACT

This Act is intended to stop/prevent abuse of adults living in lodges, hospitals, nursing homes and other facilities. Volunteers have a legal responsibility to uphold this Act if abuse is suspected. The Act stipulates fines and penalties for those who do not comply with the Act. Please report suspicions of abuse to the Community Manager.

BOUNDARIES AND LIMITATIONS:

We support the creation of respectful and professional relationships in our communities. It is important to remember we do not allow volunteers to transport residents in their vehicles at any time.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Please do not:

- Use Silvera's property or identification to carry on a private business.
- Use Silvera's time for any purpose related to personal financial gain through outside activities or employment.
- Place oneself in a position of obligation to a resident.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE

We value our volunteers and count on them to be reliable and responsible. In order to track volunteer shifts, please sign into the My Impact app and record your hours.

Volunteers are expected to let the Silvera community know through the My Impact app if there is a change in their availability.



DRESS CODE

Attire is expected to be clean and in good shape. To comply with Silvera's safety regulations, anyone working in community must wear closed-toed/ closed-heel shoes. Please avoid wearing scented products for residents who may have fragrance sensitivities, asthma, allergies and other respiratory ailments. All volunteers will be issued a name tag that must be worn at all times while volunteering in and outside of community.

MOBILE PHONES

Taking pictures of residents on your phone is not permitted unless a Community Manager has approved of such and the resident has given consent in accordance with Silvera's policies.

SOCIAL MEDIA

It is within everyone's rights to share where they volunteer on social media. However, please do not speak on behalf of Silvera. Disclosure of any private Silvera information is not permitted unless it has been published by Silvera in a public document.

COMMUNICATION

The Silvera community you are volunteering at is responsible to keep volunteers up-to-date through the My Impact app or by phone. We will contact you through the app about outbreak notices, upcoming events and training sessions, requests for volunteers, and so on.

REPORTING INCIDENTS

All incidents, whether large or small, should be reported to the Community Manager on site to prepare an incident report. The report will be completed with the volunteer's assistance.

ABUSE

Silvera has a zero-tolerance policy for abuse. Please inform the Community Manager or an employee if you witness any type of abusive behaviour towards residents, employees or others in community.

REPORTING COMPLAINTS

When there is a complaint from an employee, volunteer, or resident, an investigation is required. Employees, volunteers, and residents are encouraged to resolve any disputes amongst themselves first. Any unresolved issues should be brought to the attention of the Community Manager. All employees and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.



GIFTS

Volunteers may not accept gifts of any kind.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

You will be advised where you can safely store your personal items while volunteering. Silvera does not assume any liability for loss, stolen and/ or damage to personal property.

SECURITY CHECKS

In compliance with the Protection for Persons in Care Act, all volunteers will be required to complete a security clearance, which includes a criminal record check and a vulnerable sector search.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

While on Silvera property, it is not permitted to use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

DISMISSAL AND TERMINATION

We expect you to take your volunteer role at Silvera seriously. Dismissal of a volunteer can occur for any of the following reasons:

- Consecutive, unexcused absences.
- Failing to comply with established volunteer policies and procedures.
- Volunteering while in a state of intoxication or under the influence of drugs.
- Dismissal of a volunteer can happen by voluntary resignation, retirement or dismissal.

A photograph of a group of people outdoors. In the center, an older woman with short grey hair, wearing a black jacket with white floral patterns over a blue top, is smiling and holding a purple and white patterned cane. To her left, a woman in a red shirt is looking down. To her right, a woman with sunglasses on her head is looking towards the center. A man in a red shirt and glasses is partially visible on the far right. The background shows a paved area, grass, and trees.

Health, safety and wellness

Silvera requires all visitors to sign in and out when entering and exiting our communities.

FIRE SAFETY

Volunteers are required to be informed of, and to follow, the fire safety procedures in community.

HAZARDS

A hazard assessment will be completed before attempting a new task. This procedure shall be reviewed with volunteers at the volunteer orientation.

VOLUNTEER WELLNESS

To minimize the risk of spreading illness to residents, employees and other volunteers, please do not come into the community if you have a cold, flu, fever or are not feeling well.

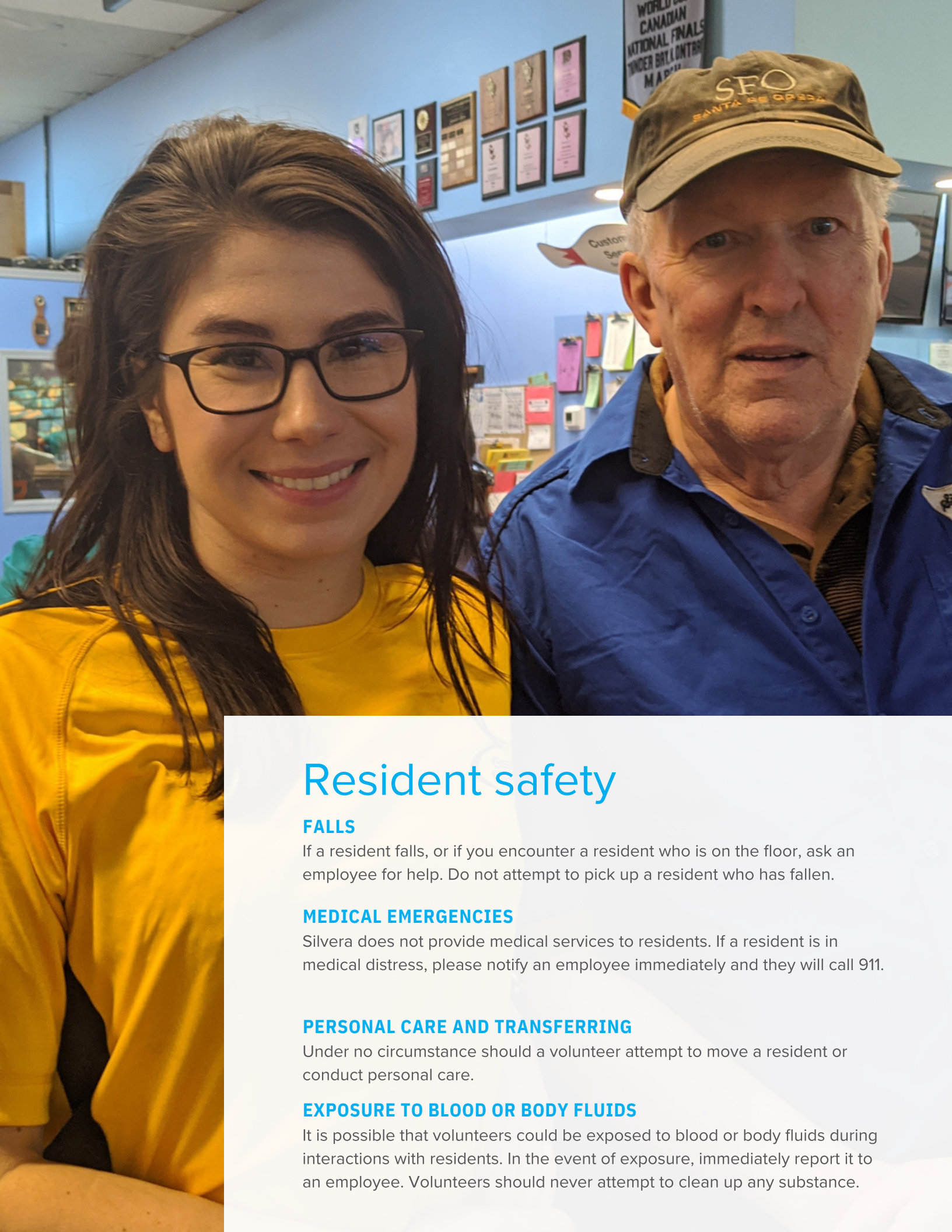
If you cannot fulfill your volunteer commitment, please update the My Impact app and contact the community where you were planning to volunteer.

HANDWASHING

Preventing and/or controlling the spread of infections is a very important part of Silvera's health and safety program. Hand hygiene is one of the most important means of preventing infection. Silvera encourages frequent hand washing or the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers while in community.

OUTBREAK

Activities in community may be suspended when an outbreak is declared as per the order of the medical officer. Volunteers will be notified via the My Impact app if an outbreak occurs.



Resident safety

FALLS

If a resident falls, or if you encounter a resident who is on the floor, ask an employee for help. Do not attempt to pick up a resident who has fallen.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Silvera does not provide medical services to residents. If a resident is in medical distress, please notify an employee immediately and they will call 911.

PERSONAL CARE AND TRANSFERRING

Under no circumstance should a volunteer attempt to move a resident or conduct personal care.

EXPOSURE TO BLOOD OR BODY FLUIDS

It is possible that volunteers could be exposed to blood or body fluids during interactions with residents. In the event of exposure, immediately report it to an employee. Volunteers should never attempt to clean up any substance.



THANK YOU ...

To our volunteers thank you for your time. We appreciate your commitment to Silvera and to our residents. Our goal is to provide you with a safe and supportive environment so you may have an enjoyable and rewarding experience with us!



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