



Volunteer Manual

Habitat for Humanity of Bergen County

2019

A BIG WELCOME TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Habitat for Humanity Bergen ReStore! This ReStore could not be possible without people like you putting your time, energy, and passion into alleviating homelessness. Each time you volunteer, you help house families in Bergen County. You are CRITICAL in making a difference to the lives of Bergen County families. We intend to utilize your creative and innovative skills to make the ReStore a HUGE success.

The ReStore mission is the Habitat mission: Bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope.

The main purpose of the ReStore is to raise additional funds to support Habitat's mission. Secondary benefits of the ReStore include providing the community with access to low-cost building materials and household goods, being a public face of Habitat for Humanity in local communities, and keeping usable items out of the landfill.

The ReStore is a fast paced and changing environment where you will be meeting people from different walks of life. Those interactions will provide you with a great opportunity to explain how each purchase helps the affiliate build affordable housing here in Bergen County.

This manual is will provide you with information about the Habitat Bergen ReStore and the ways in which you will help us fulfill our mission.

The ReStore team is glad and honored to have you with us; we cannot wait to take this journey with you.

Sincerely,

The ReStore Team

Meet the Habitat for Humanity Bergen County Affiliate:

The mission of our Habitat Bergen affiliate is to provide decent, affordable homes for hardworking Bergen County families. We join in a common goal with other affiliates of this international organization to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness from the face of the earth by working in partnership with people in need. Using volunteer labor and donated funds and materials, Habitat builds or rehabilitates simple, decent homes and sells them to low income families at cost and with no interest charged. Habitat is a people-to-people partnership, which joins all of us together regardless of race, nationality, religion or socioeconomic status.

Our History:

- Habitat Bergen became an established affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International in 1994.
- Since our founding, we have built homes in many Bergen County communities. Two in Teaneck, four in Hackensack, six in Englewood, two in East Rutherford, four in Waldwick, one in Garfield, and four in Oradell.
- We have served alongside 130 partner families residing in Bergen County.
- We have also partnered with many corporations, community groups, and churches to provide much-needed renovation work to existing homes in Bergen County.
- Each year we also tithe a part of our fund-raised dollars to our sister affiliates in other parts of the world where dollars are a precious resource.
- In 2006 Habitat Bergen, responding to Hurricane Katrina, built four homes locally and then shipped them to areas that were devastated by the hurricane. Some of our volunteers traveled to Lafayette, Louisiana to complete the construction of one of the four homes we contributed.
- In 2011 having partnered with another nonprofit called *Zoe's Place*, we renovated an existing building in Garfield, New Jersey that houses five teenage mothers and their babies.
- In September of 2011, we received a generous donation of land from the town of Waldwick. With the help of our volunteers we were able to renovate an existing 1,200 square foot farm house into housing for three families.
- In 2013 we completed Habitat Bergen's first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified project of four units in Oradell. This project was unique for Habitat Bergen as it required special attention to design energy efficiency, water conservation, indoor environmental quality.
- In February of 2013, Habitat Bergen launched a multi-phase response- *Repair, Rebuild, ReStore*-to help families in Little Ferry and surrounding areas impacted by Super Storm Sandy.
- In March 2015, Habitat Bergen celebrated the completion of a 1,900 square foot, three-bedroom single family home in Bergenfield, NJ. The Energy Star-certified home featured Blue Jean insulation made from recycled denim, LED light bulbs, and energy efficient appliances donated by Samsung Electronics America Inc.
- In 2017 we opened the Bergen ReStore as an additional source of funding to build affordable housing.
- We are currently building four units of affordable housing in the Township of Washington. Two of the homes are for seniors and two are for veterans.

"We rise by lifting others." - Robert Ingersoll

RESTORE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:

Habitat for Humanity ReStores are nonprofit home improvement stores and donation centers, which are operated by local affiliates. ReStores sell new and gently used furniture, home accessories, building materials, and appliances to the public at a fraction of the retail price. The primary purpose of the ReStore is to raise additional funding to support our mission of building affordable housing in Bergen County.

The ReStore also provides access to low-cost building materials and household goods to the community, is a public face of Habitat for Humanity in local communities, and keeps usable items out of the landfill.

Customers can affordably shop while knowing they are making a difference in the lives of their fellow community members. Donors can benefit from their tax deductible donations, while reducing their environmental impact on the earth and helping people in need. You the volunteer, will be the vehicle to make this ReStore successful, all while gaining experience and building long lasting relationships with fellow volunteers.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” -
Margaret Mead

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

The Habitat Bergen ReStore is a safe environment for people of different backgrounds to come together to shop, donate, and/or volunteer their time to help the community. Everyone has the right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect. Discrimination based on race, sex, creed, marital status, age, physical and/or developmental disability, or national origin are not tolerated on our premises. Our ReStore does not tolerate: profanity, vulgarity, sexually oriented discussions, verbal abuse, demeaning remarks, uninvited physical contact, or the display of offensive materials. Habitat Bergen reserves the right to dismiss anyone from the ReStore who engages in such discriminatory behavior.

It is also imperative that our safety guidelines are obeyed by all volunteers, at all times. Our safety procedure will be strictly enforced. Anyone who acts in an unsafe manner will be asked to vacate the premises. The use of drugs or alcohol before or during your shift will result in dismissal. A warehouse-type setting where heavy items are being moved requires the volunteers to be constantly alert. As such, the use of headphones, cellphones, iPods, or other electronic devices are a distraction and thus prohibited during your shift.

“Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don’t have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.” – **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Daily Procedures

Upon Arrival:

ALL VOLUNTEERS MUST PARK IN THE SPACES PROVIDED ON THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING AND NOT IN FRONT OF THE RESTORE. THE PARKING SPOTS IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING ARE FOR CUSTOMERS.

It is extremely important that volunteers arrive for their scheduled shift(s) on time and prepared for their shift. Once you have put your belongings away in the break room, sign-in and check in with a manager or lead volunteer. During the check in, you will be briefed on what your shift responsibilities will be. Do not hesitate to ask questions, there is NO such thing as a stupid question. Take this opportunity with your manager to discuss anything you may need clarification on.

If you cannot make your volunteer shift, please call your manager directly to inform him/her 24 to 48 hours before your shift so that we can fill the position.

Sign-In:

All volunteers must sign-in upon arrival for their scheduled shift. A computer will be available at the front desk where you can record your start and stop times. ALL VOLUNTEERS MUST SIGN A LIABILITY WAIVER FORM PRIOR TO VOLUNTEERING. All volunteers must be at least 16 years old.

Sign-Out:

You must sign-out at the end of your shift. This enables the ReStore to track your hours of service.

Dress Code:

It is important to dress appropriately and comfortably for the job you will be performing at the ReStore. You should wear comfortable, closed toe shoes. Work boots are the ideal shoe, but sneakers are the next best thing. Habitat Bergen will provide you with a ReStore t-shirt and name tag which we ask that you wear at all times while working in the ReStore.

You should not wear: loose hanging jewelry, clothing with offensive or explicit material, overly baggy clothing, heels, or clothing where your undergarments or midriff are visible.

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” –
Elizabeth Andrew

Break Room Usage Policy

- The break room is provided for the benefit of ReStore volunteers.
- The break room provides a place for volunteers to take their breaks and meal periods, free from assigned duties.
- Volunteers are responsible for keeping the break room clean at all times. This means please clean up after yourself.
- There is a mini-fridge and microwave specifically for volunteer use.
- Volunteers are allowed to keep their personal belongings in the break room for safe keeping.
- Volunteers are also allowed to eat outside at the benches on Carver Ave while on their breaks.
- Volunteers are asked to use the ReStore Staff bathroom located at the back of the ReStore, through the door on the left.

Positions at the ReStore

Volunteers at the ReStore will assist in various ways. It is important to us that you enjoy your time while volunteering, as well as using your skills to make the ReStore as successful as possible.

We ask that you sign up for a minimum of four hours per shift. While we always appreciate volunteers who can commit to a weekly schedule, our online signup procedure allows you to pick the days and times that work best for you. In addition to what you will learn from this handbook, you will also spend your first shift at the ReStore buddied up with one of our experienced volunteers who will guide you in our best practices.

Cashier/Concierge

The cashier is expected to complete transactions from seller to buyer in an efficient and friendly manner.

Position Tasks:

- Greet arriving customers
- Operate sales counter
- Operate cash register to document merchandise sales
- Follow established procedures for customer sales
- Respond to customer inquiries
- Answer and process phone calls as needed

- Direct customers to appropriate areas of the store
- Assist other volunteers as needed

Qualifications:

- Comfortable handling money and operating cash register
- People-oriented, flexible, and enthusiastic
- Professional demeanor, and ability to remain friendly and polite when faced with difficult customer situations
- Ability to stay on your feet for an extended period of time
- Strong communication and organizational skills.

Sales Assistant/Customer Service Support

Provides assistance to customers and maintains the sales floor.

Position Tasks:

- Meet and greet customers
- Provide general assistance to customers, answering questions, and directing customers to the correct department(s)
- Assist customers through the purchase process, while coordinating with the cashier
- Maintain organization and cleanliness of aisles and merchandise

Qualifications:

- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Friendly and helpful attitude
- Knowledge of building materials and home improvement is a plus, but not required
- Ability to stay on your feet for an extended period of time
- Ability to work in a warehouse environment

Merchandiser

The merchandiser is the volunteer who has the vision as to where products should go in the ReStore, and determines what location would be most pleasing and eye-catching to the customer.

Position Tasks:

- Unpack, clean, and label incoming merchandise
- Organize products into clear categories

- Display items in the appropriate sections
- Create visible signage to display products

Qualifications:

- Should be able to move and lift furniture up to 25lbs
- Ability to stay on your feet for extended periods of time
- Friendly and helpful attitude
- Creative
- Retail experience is a plus

Warehouse Support

Position Tasks:

- Help to unload donated items from ReStore Truck into loading dock area.
- Help arrange and organize donated items in the warehouse to allow for efficient use of storage space.
- Move items from the storage areas onto the merchandise floor at the direction of the ReStore Manager.
- Assist customers with loading items into their vehicles from the loading dock.

Qualifications:

- Completion of the Lockton Safety Course on Back Safety
- Ability to lift up to 50 pounds regularly and 75 pounds occasionally
- Ability to project a friendly and positive image of Habitat Bergen

Customer Service Guidelines

1. Volunteers are encouraged to enthusiastically greet customers and donors by walking over to them, welcoming them and introducing themselves by their first name.
2. All shoppers and donors should be thanked warmly and sincerely.
3. If asked to answer the phone, please follow the script that is provided next to the phone to ensure that customers receive accurate information about the ReStore and our procedures. Volunteers should treat every caller with respect and a sincere interest and effort toward helping them.
4. Volunteers should not take out their bad mood or frustration on a customer or donor; we understand how critical a positive attitude is to customer service interactions and ask that you don't let anything get in the way of providing excellent customer service to another person.
5. Our ReStore strives to have enough staff and volunteers on the floor so customers and donors can readily be assisted.

6. Our ReStore does not use its shortcomings (not enough staff; non-profit business; not enough resources, etc.) as an excuse to offer poor service. No business is able to do everything for every person; we understand our limitations and work hard at providing alternate solutions and options to customers/donors when we can't meet their specific request.
7. Our staff and volunteers should look happy to work at the ReStore. We are proud of being part of Habitat for Humanity and others should perceive us as genuinely enthusiastic and congenial.

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

Winston Churchill

Donation Guidelines

For donations that are dropped off at the store:

- When a person drops off a donation, kindly greet them and thank them for thinking of Habitat Bergen.
- Assess whether we can accept their donation based upon our guidelines. While we welcome all offers of new or very gently used items, we reserve the right to refuse unsuitable donations. **We cannot accept anything excessively scratched, soiled, damaged, extremely out of style or in need of repair.** (A list of what we do/do not accept is located at the end of this handbook.)
- Upon acceptance ask them if they would like a Donation Form for tax purposes.
- If an item cannot be accepted, please let them know that while we appreciate their support, their item cannot be sold by the ReStore. Offer them our handout of Alternate Donation Centers which lists other organizations which may be willing to accept their items.
- Bring accepted donations into the volunteer room for processing:
 - Clean and inspect each item (electronics should be plugged in and tested).
 - An item will either PASS or FAIL the inspection phase.
 - If the item has failed, discard the item at proper facility (garbage bag/dumpster/recycling area).
 - If the item has PASSED, price the item.
 - Determining prices can be an arduous task. As a general rule, the ReStore will price items from 30 to 70 percent of their retail price. High-end items should be priced at about 70 percent of retail value.

- Pricing will be based on the following factors:
 - Supply
 - Demand
 - What the market will bear as a retail price
 - Condition of the item
- Every effort must be made to find an actual retail price for each item. Prices should be compared to those found at retail stores or on sites such as EBay.
- Brand new items shall be priced at a 30% discount to their retail value. Exceptions (both higher and lower) may be made due to the perceived demand for items.
- Used items shall be priced at 50-70% off retail value, which is dependent on the condition of the item and the perceived demand for the item.
- Price tags will be dated and prices will be marked down 25% after 15 days and 50% after 30 days on the floor.
- Once an item is priced it should then be moved onto the sales floor and merchandized.

For donations that arrive via the ReStore truck:

After donations are unloaded from the truck into the warehouse loading dock area they must be cleaned, appraised, priced, and occasionally reassembled before being sold.

1. The first step is to clean the donations:
 - a. This includes the top, sides, back, and bottom of all surfaces
 - i. For example, if you're wiping down a table with a glass surface wipe down both sides of the glass with Windex and wipe down the sides and legs with Lysol.
 - b. All upholstered couches and chairs should be treated with Steri-fab while in the loading dock.
 - i. This product is a liquid that can be sprayed onto upholstery to kill all bugs, germs and bacteria.
 - ii. Items should be sprayed in a well ventilated area with the loading dock door in the up position. A safety kit with gloves, glasses and a face mask should be worn.
 - iii. Items that have been sprayed should be tagged with a Steri-Fab tag (white tag) and remain in the loading dock for 24 hrs. before being put on the floor.
2. Step two is to price the donations:
 - a. Once the donations are clean you can figure out how much it is worth. A cleaned up table will look like it is worth more than a dirty table. Perception is key.
 - b. Pricing of furniture must be approved by the ReStore Manager or Assistant Manager.
3. Once the pricing is approved the furniture can be moved onto the sales floor.

Occasionally donations need to be reassembled due to them being too big to pack in the truck. When this is the case it may be easier to clean the item while disassembled, but that is up to the discretion of whoever is reassembling the donation. You may also need to reassemble the item on the sales floor due to the fact that the item is heavy or just too big to maneuver throughout the store while put together.

Volunteer & Staff Shopping Policy

It is imperative that after an item has gone through the donation process and has been priced, it moves onto the sales floor. Items must be moved onto the sales floor so everyone has an equal opportunity to purchase them.

- There is NO shopping from the pricing areas.
- Please DO NOT announce your intention to purchase an item BEFORE IT IS PRICED.
- If you intend to purchase an item at a later time, you should not be involved in the pricing of that item.
- Do not request that an item be specially priced for you to purchase it. This will put another volunteer or staff person in an awkward situation.
- You must wait 24 hours after an item has been placed on the floor to purchase it; this gives the public an equal opportunity to purchase affordable items.
- Do not shop during your shift. You must purchase your items BEFORE or AFTER your shift.
- Volunteers must not change already priced items; please ask a staff member if an item is not marked with a price.
- Staff members will price items based on the ReStore pricing guide.

“Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they’re worthless, but because they’re priceless.” – **Sherry Anderson**

Safety Procedures

ReStore volunteers must act in such a manner to establish and maintain a safe working environment. You are expected to follow safety rules and report any accident that results in an injury. An incident report should be filed by the manager on shift when an emergency occurs.

Protective Equipment:

Habitat Bergen will provide all volunteers with the necessary protective equipment should the required jobs being executed demand them.

Protective Equipment includes:

- Safety glasses
- Masks
- Back support (for lifting)
- Construction helmets (when necessary).
- Gloves

When Lifting Items:

- Look for nails or screws before lifting
- Keep your back straight and near vertical; do not reach out in front and lift or twist your body
- Flex knees and lift with your knees/legs and hold heavy loads near your body
- Avoid using an extended reach
- Use carts, dollies or pallet jacks whenever possible to avoid strain
- Make sure you can comfortably handle the weight of an item before lifting
- Use the following guidelines when lifting objects:
 - a. Up to 50 lbs. bend knees and keep back straight
 - b. 50-80 lbs. get a mate
 - c. 80 lbs or more it's a mechanical chore

When using utility knives:

- Keep your hand and body out of the blade's path and retract blade when not in use.
- Maintain your concentration during use, distractions result in injury
- A sharp blade is safer, as it takes less force to use

Dock Safety

- Stay clear of dock edge
- Stay behind safety railing
- Keep dock door closed when not loading or unloading
- Keep dock free of debris

- Post loading zone sign

When using a ladder:

- Only one person should use the ladder at a time
- Do not carry heavy items or loads up ladder
- Place it on solid ground with feet firmly planted, with assistance from another volunteer to hold the ladder
- Do not overreach, instead get down and reposition the ladder
- Ladders should be used by ReStore personnel only, NOT customers
- Always check the condition of a ladder before using it
- Maintain 3 points of contact on the ladder at all times

When loading and unloading donated goods:

- We are not responsible for tying down customer's purchased items to their vehicle; we can provide twine, but they must do so themselves, unless they sign a waiver assuming all liability.
- Only load donations if you are comfortable with lifting the weight of that item.
- It is imperative to load the item cautiously; so as to not cause any damage to the customer's property.
- If you do not have the man power or equipment to load the items into the vehicle, then respectfully decline helping the customer.

Housekeeping Best Practices

- Keep aisles free of clutter and trash
- Clean up spills right away and put out "wet floor" signage
- Rugs, Carpets, and mats should lay flat to prevent tripping
- Power cords should not lay across floors and aisles
- Clearly identify and mark changes in floor elevation
- Place items securely on shelves and racks
- Do not exceed load capacity on shelves and racks
- Place heavy items on bottom shelves and racks, lighter objects on top
- Store products at least 18 inches away from sprinkler heads

General Safety Instructions:

- If a task makes you uncomfortable, do not do it and please voice your concern to a staff member when you feel unsafe.
- It is imperative that you remain alert and aware of your surroundings.
- Always wear protective gear when necessary and trust your instincts.
- Always put tools, cleaning supplies, and dollies/carts away when you are done using them. This will help avoid any injury.

- Smoking is not allowed on premises (Clean air act P.L. 2005, c.383 –No Smoking sign is required in a public place) nor 10 feet from entrance.
- Please watch the ReStore safety video that has been sent to you in an email.

Our Top Customer Issues

1. Pricing

- ReStore prices are too high.
- ReStore prices for used items are higher than retail prices for new items.
- The merchandise is donated, so why are they charging so much?
- Isn't Habitat's mission to help the poor? How can the poor afford this stuff?
- Store staff refuses to accept a lower offer/refuses to haggle.

It is the policy of the ReStore that we WILL NOT negotiate the sale price of items on the sales floor. We strive to price and sell items at a fair price to customers, while offering them an exceptional value on materials. Remind customers that we lower our prices every 15 days on most items in the ReStore and encourage them to return when the price of the item is scheduled to drop. Any customer who continues to pursue a discounted price must speak with the ReStore manager.

2. No Returns/Exchanges

- I bought (fill in blank) and they won't let me return it/exchange it for something else.
- I want my money back, but they will only give me a store credit.
- Store claims to have a "no returns or exchanges" policy, but it's not posted anywhere And I was not informed. Now that I want/need to return something, they tell me I can't.
- The cashier promised I could return it if it didn't fit. Now they won't take it back.

Our return policy is posted directly behind the register. Items are sold "As Is" and cannot be returned. All electric items are tested before being put on the sales floor. Large appliance that break down within six weeks of purchase can be returned for a store credit upon the approval of the ReStore manager. The cashier is not allowed to make any commitments on behalf of the ReStore with regard to our return policy.

ACCEPTABLE ITEMS FOR DONATION

A copy of this list can be found at the front desk and the loading dock for your reference when necessary.

These items MAY be accepted if they are new or in gently used condition **with no scratches, rips, stains or missing parts.**

Architectural items

- Columns, Mantels, Porch posts

Cabinets

- All doors, drawers and outer facing must be in good condition.

Countertops

- No cutouts accepted, unless paired with original cabinets.

Doors

- Pre-hung or door slabs.
- Exterior/Interior entry
- Sliding glass – **only if new**

Electrical

- Wire, plugs, plates, and hardware associated with electrical wiring
- Lamps – table and floor
- Ceiling and wall lighting fixtures
- Lightbulbs-new in box

Electronic Devices

- Stereo Systems, CD players, Speakers
- Flat Screen TVs and Monitors- must have HDMI and USB ports

Fans/Air Conditioning Units

- Portable
- Ceiling
- Window units

Flooring materials

- Ceramic/Marble/Slate and Vinyl tile
- Natural wood and laminate flooring
- Carpet tiles

Furniture

- Upholstered and Leather chairs and recliners
- Leather and neutral colored contemporary sofas
- Coffee, side, console and game tables
- Dining Tables and chairs, Breakfronts, Hutches
- Dressers, Armoires and nightstands
- Bookshelves and media consoles
- Home office desks, chairs, storage
- Bar carts, stools, benches, ottomans

Gutters and Leaders

Hardware:

- Doorknobs, hinges.

Holiday items

- Christmas ornaments

- Christmas Lights
- Christmas Trees/wreaths
- Other holiday decor

Home accessories

- Mirrors
- Artwork
- Lamps
- Chandeliers
- Decorative items

Insulation-new only

Kitchen Accessories

- Complete sets of dishes
- Glassware sets
- Pots and Pans
- Small Appliances- coffee makers, microwave ovens etc. -must be less than 5 years old. Serial numbers must be checked to assure there are no recalls.
- Large Appliances-Refrigerators, dishwashers, washers, dryers, ovens, range hoods, range tops. Must be less than 10 years old.

Lawn and Garden Supplies

- Lawnmowers, spreaders, hoses (new)
- Garden Tools
- Decorative Garden Items
- Chaises, tables, chairs, umbrellas
- Bicycles

Lumber-new only

- Pressure Treated Framing
- Plywood
- Milled lumber
- Trim
- Siding

Masonry

- Concrete Block
- Bricks
- Unopened bags of mortar

Paint and Supplies-new only

Plumbing Fixtures and Hardware

- Sinks
- Bathtubs
- Toilets-white or beige only thoroughly cleaned only
- Plumbing hardware
- Hot Water Heaters- new only
- Pipe-PVC/Metal/Copper

Roofing Materials-new only

- Shingles
- Rolls of roofing material
- Underlayment

Sheet Rock-new only

- Wallboard, drywall
- Spackling compounds and tape

Siding

- Vinyl, aluminum
- Cedar
- Siding hardware

Tools

- Hand tools
- Power tools

Vents

- Floor
- Ceiling
- Return

Windows and screens-new only

The following items will **NOT** be collected for resale

Area Rugs

Baby Items

Beds, Mattresses, Box Springs and Frames

Bedding, Clothing or Linens

Books

Computers, office equipment and accessories

Exercise equipment

Floral upholstered sofas

Pianos

Scrap Metal

Sleeper Sofas

Swing sets

Toys

Window Treatments

Please acknowledge that you have read the volunteer manual in its entirety and you agree to the terms provided above.

Print Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Sign: _____

Date: _____

How did you hear about us?

***Please bring this signed copy and your signed volunteer waiver to your training session.**

***Volunteers under the age of 18, you must have a parent or guardian sign your waiver prior to your training session.**

*Thank you for volunteering at the Habitat Bergen ReStore.
You are helping us provide decent, affordable homes to hardworking
Bergen County Families!*