

Volunteer Handbook



Office and ReStore: 1026 Park Ave. SE, Aiken, SC 29801

Mailing Address: PO Box 3323, Aiken, SC 29802

Phone: (803) 642-9295: Fax: (803) 642-9290

E-mail: info@habitataiken.org

Website: www.habitataiken.org

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Aiken County Habitat for Humanity (ACHFH). We are delighted that you have taken this step to learn more about how you can support us as we partner with people from all walks of life to help low-income families realize the dream of owning a decent, affordable home.

Since Habitat is a volunteer-driven organization, we rely on volunteers like you in every facet of our operations from producing newsletters, to serving on committees, to helping in the office and ReStore, to working on our construction sites. Habitat could not exist without the involvement and support of volunteers.

This volunteer handbook will provide you with general policies and practices of Aiken County Habitat for Humanity (ACHFH). You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with its contents. But, please, note that in order for us to retain necessary flexibility, some policies and procedures may change from time to time.

Habitat's ministry is based on the conviction that to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ we must reflect Christ's love in our own lives by loving and caring for one another.

Table of Contents

Useful Information	page 2
Habitat 101	page 3
How to Get Involved	page 4
What Every Volunteer Should Know	page 4
Information for Construction Volunteers	page 6
Conclusion	page 7

Useful Information

Our Hours of Operation

Office: Monday – Friday 9:00 – 4:00 (front door open Tues. - Fri. 10:00 - 3:00)

Receiving Donations: Tuesday – Friday 10:00 – 3:30, Saturday 10:00 – 12:30

ReStore: Tuesday – Friday 10:00 – 4:00, Saturday 10:00 – 1:00

Construction: Days vary, but usually on Friday and Saturday between 8:00 and 2:30

Our Staff

Executive Director

Richard Church

642-9295 x104

richard_church@habitataiken.org

Robert Girardeau

Construction Coordinator

221-6514

Operations Director

Suzanne Castillo

642-9295 x105

suzanne_castillo@habitataiken.org

ReStore Manager

Henry Krippner

642-0530

hkrippner@habitataiken.org

Leslie Peterson

Finance Manager

642-9295 x102

leslie_peterson@habitataiken.org

Cindy Nichols

ReStore Pick Up Coordinator

642-0530

cnichols@habitataiken.org

Habitat 101

Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry. HFHI seeks to provide affordable homeownership opportunities for very low and low-income families. Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds (through a partnership process) simple, decent houses for families who would otherwise not be able to purchase their own home. Habitat is about homeownership and providing a long-term solution designed to break the poverty cycle.

Founded in 1976 by Millard and Linda Fuller, Habitat has built more than 500,000 houses around the world, providing more than 2.5 million people with safe, decent, affordable shelter. HFHI is now present in 100 countries across the globe, including all 50 U.S. states. Former President Jimmy Carter first partnered with Habitat in 1984, and has become Habitat's most famous spokesperson. For more information on the purpose and history of HFHI see www.habitat.org.

Habitat is not a giveaway program. A common saying is that Habitat provides a *hand up*, not a *hand-out*. In addition to a down payment and monthly mortgage payments, homeowners invest hours of their own labor -- sweat equity -- into building their Habitat house and the houses of others. 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 in the future.

Family Selection committees choose homeowners based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners with Habitat, 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.

Aiken County Habitat for Humanity was formed in 1988. In partnership with local families, individuals, organizations and churches, Aiken Habitat has built over 89 houses for families in Aiken County. While the cost of houses are kept low through the use of volunteer labor and donations from individuals, business, churches, and the Habitat ReStore, each house still costs approximately \$60,000 to build. The average length of time to build a house is 32 days. Crews usually work on Friday and Saturday for 16 weeks.

How to Get Involved

- ◆ **Volunteer for any of the many opportunities available.**

In order to accomplish our mission we need volunteers for every aspect of our operations. Indeed, without volunteers to help with office, administrative and ReStore needs or to serve on committees such as Fundraising, Family Selection, Family Support and Volunteer Relations, there would not be much construction. All of the volunteer opportunities are listed on the **VolunteerUP** calendar. The **VolunteerUP** button is found on the left side of each page of our website, www.habitataiken.org. If you have questions about any of the opportunities available, please, go to **Volunteer UP** or call 803-642-9295 x105.

- ◆ **Involve your church, company, and civic organizations.**

There are many ways groups can help. For example, you can encourage your group to become a sponsor, work on a build or fundraising project, or bring meals to construction workers.

- ◆ **Donate items for the ReStore.**

Donations of furniture, collectibles, working appliances, vehicles, and much more are welcome. Your donations are tax deductible.

- ◆ **Make a monetary donation.**

Giving opportunities for groups and individuals are detailed on our website or a check could be mailed to PO Box 3323, Aiken, SC 29802.

- ◆ **Encourage eligible families to apply for homeownership.**

Call our office (642-9295 x105) for more information on requirements for homeownership or see "homeownership" on our website, www.habitataiken.org.

What Every Volunteer Should Know

Safety

ACHFH works to assure a safe workplace in all areas of its operation. In turn, you are expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all your activities, whether working in the office, ReStore, construction site or on a pick-up crew. You are asked to report any unsafe conditions to your supervisor immediately. Any accident, which results in injury, must be reported promptly to the Executive Director and to your supervisor. You and ACHFH share the responsibility for establishing and maintaining a safe work environment. To learn more about safety, go to www.hfhvolunteerinsurance.com and follow the instructions to watch safety videos.

Dress Code

Everyone is expected to dress appropriately for the job they are performing. If you have questions about what is appropriate, then ask the supervisor. In general, unless a job specifically requires otherwise, ACHFH maintains business casual dress for the office and casual dress and shoes with a closed toe and heel in the ReStore. See the section on

Special Construction Instructions for more on what to wear at the construction site.

Co-worker Relations

ACHFH strives to see that all volunteers work in a supportive environment. However, we also realize that disagreements and misunderstanding will arise from time to time. When this happens, you should contact your supervisor. If this does not solve the problem and you feel the matter needs to be pursued, contact the Executive Director.

Harassment & Discrimination

ACHFH is firmly committed to providing a workplace free of discrimination and bias. 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. Volunteers who feel that they have been harassed must immediately report the matter to the Executive Director. Regardless of the means selected to resolve the complaint, any complaints will not be a reflection of the volunteer making the complaint.

Volunteer Work Rules

In order for Aiken Habitat to provide a positive working environment for all, volunteers must adhere to certain rules of conduct. Although it is not possible to list all the behaviors that are considered unacceptable, the following are examples of infraction of rules of conduct that may result in the limitation and/or termination of the volunteer relationship.

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of ACHFH property.
- Falsification of timekeeping record (if required).
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcoholic or illegal drugs in the work place or while operating ACHFH 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 ACHFH'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 ACHFH buildings, vehicles, or in a house once it has been fully framed.
- Sexual or unlawful harassment or discrimination.
- False accusation of harassment, unlawful discrimination, or disparaging treatment by one volunteer to another.
- Possession of dangerous materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the work place.
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness without notice.
- Unauthorized or improper use of telephones, mail system, or other ACHFH-owned equipment.

Information for Construction Volunteers

1. Note that on the construction site, there are some age restrictions for volunteers. Individuals who are **14 and 15 years old** can do limited work, such as painting and landscaping, but **cannot be on the site when construction is occurring**. Those 16 and 17 can do general construction but cannot do excavation, demolition, use power tools, or work at heights above 6 feet. Children must be supervised on the job site. A waiver for minors must be completed by the parent before the child is allowed on the job site (see page 7). Anyone over 18 can do any of the various construction related jobs.
2. Work usually begins on Friday and Saturday at 8:00 a.m. and ends whenever the work for that day is complete, usually around 2:30 p.m.
3. Wear clothing appropriate for safety, the weather and the working conditions. Your clothing will get stained and soiled. Please wear sturdy shoes with **closed toes and heels**.
4. Upon arrival at the site, please sign in. This insures that you are covered by Habitat's insurance policy for *supplemental* insurance needs. *Your insurance carrier is primary*.
5. On site the crew leaders are in charge. Seek their advice when needed and heed their advice when given.
6. Put safety first. You are the best judge of your own limitations, based on your physical health and overall conditioning. Do not perform tasks, which seem too complicated and dangerous for you.
7. Remember that safety is everybody's concern. Since Habitat crews normally have a high proportion of inexperienced people, everyone must pay particular attention to safety. If you see anything that is unsafe, report it to a supervisor immediately.
8. When in doubt, ask.
9. Do your work with care. This will be someone's home.
10. Introduce yourself to your fellow workers and wear nametags to help others get to know you.
11. Be flexible and willing to perform tasks you may not have expected as schedules and the needs for the day may change.
12. If you drive to the site, please park with consideration of the neighbor's need for access.
13. Leave time for cleanup on the job.
14. Portable toilets are available at all constructions sites.

15. Lunch will be provided, but if you have any special dietary concerns, you should bring your lunch.

16. If you have tools and a tool belt, please bring them. Some tools will be provided on site, but bring yours just in case there are not enough. We recommend you bring the following if you have them.

- 16 ounce hammer
- 25 foot tape measure
- Carpenter's pencil
- Safety goggles
- Utility knife
- Nail apron or tool belt

Be sure to clearly mark your name on your tools.

Conclusion

It is our hope that you will join us in a spirit of partnership and that your efforts with Habitat will prove enjoyable and fulfilling.

All volunteers must complete the waiver from the website before or on the first day of volunteering. It can also be obtained at the Habitat office or on the construction site. The waiver needs to be updated annually. If any of your information changes, please let us know. It is important that we have accurate addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses for emergencies and other reasons.

If you have any questions or concerns about volunteering, contact the Aiken County Habitat for Humanity office at 642-9295 x105 or info@habitataiken.org.

Thank you for using **Volunteer UP** at our website www.habitataiken.org.

updated 11/29/2012