



# Downtown Emergency Service Center

515 Third Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104 / [www.desc.org](http://www.desc.org) / tel: 206-464-1570 / [info@desc.org](mailto:info@desc.org)

## Connections-Volunteer Opportunities

*A comprehensive daytime service and referral center that addresses the needs of homeless men and women by providing individualized support, basic skills training and referrals to local services and housing.*

Connections aims to eliminate existing barriers that prevent homeless men and women from securing and retaining livable wage jobs and stable, affordable housing. Connections staff work with clients one-on-one to create comprehensive plans to secure housing and employment that will end their homelessness and give them hope for an improved future. Unlike other DESC programs, Connections serves men and women whose homelessness is related primarily to economic conditions in their lives – such as the need to secure and retain livable wage jobs and stable, affordable market-rate housing. People who need specialized services for mental health, substance abuse, or other problems related to a disability will be referred to more appropriate programs at DESC or other agencies.

**Volunteers must be dependable, have good communication skills and be comfortable interacting with people from a variety of backgrounds.**

**Laundry Coordinator:** Coordinate use of washers and dryers to complete laundry for as many clients as possible while keeping each individual client's laundry separate. Provide timely feedback to staff concerning supplies, equipment and other issues. Must be able to bend and to lift average size loads of laundry. **Hours: two to four hour shifts are available 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM seven days a week.**

**Job Search/Computer Assistant:** With staff, assist clients in Connections' 17-computer job resource center. Help clients improve their basic computer skills, find and search job banks, produce a resume, and complete online and hardcopy applications. Must be familiar with Windows XP operating system, be an experienced user of Microsoft Word and Excel, and be comfortable navigating the internet. **Hours: two to four hour shifts are available 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM seven days a week.**

**Coffee Counter Host:** Prepare coffee, greet clients, establish friendly and supportive rapport, restock supplies and provide timely feedback to staff concerning supplies, equipment malfunction and other issues. Must be able to make change, stand for long periods, bend and do light lifting. **Hours: two to four hour shifts are available 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM seven days a week.**

**Meal Assistant:** While Connections is not a traditional "drop-in" center, our goal is to retain homeless individuals in a comfortable setting so that they will make full use of the center's resources in order to secure both gainful employment and appropriate housing. One meal is served each day. The meal assistant helps set up, serve and clean up after the meal. **Hours: Hours vary, one meal served daily seven days a week.**

**HOURS:** 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM / seven days a week

**REFERRALS:** Accepted on a walk-in basis at **505 Third Avenue** or by phone at **(206) 515-1555**.

The **Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC)** works to end the homelessness of vulnerable people, particularly those living with serious mental or addictive illnesses. Through partnerships and an integrated array of comprehensive services, treatment and housing, we give people the opportunity to reach their highest potential. At DESC, uncommon efforts produce uncommon results that eliminate homelessness, one person at a time.

**For more information about DESC, or to make a donation or provide other support, contact Nicole Macri, Director of Development, at 206-515-1514, or [nmacri@desc.org](mailto:nmacri@desc.org), or visit us on the web at [www.desc.org](http://www.desc.org).**

# Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: I've heard some people refer to Connections as a drop-in center and others as a hygiene center, which is it?**

A: It's actually neither one. Connections is a daytime service and referral center where homeless men and women work in collaboration with staff to create comprehensive plans to secure housing and employment. Hygiene services are available to Connections participants.

**Q: Who does Connections serve?**

A: Unlike other DESC programs, Connections serves men and women whose homelessness appears to be related primarily to economic conditions in their lives – such as the need to secure and retain livable wage jobs and stable, affordable market-rate housing. People assessed to need specialized services for mental health, substance abuse, or other problems related to a disability are referred to more appropriate programs at DESC or other agencies.

**Q: Are there eligibility requirements?**

A: Connections is open to homeless men and women over the age of 18. Participants must actively work on a plan to end their homelessness in order to stay enrolled.

**Q: Is there a fee for people to use the services at Connections?**

A: No, Connections does not charge participants a fee. The funding for this program comes from the City of Seattle.

**Q: What types of on-site services does Connections provide to participants?**

A: Some of the on-site services available include job skills training, information and referral, housing advocacy and assistance, computer skills training, financial literacy training, showers, laundry services, restrooms and daily meal service. Learn more about the services available at Connections at [www.desc.org/Connections.html](http://www.desc.org/Connections.html).

**Q: What types of referrals does Connections make?**

A: Connections staff make referrals to a variety of services such as emergency shelter, chemical dependency treatment, vocational training programs, temporary and permanent housing, and other resources in the community that will assist participants in securing employment and stable housing.

**Q: Does Connections provide any type of transportation assistance to its participants?**

A: Connections is located in the Metro Ride Free Zone of downtown Seattle. Some participants may be eligible for bus tickets or bus passes provided by the program.

**Q: Can I volunteer at Connections? What opportunities are available?**

A: Volunteer opportunities are available from 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. in two to four hour shifts. Current volunteer positions at Connections include computer aide, resume coach, laundry coordinator, coffee counter assistant and meal assistant. For additional information about volunteering contact the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteer@desc.org](mailto:volunteer@desc.org) or call (206) 515-1517.

**Q: How was DESC selected as the site for Connections?**

A: The City of Seattle selected DESC for its experience and expertise in providing a wide range of services to homeless men and women, all aimed to end their homelessness.

**Q: Does Connections serve families?**

A: Connections was created to serve a specific subset of the homeless population—men and women who typically do not have children in their custody. At this time DESC does not have the available resources to provide childcare to Connections participants.