



SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CANADA

GENERAL MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION

Overview

Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul provide service to the poor and others in need, as a result of life's challenges. This ministry is about giving of yourself and allows you to both answer God's call to service and to respond to needs within our immediate or wider community. Although home visitations have traditionally represented the core work of the members, Vincentians and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul continue to respond to new needs and realities. ("No work of charity is foreign to the Society", International Rule article 1.3)

Mandatory Activities/Responsibilities:

The Vincentian is a member of a Conference (generally parish-based) and, as such, commitments include:

- Serving those in need through activities as determined by the local Conference. These activities currently may include home visitations, holding the poor box after Masses, a Christmas basket program, and clothing and food drives;
- Actively and regularly participating in the activities of the Society, according to the principles set forth in the Canadian Rule, and faithfully attending the meetings of the Conference;
- Contributing to the spirituality of members, simplicity and Christian joy which are the hallmark of Conference meetings. Each member being an active participant in the process of collectively striving to improve services to those in need;
- Responding to the need for involvement on various committees, or, in an Executive position, as your talents and interests lead you;
- Meeting and continuing to abide by the National Council policies and procedures of the Society in Canada, as well as local policy and practices as approved by the Conference or Council.

Qualifications:

- 18 years of age or older (unless approved in particular circumstances with regards to recruitment and training of youth);

- All persons of good will, desirous of living the Catholic faith by loving and serving their neighbour in need, participating in the activities of the Society, according to the principles set forth in the Canadian Rule and the Mission and Values of the Society in Canada, may become members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.
- Successful completion of all elements of the Screening procedures for all members.

Personal Traits and Qualities:

- A deep desire to develop one's own spirituality, serve the poor, as well as others in need, and to commit some of your time, talents and self to this ministry;
- The ability and the commitment to see Christ in those whom you will serve;
- A genuine spirit of humility and generosity;
- A deep sensitivity to, and respect for the person and his or her range of needs;
- A sense of humour, especially about yourself;

Orientation and Training:

- Completion of an orientation program for new members and mentoring by experienced Vincentian;
- Familiarity with the Canadian Rule;
- Commit to ongoing training, as available.

Client Group:

People with a range of needs will welcome or seek out the assistance of the Society. Some will require financial or material assistance, others a compassionate ear or some advice. Assistance will usually be provided through home visitations. In other cases, those in need might receive support and assistance at another appropriate location, such as the church hall.

Support, Supervision and Evaluation:

The most substantive support and supervision is provided by the president and other members of the Conference. Through attendance at regular meetings, sharing of experiences and expertise as related to the cases of those served, the member is able to self-evaluate. Through this process the group is able to assist and guide the member.

When, in the opinion of the Conference president and members, a member is not providing appropriate service to those in need, or is behaving contrary to the principles of the Rule in spite of efforts to address the concern, the President of the Conference will address the issue according to National Council policy and procedure (**ADM 003, FIN 002, ADM-PR 003**).

Length of Appointment:

A person may remain a member as long as he or she continues to be a member in good standing with a Conference . He or she must always abide the by the requirements for membership including screening and renewal procedures and adherence to the principles of the Rule, the Mission and values of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Canada.

Benefits and Working Conditions:

You are provided with the opportunity to answer Christ's call to serve and to respond to the need of the less fortunate. In order to do so, it will be necessary for you to be available to visit homes as the need arises, to attend regular meetings and to assist in other ways. You, as a Christian volunteer, must be prepared to be generous with your time, talents and compassion.

Screening Measures.

Before becoming a full member, each candidate must:

- Submit a completed Member Application Form,
- Provide three references;
- Submit an appropriate Police Records Check report;
- Successfully complete the interview process;
- Sign a Service Covenant and confidentiality Agreement;
- Complete the Orientation Session or mentoring program;
- Submit to renewal of Police Record checks each 5 years..