

About Interfaith Hospitality Network:

For almost two decades, Interfaith Hospitality Network of Somerset County (IHN) has been a successful permanent solution for many client families. IHN's primary objective is to break the cycle of homelessness through case management programs that include direct intervention services, physical and emotional health care services, good nutrition education, and educational and therapeutic parenting. The key to the program's success is the clients must cooperate and work hard to earn their way out of this cycle. There is no free ride and the IHN staff makes sure the clients understand this. There are many success stories to tell, all the more reason to support IHN.

Interested in becoming an IHN Volunteer?

Our parish networks with other local religious and social service organizations to provide basic needs for these clients, including temporary shelter on a rotation basis, five or six times a year for one week. We have about 70 volunteers who perform a wide variety of tasks and services. But we can always use more helping hands. Our parish has over 9,000 members, and surely we can have greater participation. You know the saying "if something needs to get done ask a busy person". Our parish IHN program is running short of busy people. Many hands make light work – so why not help?

There is good work for everyone who wants to help. Do you like to entertain children with reading or play activities? Can you and/or your family spare time in the evening, overnight or early morning hours to serve as hosts for our guests? Confirmation candidates and high school seniors, are you looking for community service hours? Do you like to cook or bake? Can you drive a truck?

Think for a moment, what a difference just a few hours of your time for one day or night can make for a family who is trying to live in a healthy environment like yours?

The satisfaction you get is priceless!

IHN Volunteer Opportunities:

- **Evening Hosting (5:00-9:00 pm)**
- **Overnight Hosting (9:00 pm – 6:00 am)**
- **Morning Hosting (6:00-7:15 am)**
- **Rooms Set Up**
- **Rooms Breakdown**
- **Cooking Team**
- **Baking Team**
- **Linens Pick Up and Return**
- **Shopping for Supplies**
- **Moving Truck Drivers**

Please Note: Any adult who wishes to volunteer as an evening, overnight or morning host **on a long-term basis** must be registered in VIRTUS, the diocesan children protection awareness program. The program requires your attendance at one training session, and electronic fingerprinting/background check. For more information, go to the website <https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus>.

Future parish hosting dates: July 26 - August 1, 2009
October 4-10, 2009
December 27, 2009 - January 2, 2010

Hosting Hours:

Evening (5:00-9:00 pm); OK for families who can help for 1-2 hours

Overnight (9:00 pm-6:00 am)

Morning (6:00-7:30 am)

Evening/Morning hosting - call Cynthia O'Connor at 908-203-0345.

Overnight hosting - call Lois Czajkowski at 908-534-9553, or
Bob Craig at 908-927-1128.

Any questions or suggestions, please contact Bob & Eileen Bracale, St. Bernard parish IHN Coordinators, at 908-253-9372, or email at bobbybrac@verizon.net.

Evening Hosting

- We schedule two hosts for each evening
- Share an evening meal with our guests
- Provide companionship and organize activities

Set up the dining area. Arrange placemats on the dining tables, and place the prepared foods, napkins, utensils, cups, etc. on the tables alongside the wall. All supplies are located in the IHN cabinets above the kitchen sink. dining table before dinner and clean up after dinner along with the guests.

Dinner will arrive around 5:45 pm. It is important that dinner does not begin before 6:00 pm. Sunday through Friday. This is to ensure that all the food has arrived prior to the guests and hosts eating, and allows extra time for those delivering the food. You may use the kitchen stove to keep the food warm.

Greet our guests when they arrive after 5:00 pm. Have the guests make any notes in the Guests' Log section of the white notebook if they will be leaving for any time during the evening.

After dinner clean up the dining area, put any leftover food away, packaged and ready for transport when the van arrives the next morning. Use the supplies available in the IHN kitchen cabinets. Encourage the guests to help you where they can.

For those guests who need bag lunches for the next day this is a good time to pack any lunches they will need and place them in the refrigerator. Please encourage any guests with school age children who take their lunch to do so.

Take time to play games with the children, read a story, or get out the IHN toys and art supplies usually stored in Room C.

Saturday evening hosts, be sure to offer plastic garbage bags to any of the guests who will need them to put their sheets and blankets in on Sunday morning. The bags are in the IHN cabinets.

Overnight Hosting:

- For safety reasons we are required to have two hosts on the premises during the night. Since many of our guests are single women with children, it is ideal to have at least one woman host on site each night.
- Bring your pillow and bedding or sleeping bag, a good book or magazine, and spend the night on location. A rollaway bed will be provided, or the couches are available

Children should be quieted down by 9:00 pm when you arrive. If they are not then encourage parents to get them settled in.

In the morning, awake guests at 6:00 am. Parents with small children should be encouraged to feed them breakfast here and not at the IHN center, especially during the weekdays when the kids are heading to school.

Any lunches that weren't packed the night before need to be made before the 7:00 am van pick up, Monday thru Friday, and 8:00 am pick up on Saturday.

Remind the morning host to have the leftover food ready for transport when the van arrives.

For the Saturday night hosts, the guests should have all their belongings packed and moved into the room with the outside entrance to the parking lot before leaving on Sunday morning. Their beds need to be stripped and the bedding stuffed into either the pillowcases or a plastic garbage bag. Beds are to be folded up and moved into the hallway.

Morning Hosting:

- Relieve the overnight host
- See the guests off as they depart for their day
- Clean up and store breakfast supplies to IHN cabinets

Relieve the overnight hosts at 6:00 am.

Assist the overnight hosts to awaken guests at 6:00 am. Parents with small children should be encouraged to feed them breakfast here and not at the IHN center. Especially during the weekdays when the kids are heading to school.

Assist overnight hosts to prepare any lunches that weren't packed the night before; lunches must be made before the 7:00 am van pick up, Monday thru Friday, and 8:00 am pick up on Saturday.

Clean Room C of any breakfast supplies and store all items in IHN cabinets located above the kitchen area sink.

Have leftover food ready for transport when van arrives.

Rooms Set Up:

Volunteers meet the moving truck near the parish office entrance when it arrives at St. Bernard on Sunday morning after the first Mass.

Help to transfer rollaway beds and guests' personal belongings from the moving truck into the guest rooms.

Set up each guest's room with bedding, towels, and linens.

Set up may also include moving and breakdown of classroom tables and folding chairs which will be stored against the walls in each guest room.

Rooms set up is usually completed in 30-45 minutes.

For more information, contact [Michelle Adcock at 908-253-8950](tel:908-253-8950).

Rooms Breakdown:

Volunteers meet the moving truck near the parish office entrance when it arrives at St. Bernard on Sunday morning after the first Mass.

Help to transfer rollaway beds and guests' personal belongings from the guest rooms onto the moving truck.

Collect and bag all bedding, towels, and linens.

Unless requested classroom tables and folding chairs located in guest rooms will be set up according to room specifications.

Rooms set up is usually completed in 30-45 minutes.

For more information, contact [Jane McElroy at 908-526-8949](tel:908-526-8949).

Cooking Team:

Do you like to cook? We try to provide our guests with a variety of nutritionally balanced, seasonal meals for both adults and children.

There may be instances where meals are prepared to meet special dietary needs.

There are established cooking teams for each night of the week, except for Saturday, which is Pizza Night.

Each team has a leader, who plans the menu and calls the cooks.

Individuals prepare one portion of the meal (entrée, side dish, salad, vegetables, etc.) and deliver it to St. Bernard at **5:45 pm**.

[For more information, contact Tracy Liston at 908-725-4334.](#)

Baking Team:

Do you like to bake?

Depending on the number of guests, we provide fresh homemade baked treats and breakfast breads two or three nights of the week.

Occasionally we provide a birthday cake.

[For more information, contact Maureen Hurley at 908-722-2081.](#)

Linens Pickup and Return:

Pick up the linens at Somerset Medical Center the week before we host and deliver them to the church (serve as a backup only; return delivery is not required) – [call Jan Gunnis at 908-306-8845](tel:908-306-8845)

At the end of each rotation, one person is needed to return the bags of linens to Somerset Medical Center. Linens can be returned on either Sunday or Monday (serve as a backup only) – [call Flora Costantini at 908-526-1634](tel:908-526-1634).

Shopping for Supplies:

We are also looking for volunteers to serve as backup only for the following:

Baby Supplies (if requested from IHN Flynn Center)

IHN Guest Supplies (soda, snacks, cereals, utensils, plates, household cleaning products, etc.)

Pizza Night order pickup and delivery.

[Call Bob & Eileen Bracale at 908-253-9372](tel:908-253-9372).

Moving Truck Driver:

For each rotation a volunteer is needed to drive the truck with the beds and guests' belongings to the next congregation site in the rotation.

IHN Flynn Center requests a copy of your driver's license.

Drivers must register and pick up the rental truck key before noon on Saturday at the Avis rental center, located at 400 Bridge Street, Bridgewater, next to La Catena restaurant.

Arrive with rental truck at St. Bernard by the end of the first morning Mass on Sunday.

Transport to the next host location and return the truck to the rental agency.

[For more information, contact Jane McElroy at 908-526-8949.](#)