



RIVERWOOD  
CHRISTIAN  
COMMUNITY

MISSIONS HANDBOOK

**DISABILITY**  
MINISTRY



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We encourage you to watch and share this video before your visit! Scan the QR code or [click here](#).

## WELCOME TO TEAM MEMBERS!

We are excited that you are here and that you want to know more about individuals affected by disability. You will find that our family here is a lot like your family and friends. We want to hear from you and encourage you to let us know about your experiences while at Riverwood.

Did you know that kindness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit? In other words, kindness is a part of God's character. Paul wrote to the Ephesians to be kind to one another and forgiving, just as Christ forgives us.

As a challenge, before you arrive, look in your Bible and see how many examples of kindness you can find.

*“And be ye kind one to another,  
tenderhearted, forgiving one  
another, even as God for Christ’s  
sake hath forgiven you.”*

*Ephesians 4:32*



## MISSION SHIRTS

Mission team leaders should send team t-shirt sizes to Ability Ministry one month in advance to ensure all of the sizes needed will be available. We have provided an order form at the end of this handbook for your convenience. For questions about shirts, please email [connect@abilityministry.com](mailto:connect@abilityministry.com).

## WHY WE'RE HERE

Ability Ministry has two distinct missions. First, we provide residential care for adults affected by disability. We operate and manage Riverwood Christian Community in Louisville, Tennessee and New Hope Christian Community located in Versailles, Missouri. Second, we work to reach as many people in the disability community for Christ as possible. This does not only include those affected by disability, but also their family, friends, and loved ones.



## DISABILITY FACTS

*Did you know that there are over **one billion** people in the world who have a disability?*

Despite the growing disability population, there are over 350,000 churches who do not have a plan to reach their disability community. Every church, everywhere, has the responsibility to tell the disability community about Christ! We continue to develop resources and curriculum to help churches create and grow disability ministries and are now in all 50 states as well as over 30 countries!

## INTERNATIONAL REACH

- Alberta, Canada
- Beijing, China
- British Columbia, Canada
- Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Canefield, Dominica
- Gauteng, South Africa
- El Salvador
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Hong Kong
- Indonesia
- Ireland
- Lebanon
- Manitoba, Canada
- Kampala, Uganda
- Machakos, Kenya
- Manama, Bahrain
- Mauritius
- Metro Manila, Philippines
- Nassau, Bahamas
- Netherlands
- New Brunswick, Canada
- New South Wales, Australia
- New Zealand
- Norfolk, United Kingdom
- Ontario, Canada
- Pakistan
- Poland
- Puerto Rico
- Marikina City, Rizal, Philippines
- Romania
- Rwanda
- Sao Paulo, Brazil
- Singapore
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- Victoria, Australia
- Zimbabwe

## HELP! WE NEED YOU!

We want to show everyone around the world the importance of inclusion, having friends within the disability community. Taking and sharing photos during your visit to Riverwood is critical! We encourage you to take photos and videos and share them with our team. Please email [connect@abilityministry.com](mailto:connect@abilityministry.com) and let us know what team you are with.



## Disability Is Beautiful

We want you to share your experience with us and encourage you to also share your photos and videos on social media. Please tag [@AbilityMinistry](https://www.instagram.com/AbilityMinistry) in your posts! Please upload your best photos to Disability Is Beautiful. You can scan the QR code above or [click here](#) to start uploading for free.

## MEET OUR FAMILY

We have included photos and a short bio of our family here at Riverwood that will help you get to know them before you arrive.



### GLENNA

Glenna came to us from Kentucky. She enjoys playing guitar and spending time with staff, as well as coloring. She can whistle and dance well and likes sitting with friends. Ask her to show you her coloring books.



### KATHLEEN

Kathleen is from Knoxville. She enjoys playing with her Barbie dolls and doing crafts. She is non-verbal, but she is quite capable of communicating in other ways.



## **DONNIE**

Donnie loves his job at Goodwill and he has a thirst for knowledge. He also loves his Bible, superheroes, dancing, and playing games on his iPad.



## **KENNY**

Far and away, Kenny is our biggest sports nut, but loves the Tennessee Volunteers most of all. He is boisterous and willing to engage in group activities. He is part of the group which enjoys walking after supper. Ask him about anything in sports or about his friend Georgie.



## **BECKY**

Becky loves numbers and dates. If you tell her your birthday, she will remember it for the next time she talks to you. She enjoys talking about family members, calendars, and holidays. She may ask you for your birthday to keep in her notebook.



## **RACHEL**

Rachel moved here from Pensacola, Florida, and comes from a Mennonite background. She is quite the cook and baker. Rachel is also a seamstress and has been making dresses for some of our residents. She enjoys being outside working in the garden and making quilts.



## **NATE S.**

Nate officially joined our Riverwood family in April of 2024, making him the newest fella on the block. Nate loves the Lord and the University of Tennessee (so he will fit in great with our crew).



## TOM

Tom is known as “Junior” among his friends here at Riverwood. He is very shy, and doesn’t like to be touched, unless HE initiates it. He works at Heartland Services. He has a collection of playing cards and loves to show you his card tricks.



## STACY

Stacy is from Knoxville, TN. He loves to joke and tease, especially with Kenny. He works at Goodwill Industries. He likes old western movies and John Wayne is a hero of his. You will see he and Paula out walking each day.



## DEBORAH

Deb moved from Albuquerque, NM to Riverwood in April of 2013. She works at Goodwill and has even been in a commercial for them. She enjoys doing crafts and loves to play most sports. She enjoys making key chains with beads.



## DIANE

Diane, Rebecca’s sister, joined our Riverwood family in February of 2018 and works at Goodwill. She is an energetic young lady who loves to meet new people. She likes to listen to Christian music and play on her phone.



## CINDY

Cindy likes scrap booking and has a great interest in Ronald Reagan. She likes ice cream. Ask her what her favorite flavor is. She dyes her hair red and likes to be called Lucy after Lucille Ball.



## **BRIAN**

Brian joined the Riverwood family in October 2015. Prior to moving to Riverwood, he had lived in Florida and worked at Disney World. He likes outdoor sports and especially enjoys walking and visiting with others.



## **MANDY**

Mandy enjoys country music, (especially Kenny Chesney), watching TV and meeting new people. She has a gentle spirit. You'll come to love her as you do all the rest of your Riverwood Family.



## **NATE**

Nate is very quiet and prefers to hang out in the back of any room. He loves to meet people, but often it needs to be a one on one situation. He is very gifted at drawing. He has an infectious smile and is also known to speak his mind.



## **JEB**

Jeb is a great guy with a quick wit and wonderful personality. He enjoys working outdoors and is quite tech savvy. He also enjoys playing basketball and video games.



## **MICHAEL**

You will find Michael quite funny and also very kind. He loves University of Tennessee football as well as most sports. His family lives in the area and visits him regularly.



## REBECCA

When you first meet her, Rebecca will introduce herself as the “princess” of Riverwood. She is kind and compassionate. She enjoys doing her nails and dressing up. She likes to do crafts. Diane is her sister.



## GARY

He has a wonderful sense of humor and is by far the most polite resident that I have ever encountered. Whenever he speaks to the ladies, his answer will always be “yes, ma’am”. Gary likes to garden and work outside, and he’s definitely into UT.

## THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

### WHAT TO BRING

Items we recommend bringing with you, especially if you are staying at the Retreat Center, include:

#### General

- Bedclothes (Sheets, blankets, or sleeping bag)
- Pillow & Towel(s)
- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Shampoo & body wash

#### Work Attire:

- Closed-toe shoes/work shoes
- Work clothes
- Extra work clothes
- Sunscreen & Hat

### COSTS

There will be a fee of \$40.00 per night, per person, and \$20.00 per meal, per person. This fee also includes a mission t-shirt. **Please do not forget the t-shirt sign-up sheet!** Download it at [abilityministry.com/missionshandbook](https://abilityministry.com/missionshandbook) or scan the QR code to the right.



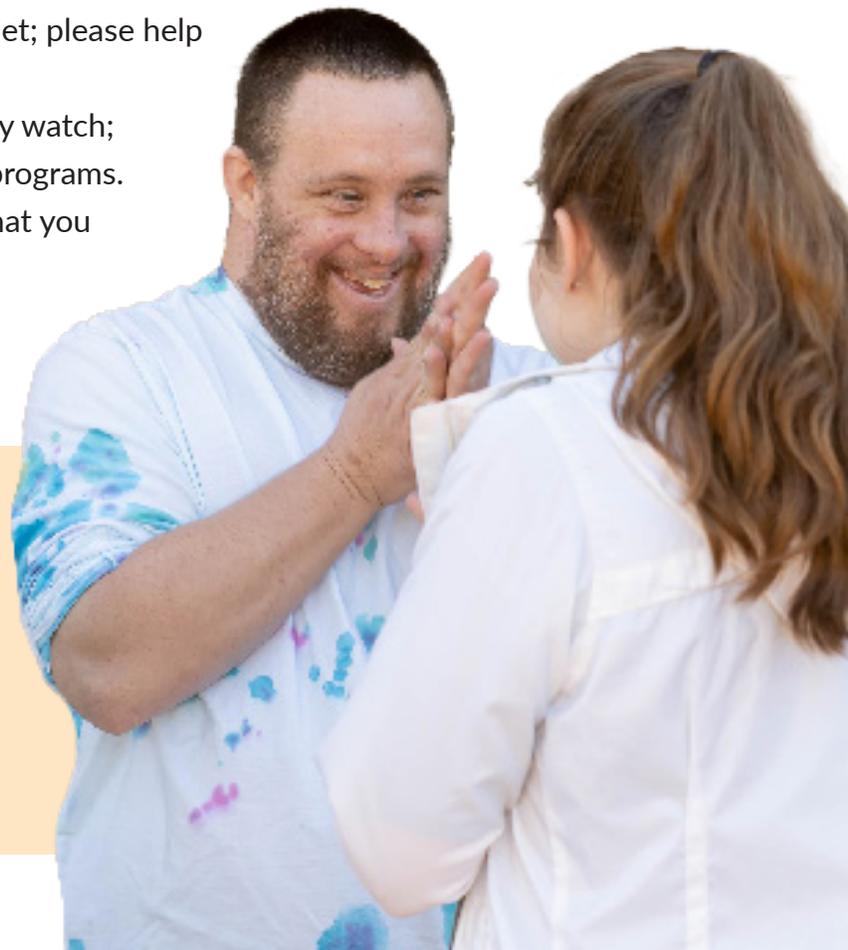
## SOCIAL RULES

These have been included to aid in understanding the residents' lives, as well as the requirements of our regulations. Below are a few of the guidelines we ask you to follow while at Riverwood:

- Please respect the resident's privacy by not going into their rooms unless you are invited.
- If you have been invited to see a resident's room, always have at least two people go. Never go to a resident's room alone.
- Our residents need plenty of sleep. Please try to allow them rest by staying with them no later than 6:00 pm.
- Be aware that the residents will notice the clothing choices you make, please be responsible (modest) with your attire.
- Remember that just like anyone else, the residents can get overwhelmed. Try to respect their personal space and boundaries. To help teach them this, please communicate your own boundaries to them as well. If you feel overwhelmed, feel free to walk away.
- If an issue arises with a resident, please ask the staff to help you resolve it.
- We all love the residents, but please do not give them gifts unless it is a group activity. Also, please do not accept gifts from them.
- Please use the bathrooms designated for the staff and visitors.
- Some of the residents are on a limited diet; please help encourage healthy eating.
- The residents are affected by the TV they watch; please be aware of this when selecting programs.
- The residents will remember promises that you make, please let your 'yes be yes' and your 'no be no.'

### REMINDER:

*Riverwood is our home.  
We want everyone to feel  
comfortable and respected  
in our home.*



## PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

We will be setting the menu for your team's meals with the residents prior to your arrival. It is imperative to make us aware of any food restrictions that are needed such as gluten-free, vegetarian, or allergies.

While at Riverwood, you will have a specific staff person assigned as your team's contact. For this reason, advance notice of your team's arrival time and details is necessary. If the need arises for your staff contact to leave the Riverwood campus, we will keep you informed. Please see that you have their phone number in case you need to reach them during their absence. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we balance all our staffing needs.



## COVID NOTICE

If the CDC reports an increase in COVID cases, Ability Ministry reserves the right to require mission teams to conduct COVID testing prior to arrival. We apologize for any inconvenience that this requirement may impose, however, should our residents contract COVID, it becomes not only a health concern for us, but a drastic increase in costs (*i.e. overtime for employees, residents losing pay from employment, etc.*) Thank you for your understanding.



## DIRECTIONS

### Coming into Knoxville from the west or south:

- From I-40, Take I-140 E toward Maryville
- Take Exit 9 – Topside Road / TN -333
- Turn right onto Topside Road.
- Go approximately 3 miles then turn right at the traffic light onto Louisville Road / TN – 333.
- Go 2 miles. Take slight right onto Old Lowes Ferry Road.
- Go 1.6 miles; at stop sign, turn right onto Lowes Ferry Road.
- Enter roundabout and take first right onto Pride Road.
- Proceed with care. Road becomes a narrow one-way road. At the end of the road when it turns into gravel, you have arrived at our Riverwood Campus.



[Click here](#) or scan the QR code above for directions using Apple Maps.

### Coming in from the north or from the east side of town:

- From I-40, Go south on Alcoa Highway (US 129 S) toward the airport
- Turn right on Topside Road / TN-333.
- Proceed 5.5 miles (this will take you under I-140). Turn right at the traffic light onto Louisville Road / TN – 333.
- Go 2 miles. Take slight right onto Old Lowes Ferry Road.
- Go 1.6 miles; at stop sign, turn right onto Lowes Ferry Road.
- Enter roundabout and take first right onto Pride Road.
- Proceed with care. Road becomes a narrow one-way road. At the end of the road when it turns into gravel, you have arrived at our Riverwood Campus.



[Click here](#) or scan the QR code above for directions using Google Maps.

### Main Address:

3123 Pride Road

Louisville, TN 37777

Phone: (865) 984-5178

Website: [abilityministry.com](http://abilityministry.com)

Email: [connect@abilityministry.com](mailto:connect@abilityministry.com)

Social: @AbilityMinistry

# Riverwood Retreat Center

## Departure Checklist

Thank you for helping us care for our facility and also welcoming the next mission team by leaving this facility beautiful. All cleaning supplies needed should be located in the kitchen closet. We are glad you are on our team!

### BATHROOMS

- Clean and disinfect all shower stalls and mats.
- Hang all mats inside the showers.
- Clean and disinfect all sinks and shelving.
- Sweep and mop all bathrooms, including underneath all rugs.

### BEDROOMS

- Vacuum all carpets
- Wash and fold any bed linens and towels and place them in the common area.

### KITCHEN

- Dispose of all opened food items unless packaging is clearly labeled with a future expiration date.
- Wash and put away all dishes, utensils, and kitchen items.
- Clean and disinfect all kitchen counters and appliances.
- Place any unwashed kitchen linens in the kitchen sink.

### COMMON AREAS

- Vacuum kitchen area and all remaining areas.
- Sweep the patio.
- Empty the vacuum canister.
- Empty all garbage. If needed, wash the garbage can and leave upside down on the Retreat Center patio.
- Store all cleaning supplies in the kitchen closet on the labeled shelving.

*\*If you observe any cleaning supplies that are missing, or any that need to be restocked, please let our staff know.*

**Thank you for being the hands and feet of God and serving our family at Riverwood. This is now your family, too! We pray that you have a safe return trip home and thank you for blessing us.**

