



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



# INTRODUCTION

Welcome and thank you for your interest in volunteering with Charlotte County Habitat for Humanity. We are happy that you have joined our team in partnership with God and people from all walks of life, to provide low-income families new hope in the form of simple, decent affordable housing.

Our words and actions are for the ultimate purpose of putting shelter in the hearts and minds of people in such a way that poverty housing and homelessness become socially, politically, and religiously unacceptable in our world. With these goals in mind employees and volunteers work as a community of caring people who demonstrate our faith by our actions toward each other and toward the community at large. We seek to work together in harmony, in an atmosphere of trust and confidence in each other.

It is our hope that you will join us in this spirit of partnership and that your work here at Charlotte County Habitat for Humanity is successful and fulfilling. We hope your volunteer experience will be rewarding, enjoyable, and worthwhile. Since Habitat for Humanity is primarily a volunteer organization, we rely on volunteers like you to help families in need realize the dream of owning a decent, affordable home. From our construction, Home Improvement Center, and ReSale Store operations to our office, special events, and committee work, we rely on volunteers in every facet of our organization.

This handbook will provide you with general policies and practices of Charlotte County Habitat for Humanity, Inc. hereafter referred to as CCHFH. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook, for it will answer many common questions concerning your volunteering. In order to retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, CCHFH reserves the right to change, add to, or eliminate any of the policies and/or benefits described in this handbook.

To help you better understand us and what your volunteering for, read on!

## Habitat 101

Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty and homelessness. Habitat works in partnership with low-income working families, sponsors, and communities to build and renovate decent, affordable housing. Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds and rehabilitates simple, decent houses with the help of the homeowner (partner) families. Habitat houses are sold to partner families at no profit, financed with affordable, no-interest loans. The homeowners' monthly mortgage payments are used to build still more Habitat houses.

Habitat is not a giveaway program. In addition to a down payment and the monthly mortgage payments, homeowners invest hundreds of hours of their own labor - sweat equity - into building Habitat houses and working in various support areas.

Habitat for Humanity's work is accomplished at the community level by Habitat affiliates -

independent, locally run, nonprofit organizations. Each affiliate coordinates all aspects of Habitat home building in its local area - fund raising, building site selection, partner family selection and support, house construction and mortgage servicing. Habitat for Humanity International's headquarters, located in Americus, GA, provides information, training and a variety of other support services to Habitat affiliates worldwide.

Habitat for Humanity invites people of all backgrounds, races and religions to build houses together in partnership with families in need. Habitat is a worldwide, grass-roots movement. There are more than 2,050 active affiliates in 3,000 communities.

Habitat has built more than 400,000 houses around the world, providing more than 2,000,000 people with safe, decent, affordable shelter. HFHI was founded in 1976 by Millard & Linda Fuller. Former President Jimmy Carter partnered with Habitat in 1984 and has become Habitat's most famous spokesperson.

Throughout the world, the cost of Habitat houses varies from as little as \$800 in some developing countries to an average of \$50,000 in the United States. Families in need of decent shelter apply to local Habitat affiliates. The affiliate's family selection committee chooses homeowners based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners in the program and their ability to repay the no-interest loan. Every affiliate follows a nondiscriminatory policy of family selection. Neither race nor religion is a factor in choosing the families who receive Habitat houses.

Donations whether to a local Habitat affiliate or to HFHI, are used as designated by the donor. Gifts received by HFHI that are designated to a specific affiliate or building project are forwarded to that affiliate or project. Undesignated gifts are used where most needed.

## **Your Charlotte County Habitat for Humanity affiliate**

Since our inception in 1987, we have built nearly 200 homes. We are currently experiencing unprecedented growth. We have a multi-faceted operation that not only includes home building, but also administrative, resale, and deconstruction operations.

### ***Construction:***

Building homes is certainly synonymous with the Habitat for Humanity name. There are construction tasks for all skill levels and a willing volunteer can learn and do just about anything on the construction site. With the exception of a few highly skilled tasks (e.g. electrical, plumbing, air conditioning, concrete work), most of our work on a building site is done by volunteers.

### ***Resale Stores:***

CCHFH has three Resale Stores: Englewood Resale Store (ERS) located at 3949 S. Access Rd. Englewood, Murdock Resale Store (MRS) located at 1354 El Jobean Rd. Port Charlotte, and the Punta Gorda Resale Store (PRS) located at 1750 Manzana Ave. Punta Gorda. The Resale Stores receive donated items and resells them. The money is then used to help build Habitat homes.

### ***Pre Owned Vehicle Lot:***

Located at our MRS, the Pre Owned Vehicle Lot coordinates the receiving, storing, and selling of donated cars and boats. The money is then used to help build more Habitat homes.

### ***Shipping & Receiving:***

The shipping and receiving areas are essential in the operation of our ReSale Stores. All of the scheduling for donation pick-ups and deliveries are done in the Shipping & Receiving office in the back of the PRS. Inventory & building materials for our houses are received and often stored in this area along with other gifts-in-kind.

### ***Deconstruction:***

This is a fairly new operational facet for our affiliate. If a home or building is being demolished or renovated, Habitat can remove donated items like cabinets, doors, light fixtures, appliances, commodes, windows, etc., and resell them in our Home Improvement Center or directly from the site. This also helps keep items out of landfills.

### ***Administrative/Committees:***

We have been very fortunate to have several office volunteers who have been with us for years. Our office volunteer opportunities are thus limited, but we occasionally have a need for temporary office help - almost all of which relates to large mailings and mailing list maintenance. We do have committees such as Volunteer Committee, Special Events, and Collegiate Challenge that are occasionally in need of volunteers.

### ***Special Events:***

Charlotte County Habitat for Humanity participates in a number of special events each year. These include our alternative spring break program called Collegiate Challenge, our annual fundraising banquet, the Punta Gorda Block Party, the 5K Turkey Trot, and more. Volunteers are always needed at these events.

## **VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP**

### ***Nature of Volunteering - At Will***

This handbook is not an employment or volunteer contract and is not intended to create contractual obligation of any kind. Neither you nor CCHFH is bound to continue the volunteer relationship if either you or CCHFH chooses, at will, to end the relationship at any time.

### ***Personal Data Changes***

It is important for you to notify CCHFH of any changes in personal data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency (an emergency phone number can be vital), and other such status reports should be kept accurate at all times.

### ***Attendance and Punctuality***

In order to ensure a smooth operation, we ask that volunteers extend Habitat common courtesy in informing us of absences, late arrivals, and early departures. Volunteers are essential to Habitat; we depend on you and miss you when you are not here.

### ***Volunteer Development***

CCHFH wishes to foster an efficient and professional work environment by encouraging each volunteer to take advantage of job related educational and vocational opportunities. When possible, volunteers are encouraged to attend conferences, seminars and other training programs. The Executive Director will consider requests for volunteer development on a case-by-case basis.

## **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

### ***Safety***

You and CCHFH share the responsibility for establishing and maintaining a safe work environment. CCHFH will attempt to assure a safe work environment and to comply with federal, state, and local safety regulations. In turn, you are expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all your work activities. You are also asked to report any unsafe conditions to your supervisor immediately. Any accident, which results in injury, regardless of how insignificant, must be reported promptly to your supervisor.

CCHFH does have several first aid kits located in various areas on our property and at the construction sites. Please see the supervisor of your area for exact locations.

### ***Volunteer Conduct & Work Rules***

Although it is not possible to list all the forms of behavior or conduct that are considered unacceptable in the work place, the following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in the limitation and/or termination of the volunteer relationship.

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of CCHFH property.
- Falsification of timekeeping records.
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcoholic or illegal drugs in the work place, while on duty, or while operating CCHFH vehicles or equipment.
- Fighting or threatening violence in the work place.
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the work place.
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of CCHFH's or another person's property.
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
- Repeated failure to follow a supervisor's reasonable request or to carry out a reasonable job assignment.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Smoking in CCHFH buildings or vehicles.

- False accusation of harassment, unlawful discrimination, or disparaging treatment by one volunteer to another or to an employee.
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment or discrimination.
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the work place.
- Excessive absenteeism, tardiness or any absences without notice.
- Unauthorized or improper use of telephones, mail system, or other CCHFH-owned equipment.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.

### ***Unlawful Harassment & Discrimination***

CCHFH is firmly committed to providing a positive work environment free of discrimination and bias. Each volunteer is personally responsible for maintaining such a work environment. CCHFH prohibits any actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, sexual preference, race, ethnic background, age, religion, physical condition, or other legally protected characteristic. Any conduct or action, whether overt or subtle, which creates an offensive or hostile work environment is prohibited and will be grounds for immediate disciplinary action. CCHFH prohibits any harassment between volunteers, employees, or other non-employee on the basis of sex. No volunteer, male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited or unwelcome sexual overtones and conduct, either verbal or physical. Misconduct applies to both males and females and includes harassment between different and same sex.

### ***Harassment/Discrimination Investigative Procedure***

Any volunteer who feels that he or she is a victim of sexual or discriminatory harassment is encouraged to let the harasser know that his or her behavior is unwelcome. Additionally, volunteers who feel they have been harassed must immediately report the matter to the Executive Director. Regardless of the means selected to resolve the complaint, any complaint will not be a reflection of the volunteer.

### ***Co-worker Relations***

While CCHFH desires every volunteer to receive fair and impartial treatment, it does recognize that conflicts, misunderstandings, and problems will arise from time to time. These concerns or problems may involve co-workers, supervisors, or CCHFH policies. Although most misunderstandings can and should be solved on an informal basis, more formal provisions have been made to resolve difficult problems. The procedure for raising a problem or concern is as follows:

1. The volunteer should inform directly the person who is the source or cause of the problem or concern that there is a problem or concern. The people should attempt to resolve the issue informally and on their own. The standard for addressing such problems or concerns is outlined in "Four Rules for Fair Fighting" found on pages 9-10 at the end of this Handbook.

2. If the volunteer does not wish to communicate directly with the person who is the source or cause of the issue or fails to satisfactorily resolve the issue after discussing it with the other party, the volunteer should then contact their supervisor, followed by the Executive Director.

### ***Equipment***

Use of the forklift is prohibited for all volunteers unless specifically approved by their supervisor. Use of the truck lift and power tools in the store workshop requires permission from the store manager or assistant store manager. All volunteers at construction sites must have approval and proper instruction from a crew leader before using any type of power tool.

### ***Use of Telephones***

To ensure effective communications, while on the telephone you are expected to use a proper greeting and to speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller and hang up only after the caller has done so. All volunteers answering the phones are expected to know how to properly receive and communicate telephone messages.

Personal use of CCHFH phones is permissible provided calls are local, of an essential nature, and of short duration.

## **THINGS EVERY VOLUNTEER SHOULD KNOW**

### ***Drug & Alcohol Use***

Volunteers of CCHFH are required to be medically (physically, emotionally and mentally) capable of performing the required work, free from the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances that diminish or impair their ability to perform the job. Any volunteer found under the influence of an illegal drug or abuse of prescription drugs, in possession of, using, selling, trading, or offering for sale illegal drugs or alcohol during business hours or on affiliate property or in an affiliate vehicle will be subject to termination of their role with CCHFH.

Volunteers with a drug, alcohol or other substance dependency are urged to seek professional treatment, to include hospitalized rehabilitation.

### ***Smoking***

In keeping with CCHFH's intent to provide a safe and healthy work environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the offices, ReSale Store, Home Improvement Center, shipping and receiving areas, and all CCHFH vehicles except in the designated smoking area at the picnic table near the warehouse door. At construction sites, smoking is prohibited inside a home once it has been fully framed. In recognition of federal law, any volunteer under the age of 18 is prohibited from smoking at any time on CCHFH property or in a CCHFH vehicle.

### ***Dress Code***

Everyone is expected to dress appropriately for the job in which they are performing, whether

they are employees or volunteers. If anyone has questions on what that means, they are to ask the supervisor under whom they are performing that job.

In general, unless a job specifically requires otherwise, HFHI maintains business casual dress. In particular:

- Clothing should not be ragged, stained or torn.
- Clothing should not be too short, too low-cut, or sheer.
- Clothing should be appropriate to insure safety at the work place.
- Shorts must be 6 inches above the knees or longer.
- Undergarments should be covered with clothing.
- Shirts should come to the top of one's pants or skirt.
- Any clothing with disturbing messages, which could be viewed by others as offensive or suggestive, is prohibited.
- Any clothing which is provocative in nature is prohibited.

When in the shipping and receiving area, construction site, or other area deemed appropriate, employees and volunteers must wear full, flat shoes (i.e. closed-toe and with backs) and appropriate safety equipment.

When volunteering in the ReSale Store, denim skirts and dresses are permitted.

### ***Community Service***

CCHFH welcomes community service volunteers from civic groups, schools, community assistance programs, and the judicial system. It is the community service volunteer's responsibility to maintain an accurate time sheet and to ensure that it is signed off at the beginning and end of each day by a CCHFH supervisor or duly appointed person. Hours worked but not recorded or signed off at the end of each day of service will not be counted. CCHFH does not recognize breaks or lunches to be community service time. It should be further understood that only actual time worked will be credited for community service. For appropriate placement within our organization, CCHFH reserves the right to know the offense related to court-ordered community service. In all other respects, court-ordered community service volunteers will be treated and held accountable to the same standards as all other volunteers.

### ***Customer Service & Name Tags***

While volunteering at CCHFH, volunteers frequently come into contact with ReSale Store and Home Improvement Center customers, Habitat supporters, Habitat partners, and the community at large. Volunteers are encouraged and expected to greet and assist everyone in a friendly and courteous manner. The success of CCHFH relies heavily on our ability to partner and work with the community.

While volunteering during business hours at the ReSale Store and Home Improvement Center, volunteers are encouraged and expected to use name tags identifying them as a Habitat volunteer. Since new volunteers are a frequent sight at CCHFH, name tags help customers know who can assist them and help staff & other volunteers know who is working with them.

## ***Gifts & Gratuities***

To ensure the integrity of CCHFH and the unbiased actions and decision making of Habitat volunteers, the acceptance of gifts and gratuities from customers, suppliers, partners or anyone CCHFH in a business relationship with is strictly prohibited. Further, any honoraria received by any CCHFH volunteer for speaking on behalf of Habitat must promptly be remitted to CCHFH.

# **USEFUL THINGS TO KNOW**

## ***Our Hours of Operation***

**Office:** Monday-Friday: 8:00-4:00  
**Shipping & Receiving:** Monday-Saturday: 9:00-4:00  
**PRS:** Monday - Saturday 9:00-5:00  
**MRS:** Monday -Saturday 9:00-5:00  
**ERS:** Monday -Saturday 9:00-5:00  
**Construction:** Days and times vary.

## ***Our Holidays***

CCHFH recognizes the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Independence Day	Good Friday
Memorial Day	Labor Day	Christmas Eve
Thanksgiving Day	Day after Thanksgiving	Christmas Day

## ***Our Staff***

<b>Mike Mansfield</b> <i>Chief Executive Officer</i>	Office:	639-3162
<b>Gabrielle Reineck</b> <i>Senior Director of Outreach</i>	Office:	639-3162
<b>Trish Bellois</b> <i>Senior Director of Operations</i>	Office:	639-3162
<b>Tim McCleery</b> <i>Construction Supervisor</i>	Office:	639-3162
<b>Ellen Cardillo</b> <i>Special Event Coordinator</i>	Office:	639-3162
<b>Vickie Sheldon</b> <i>Director of Retail Operations</i>	Murdock Resale Store:	206-2606
<b>Shelly Shepard</b> <i>Director of Faith Relations</i>	Office:	639-3162
<b>Ed Dacey</b> <i>Volunteer Coordinator</i>	Office:	639-3162
<b>Shelly Kunz</b> <i>Family Services</i>	Office:	639-3162

## ***Our Contact Information***

1750 Manzana Avenue  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950

**Office Phone:** (941) 639-3162  
**Fax:** (941) 639-7414

**Website:** [www.charlottecountyhfh.org](http://www.charlottecountyhfh.org)  
**E-mail:** [volunteers@charlottecountyhfh.org](mailto:volunteers@charlottecountyhfh.org)

## VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am in receipt of the Charlotte County Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Handbook and understand I should consult with the Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director, if I have any questions about the policies, procedures and benefits contained therein.

I understand that from time to time there may be revisions to the Volunteer Handbook. Such revisions will require the prior approval of the Executive Director and will be communicated to volunteers through official notices.

I have entered into my volunteer relationship with CCHFH voluntarily and acknowledge there is no specified length of volunteering. Accordingly, either CCHFH or I can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this Handbook is neither a contract of employment or volunteering, nor a legal document. Although some or all of the policies, procedures, and benefits may have been explained to me verbally, I understand that it is my responsibility to fully read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

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Volunteer signature

Date signed

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Volunteer's name (typed or printed)

**Please sign this page, detach, and return it to an appropriate CCHFH employee.**