

Help Us Keep Our Neighbors Warm This Winter

As we prepare for our second season, the Ames Warming Place (AWP) is getting ready to once again provide a safe, warm place for our neighbors during periods of extreme cold, and we need volunteers like you to make it possible!

Whether you volunteered with us last year or are considering AWP for the first time, we would love to have you join us this season.

Last winter, AWP opened its doors on January 16 in the lower level of Ames First United Methodist Church and remained open for 17 consecutive nights. Those first 17 nights taught us a great deal. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers and community partners, we gained valuable experience and developed an operating manual to help make this season safer, smoother, and more organized.

This year will be our first full season, and we are excited to welcome back familiar faces while also building a larger team of new volunteers.

You Don't Have to Volunteer All Night

One of the most common misconceptions about volunteering at AWP is that you have to commit to an entire overnight shift. You don't!

We know people have different schedules and comfort levels, so we have created several volunteer opportunities. Some require only one to three hours, while others are for those who prefer an overnight role.

There is a place for you on our team.

Volunteer Opportunities

1. **Door Check-In | 8:00–11:00 PM**

Be one of the first welcoming faces our guests see. Volunteers will greet guests, assist with sign-in, and explain AWP's basic expectations and procedures.

2. **Security & Tote Collection | 8:00–11:00 PM**

Help us maintain a safe environment for everyone. Volunteers will assist with a simple security wand check and securely store guests' belongings in designated totes for the night. Training will be provided.

3. **Overnight Watch | 8:00 PM–8:00 AM**

At least two volunteers will serve together overnight. They will help guests settle into their designated areas, oversee lights-out at 10:30 PM, maintain the required fire-watch log, and provide general oversight of AWP throughout the night. Overnight volunteers are essential to guest safety, and we can't open the shelter without at least two on shift.

4. **Morning Clean-Up | 7:00–8:00 AM**

If mornings work better for you, this is a great way to help. Volunteers will help clean

and prepare the bathrooms, sleeping rooms, and lounge area so the space is ready for its next use.

Join Us for Dinner & Volunteer Training

October 27 at 5:30 PM
Fellowship Hall — Ames First United Methodist Church

We invite both returning and first-time volunteers to join us for a community dinner and training session as we kick off the upcoming season.

Dinner will be provided, and we'll cover:

- What to expect when volunteering at AWP
- Basic de-escalation techniques
- Guest check-in and nightly logistical flow
- Volunteer roles and responsibilities
- Questions you may have before signing up

Volunteer applications and background-check consent forms will also be available that evening. A basic background check is required to meet Ames First United Methodist Church's insurance requirements.

If you're new to AWP, you don't need any special experience to volunteer. We'll provide the training and information you need. What matters most is a willingness to treat every guest with dignity, kindness, and respect.

If you volunteered last year, thank you. You helped build the foundation for what AWP is becoming, and we hope you'll join us again.

The Ames Warming Place is a tangible way to care for our neighbors during some of the coldest nights of the year. Whether you can give an hour in the morning, a few hours in the evening, or an occasional overnight shift, your time can make a meaningful difference.

Come share a meal, learn more, and discover where you might fit into the AWP volunteer team.

We look forward to seeing you on October 27 at 5:30 PM!