



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK & Policy Manual

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## **Welcome to Habitat for Humanity of Grays Harbor**

Dear Volunteer,

You have joined an organization, that started in 2000 and shares in your desire to help people to have affordable and safe places to live. Our success in achieving the mission of Habitat is due to the many volunteers who share their time and talents with us. It is our hope that your time as a Habitat volunteer will be a rewarding and enjoyable experience. The personal satisfaction gained from a job well done is one reason many people enjoy volunteering. Career development, community service, and enjoying the company of others are additional benefits your involvement may bring you. Habitat for Humanity (HFHGH) is dedicated to doing its part to assure you a satisfying volunteer experience.

The Volunteer Handbook provides answers to many of the questions you may have about the volunteer opportunities we offer. It covers policies and procedures, and our mutual responsibilities. If anything is unclear, please don't hesitate to ask questions. The information included in the Volunteer Handbook may change. Every effort will be made to keep you informed of any changes.

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## **OUR VISION & MISSION**

**Habitat Vision Statement – A world where everyone has a decent place to live.**

**Habitat Mission Statement – Seeking to put God’s love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities, and hope.**

The vision and mission at HFHGH mandates a sincere, on-going commitment to both our partner families and our volunteers. All who share this commitment are welcome to join us in our work regardless of their background, ethnic origin, race, age, or gender identity. Everyone is welcome at our table. Every member of the Habitat family is valuable and everyone’s time, talents, and efforts are special gifts that are to be appreciated, respected, recognized, and never taken for granted. The right role can be found for any person with a desire and heart to serve.

Volunteers and staff should be given opportunities to learn and grow within the organization. The work of every volunteer is valued equally. All volunteers are treated with dignity and respect. HFHGH values volunteers by giving them meaningful work to do and the materials, tools, training, and supervision to complete their tasks safely and in a timely manner. Volunteers are responsible for the quality of their work, their conduct at work sites, and for meeting their commitment to Habitat, its partner families, and its mission.

All volunteers deserve frequent and accurate information about our activities and operations provided through regular, open, one-on-one communication with staff, through publications, and through conversations with volunteer leaders. Volunteers provide our organization with credibility, insight, perspective, diversity, and expertise that enlightens our operations, helps fulfill our mission, and engages the community in our activities.

## **Volunteer Handbook Introduction**

Welcome and thank you for your interest in volunteering with (HFHGH). We are excited to have you on our team that helps see a brighter future by living in safe, stable, affordable housing. Your efforts will help this community address the ongoing housing crisis in our area.

With this goal in mind, Habitat employees, partner families, and volunteers work in harmony, in an atmosphere of trust and respect for each other. It is our hope that you will join us in this spirit of partnership and that your work here at HFHGH is successful and fulfilling. From our construction and Habitat Store operations, to our office, special events, and committee work, volunteers are a part of every facet of our organization. This handbook will provide you with general policies and practices of HFHGH. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook, as it will answer many common questions concerning your volunteering. To retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, HFHGH reserves the right to make changes, to any of the policies described in this handbook.

### **Habitat 101**

Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) is a nonprofit Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating substandard housing. Habitat works in partnership with low-income working families, sponsors, and communities to build new homes and repair homes that are unsafe or unhealthy to live in through our Critical Home Repair program. New Habitat homes are sold to partner families with affordable, no-interest loans. The homeowners' monthly mortgage payments are then recycled back into the program to build more Habitat homes. Critical Home Repair (CHR) families can finance their project through Habitat loans with payments determined by the cost of the project and family income.

### **We believe in a hand up, not a hand out**

Habitat partner families invest hundreds of hours of their own labor - sweat equity - into building their new home and potentially working in various support areas. Partner families for CHR projects comply with sweat equity requirements as determined by the scope of needed repairs.

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 and repair in its local area; fund raising, building site selection, partner family selection and support, house construction and mortgage servicing. HFHI's headquarters, located in Americus, GA, provides information, training, and a variety of other support services to Habitat affiliates worldwide.

Families in need of safe, stable, affordable shelter apply to local Habitat affiliates. Applications are reviewed based on three criteria, 1) current living situation, 2) their willingness to partner with Habitat, and 3) their ability to pay. Every affiliate follows a non-discriminatory policy of family selection.

## **HFHGH**

Habitat for Humanity of Grays Harbor is part of a global, nonprofit housing organization operated on Christian principles that seeks to put God's love into action by building homes, communities, and hope. HFHGH is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing locally through constructing, rehabilitating and preserving homes; by advocating for fair and just housing policies; and by providing training and access to resources to help families improve their shelter conditions. Since our first meeting in 2000, HFHGH has completed 17 new homes and 2 Critical Home Repair projects. Those 19 projects have positively impacted the lives of over 50 children who now have a brighter future due to living in a stable housing situation.

## **Habitat Store History:**

Solely developed on passion, energy of volunteers and community donations our Habitat Store began with a few yard sales and was located on 8th Street in Hoquiam. An adjacent commercial building fire led a path of relocation to South Shore Mall. Our current location at 3005 Simpson Ave in Hoquiam WA. Habitat store profits are critical to supporting the work of HFHGH.

## **Volunteer Relationship**

A volunteer is anyone who provides time and talent to HFHGH through work on construction, office, committee, store, or any other Habitat projects. We thank you, and all volunteers, for the personal investment you make in our

organization and its mission. We strive to provide support, supervision, and recognition to our volunteers.

**As a volunteer, you have the right to:**

1. Be assigned appropriate tasks according to ability, skill, interests, availability, and training.
2. Receive training and supervision for the tasks accepted.
3. Receive a job description for your assignment when appropriate.
4. Be treated as a fellow team member who contributes to HFHGH goals through your volunteer work.
5. Make suggestions about your assignment and the HFHGH volunteer program, and be acknowledged by staff.
7. Be given appropriate expressions of appreciation and recognition.
8. Be trusted with confidential information if needed to help carry out assignments.
9. Expect that records will be kept; documenting areas of interest or positions held, during time spent volunteering.
10. Be treated with a spirit of friendliness and cooperation so that HFHGH will continue to be known as a “great place to volunteer.”
11. A safe and inviting environment to work in that is free of harassment and discrimination.

**HFHGH expects volunteers to:**

1. Know your own duties and stay on task.
2. Cooperate with staff and your fellow volunteers, and maintain a team attitude.
3. Voice your opinions and contribute your suggestions to improve HFHGH’s work.
4. Sign in and out each time you arrive for a work assignment.
5. Be on time for scheduled meetings and work assignments.
6. Honor your commitment and come when scheduled
7. Treat all volunteers, staff, and partner families with respect.

Remember, you help to create the healthful, pleasant, and safe volunteering conditions that HFHGH intends for you. We need your help in making each volunteering day enjoyable and rewarding.

### **Community Service Volunteers**

HFHGH welcomes community service volunteers from civic groups, schools, community assistance programs, and the judicial system. Community service volunteers are responsible for maintaining an accurate timesheet and to ensure it is signed at the beginning and end of each day by a HFHGH 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. Community service volunteers must also sign in and out on Habitat's volunteer sign in sheets. This is the only information that will be entered in our data base. HFHGH does not recognize breaks or lunches to be community service time. Only actual time worked will be credited for community service. For appropriate placement within our organization, HFHGH 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.

### **Age Requirements**

Habitat staff supervisors evaluate the abilities and competency of all volunteers and assign appropriate, safe activities as availability and conditions permit. Volunteers under the age of 18 may not work on Habitat construction sites or use any type of power tool. Volunteers under 18 must present a waiver of liability form signed by a parent or legal guardian and must be accompanied by an adult when volunteering with Habitat. There are very limited opportunities for volunteers under 16. Our volunteer coordinator will work with youth group leaders to provide opportunities for safe, meaningful participation in appropriate activities and settings that support our mission. There is no maximum age for Habitat volunteers.



## **Code of Conduct**

It is our policy that every person at any Habitat activity is entitled to be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. Consistent with that policy, we **DO NOT TOLERATE** any of the following:

1. Verbal abuse, insults, and/or demeaning remarks
2. Any uninvited physical contact
3. The display of offensive objects, pictures, or gestures
4. Repeated or unwelcome flirtation or discussion of a sexual nature
5. Profanity or vulgarity
6. Inactive participation

Habitat does not allow discrimination based on race, sex, creed, marital status, age, physical and/or developmental disability, color, or national origin. Discrimination will not be tolerated under any circumstance.

## **Harassment & Discrimination**

HFHGH 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. HFHGH prohibits any actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's race, sex, sexual preferences, 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. HFHGH prohibits any harassment between volunteers, employees, or other non-employee based on sex. No volunteer, male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited or unwelcome sexual overtones and conduct, either verbal or physical. Misconduct applies to males and females, and includes harassment between individuals of both sexes and the same sex. Any volunteer who believes 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. In addition, volunteers who believe they have been harassed must immediately report the matter to a Supervisor or HFHGH Board President. A grievance is then filed.

## **Grievances**

Under this policy, a grievance is defined as any event, condition, rule, or practice which the volunteer believes violates his or her civil rights, treats him or

her unfairly, or causes him or her any degree of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the job. A grievance may also deal with an attitude, or an opinion or statement held by a staff member or fellow volunteer. Volunteer grievances are of great concern to HFHGH, regardless of whether the problem is large or small. To provide prompt and efficient evaluation of, and response to grievances, HFHGH has established a procedure for all volunteers. It is HFHGH's policy to consider every volunteer's opinion. There will be no discrimination against or toward anyone for his or her part in presenting a grievance. All grievances are handled confidentially. The grievance procedure is:

1. If urgent action is needed, notify the site supervisor or site host immediately.
2. Attempt to discuss your grievance with your supervisor, HFHGH Volunteer Coordinator, or committee chairperson to work out the problem.
3. If you are unsatisfied, submit your complaint in writing to a supervisor, the HFHGH Volunteer Coordinator, or committee chairperson.
4. A response should be made within 5 business days.
5. If you are not satisfied within 5 days of how your written complaint was handled, you may appeal by submitting your written complaint to the HFHGH Board President.
6. The president should respond within 5 business days.

## **Volunteer Conduct**

HFHGH is an at-will agency and has the right to ask a volunteer to leave and not return to Habitat. 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 or conduct that may result in the limitation and termination of the volunteer relationship.

1. Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of HFHGH property
2. Misuse of agency funds, equipment, or materials
3. Falsification of timekeeping records
4. Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
5. Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcoholic or illegal drugs in the work place, while on duty or while operating HFHGH equipment
6. Fighting or threatening violence in the work place
7. Boisterous or disruptive activity in the work place
8. Negligence or improper conduct leading to the damage of property

9. Repeated failure to follow a supervisor's reasonable request or to carry out a reasonable job assignment.
10. Violation of safety or health rules
11. Abuse or mistreatment of homeowners, volunteers, or employees
12. Sexual or other unlawful harassment or discrimination
13. Violation of HFHGH anti-discrimination policies and procedures
14. Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the work place
15. Excessive absenteeism without notice
16. Releasing confidential information

## **Safety**

You and HFHGH share responsibility for establishing and maintaining a safe work environment. HFHGH will attempt to ensure 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 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. A first aid kit is located on all properties and at the construction sites. A supervisor will advise you of exact locations on site.

## **Absence & Lateness**

The positions that volunteers fill is critical to HFHGH. If you fail to show up, others must take on the tasks you were expected to accomplish. If you are unable to attend a scheduled work day, or if you will arrive late, please contact your Volunteer Coordinator or supervisor with as much notice as possible.

## **Sign-in Sheets**

Volunteer sign-in sheets are very important to our organization. All volunteers must sign in and out on the forms provided each volunteer day on site, or keep a log of your personal hours if spent off site.

## **Confidential Information**

HFHGH has an obligation to partner families, volunteers, and donors to maintain their confidentiality and to respect their privacy. Every person served by HFHGH has the right to confidentiality. At the same time, every volunteer must

use his or her best judgment. If you are aware of an issue that requires immediate attention, especially if it involves volunteers, please direct your concern immediately to the HFHGH Volunteer Coordinator, Office Manager, or President of the Board.

### **Contact Information**

Board of Directors President: **David Mistachkin**  
[damistachkin@izglaw.com](mailto:damistachkin@izglaw.com)

Office Manager: **Darlene Triggs**  
[director@graysharborhabitat.com](mailto:director@graysharborhabitat.com)

Volunteer Coordinator: **Jillian Kilwien**  
[gghabitatjillian@gmail.com](mailto:gghabitatjillian@gmail.com)

Store Manager: **Brad Lyons**  
[store@graysharborhabitat.com](mailto:store@graysharborhabitat.com)

**Volunteer Acknowledgement**

**(To be kept on file in the HFHGH office)**

I am in receipt of Habitat for Humanity of Grays Harbor (HFHGH) Volunteer Handbook and Policy Manual and understand I should consult with the HFHGH Volunteer Coordinator or the Office Manager if I have any questions about the policies or procedures contained therein. I understand that from time to time there may be revisions to the Volunteer Handbook and Policy Manual. Such revisions will require the prior approval of the Habitat Board of Directors and will be communicated to volunteers. I have entered into my volunteer relationship with HFHGH voluntarily and acknowledge there is no specified length of volunteering. Accordingly, either HFHGH or I can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time. Furthermore, I acknowledge that this manual is neither a contract of employment or volunteering, nor a legal document. Although some or all of the policies and procedures 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's Signature

Date Signed

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Volunteer's Name (print)

Received By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_