October 2025

DONOR Connection

PITTSBURGH MERCY
A HERITAGE OF HOPE

Bringing Joy to Our Residential Clients

Melissa DeiCas from St. Jude Parish delivers gifts to Brendan Copp for residential clients at Pittsburgh Mercy.

As the weather turns chilly, Pittsburgh Mercy is preparing to bring joy to its residential clients—those with intellectual and developmental disabilities and those with mental illness who live in one of our many facilities throughout the area.

Gifts for All

Four years ago, Pittsburgh Mercy began an annual gift-giving program in partnership with local church groups, the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust, and organizations that come together to ensure every residential client receives a personal gift over the holidays. Staff

members select a meaningful item for each client; volunteers do the wrapping; and gifts are distributed at the festive holiday party in December or at the residential program sites on Christmas morning. For the 203 individuals in our residential programs, it's a much-loved and anticipated event that makes them feel valued and celebrated.

The organizations involved this year are:

- St. Jude Parish
- St. Aidan's Parish
- St. Phillip Parish
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church

"It's hard to describe the joy this program brings," said Doritta Pelc, senior manager of adult mental health residential programs at Pittsburgh Mercy. "For some individuals, this may be the only gift they receive, and it means the world to them."

If your organization or church group would like to participate in this program, contact Brendan Copp at **Brendan.copp@pittsburghmercy.org** for details.

Our Many Residential Options

There's a growing need for residential care in the Pittsburgh region. Pittsburgh Mercy operates several types of housing for those with **intellectual and developmental disabilities** and those with **mental illness**.

For those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Pittsburgh Mercy offers **Community Homes,** also called **Community Living Arrangements (CLAs).** These are private homes or apartments housing one to four persons who receive care based on individual safety, medical, behavioral, and recreational needs. Levels of support range from 30 hours/week to round-the-clock staff supervision.

For those with mental illness and behavioral health conditions, we offer the following:

- **Residential Treatment Facility for Adults (RTFA):** Located on the South Side, this is a licensed short-term (45 - 60 days) mental health stabilization and treatment program. Currently, 16 residents receive specialized services for the period between a hospital stay and return to the community.
- **Comprehensive Mental Health Personal Care Homes:** These homes are for adults with a mental health diagnosis who need help with daily tasks including dressing, bathing, taking medication, managing finances, etc. Pittsburgh Mercy offers three such homes in Allegheny County: Garden View Manor in Wilkinsburg (56 residents), Munhall Manor (8 residents), and Outlook Manor in West Mifflin (12 residents).
- **Extended Acute Care (EAC) Facility:** This licensed residential program in Glen Hazel houses adults recently discharged from the hospital following mental health treatment, who need intensive stabilization, treatment, and rehabilitation services for up to six months to allow them to return to the community.
- **Long-Term Structured Residences (LTSRs):** These secure residential treatment facilities are for adults who need 24/7 long-term treatment and assistance, but don't need a hospital admission. Our LTSRs are Journey Home in Carrick (16 residents) and Monarch Springs in Glen Hazel (15 residents).

Garden View Manor: A Special Place

Located in Wilkinsburg, Garden View Manor is Pittsburgh Mercy's largest comprehensive mental health personal care home, currently housing 56 individuals. Each person has a

private room and receives a small monthly spending allowance. Counseling staff is available onsite 24/7; nursing staff is available on a regular basis; and transportation is provided to and from medical appointments.

The goal is to promote community inclusion and improve the quality of life. In addition to getting help with important life skills like budgeting, laundry, and cooking, residents enjoy activities such as gardening, trips to local fitness centers, weekly shopping trips to area malls and stores, and other recreational opportunities. The length of stay varies, based on each person's needs.

Winter Overflow Shelter to Reopen

As temperatures drop and winter approaches, Pittsburgh Mercy is once again opening its Winter Overflow Shelter to provide warmth, safety, and support to those experiencing homelessness in the city.

Starting Wednesday, Nov. 15, the shelter will operate nightly from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. at Second Avenue Commons, located at 700 Second Avenue in Downtown Pittsburgh. It will remain open seven days a week through early spring 2026, including holidays.

The Winter Overflow Shelter plays a critical role in the city and county Code Blue emergency response plan. A Code Blue is declared when the National Weather Service forecasts temperatures below 26°F between 4 p.m. and 8 a.m., or when the City of Pittsburgh's Office of Emergency Management activates its Emergency Operations Center due to severe weather.

In the colder months, this seasonal shelter protects vulnerable individuals from the dangers of extreme weather. A common and particularly challenging condition for people experiencing homelessness, extended exposure to cold temperatures can cause frostbite, when body tissue freezes. At its most severe, it can lead to tissue death and require limb amputation. Exposure to freezing temperatures can also lead to hypothermia, a serious condition where the body loses heat faster than it can produce heat. If untreated, hypothermia can result in cardiac arrest, coma, or even death.

That's why Pittsburgh Mercy's Winter Overflow Shelter and Engagement Center at Second Avenue Commons is such a critical resource. With space for up to 40 adults, the shelter offers a first-come, first-served admission policy. Each guest receives a warm indoor space to sleep, along with a mat, blanket, hot dinner, and breakfast. In a compassionate effort to keep families and companions together, partners and pets (one dog or cat per person) are welcome. Personal belongings are safely stored in lockers and returned at checkout. Quiet hours are observed from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. to encourage a restful environment.

At the Engagement Center, shelter guests and non-guests are welcome to find refuge from the cold during daytime hours, where they can access a range of amenities: charging stations; Wi-Fi; mail services; hygiene kits; showers; laundry facilities; and connections to other essential services.

Pittsburgh Mercy's Winter Overflow Shelter is more than just a place to sleep—it's a lifeline during the harshest months of the year.

To learn more about Pittsburgh Mercy's homeless services, visit our website.

There's Still Time to Give for All Souls' Day

Across cultures, continents, and faith traditions, the act of honoring and remembering those who have passed is a deeply human experience. Whether through prayer, storytelling, lighting candles, or gathering with family, people everywhere find meaningful ways to celebrate the lives of loved ones who are no longer with us. This shared ritual of remembrance transcends race, religion, and nationality—uniting us in love, memory, and hope.

At Pittsburgh Mercy, November 2—All Souls' Day—is a sacred time when we join this global tradition of remembrance. It is also a day when we pay special tribute to the Sisters of Mercy, who arrived in Pittsburgh from Ireland in 1843. These visionary women dedicated their lives to serving immigrant laborers and their families, caring for the sick and poor, and educating children in the basement of their convent on what is now Penn Avenue. Their legacy of compassion and justice laid the foundation for a culture of care that has since spread across the country and the world.

Continuing a Legacy of Mercy

Today, Pittsburgh Mercy is proud to carry forward the Sisters' mission by serving Allegheny County's most vulnerable individuals, regardless of background or beliefs. Our programs support people living with intellectual and developmental disabilities, behavioral health challenges, and homelessness—offering wrap-around services that improve health outcomes, foster independence, and restore dignity.

This work is made possible through grants, government support, and the generosity of donors like you.

Honor a Loved One

This All Souls' Day, we invite you to memorialize someone dear to you who has passed away by supporting Pittsburgh Mercy. No gift is too small to make a meaningful impact on the vulnerable populations we serve. At the link below, you can provide the name of your loved one to be added to our prayer list. Throughout November, the Sisters of Mercy will remember all names during Mass intentions at the Mother of Mercy Chapel at Pittsburgh's Mercy Convent.

Give to Remember a Loved One for All Souls' Day

Volunteer at Pittsburgh Mercy

At Pittsburgh Mercy, our volunteers provide a truly meaningful and enriching experience for community members in need. ***Thank you to our compassionate and inspiring***

volunteers!

Would ***you*** like to make a difference in the lives of the thousands of people served by our programs? Pittsburgh Mercy offers numerous ways to get involved.

Consider these volunteer opportunities:

- Serving food at Second Avenue Commons.
- Hosting a sporting event watch party at a behavioral health residential program.
- Making arts and crafts at our adult day programs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Making PB&J sandwiches for persons served at Pittsburgh Mercy's Engagement Center at Second Avenue Commons.
- Sorting donated clothing and basic hygiene supplies for people experiencing homelessness, housing insecurity, or other crises.

For more details or to sign up, contact Pittsburgh Mercy's Volunteer and Engagement Coordinator Brendan Copp at **Brendan.Copp@pittsburghmercy.org** or 412-897-8822.

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