



POLICIES & GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Arkansas Foodbank is truly a community supported food bank. Without the support of our volunteers, our fight against hunger would not be possible. In order to ensure a safe and a beneficial experience for everyone, we ask that all Volunteers follow these simple policies and guidelines.

Arkansas Foodbank Core Values

Here at the Arkansas Foodbank, our values are at the core of everything that we do and help to guide all of our decisions and actions. With over 180 times more volunteers than staff here at the Foodbank, we also expect that our volunteers will use these values to guide their behaviors and decisions while working with us. These values are:

- **Collaboration** – We are stronger when we work together! We have volunteer groups from many backgrounds and skill levels, which we believe makes us unique from a lot of other organizations. Volunteers should be prepared to be mixed in with other groups and excited about learning from and sharing with others.
- **Respect** – We value the dignity and diversity of ALL people. Staff, volunteers, and visitors alike should value others, be kind to one another, and keep appropriate tones of voice when speaking to other people in the building or when representing the Arkansas Foodbank.
- **Innovation & Creativity** – We seek, identify and implement the best solutions to fight hunger, meeting people where they are.
- **Integrity** – We achieve our goals by maintaining the highest degree of ethical standards and by putting our values into action.

Volunteering

- It is asked that volunteering be scheduled in advance. This is to ensure there is adequate space and work available. **Please visit arkansasfoodbank.org → "I Want To Help" to schedule a shift and learn more about volunteer opportunities during the week, Saturdays, and Tuesday evenings on Family Night.** For additional questions, contact Amber Bryant, Volunteer Coordinator, at 501-569-4320 (abryant@arkansasfoodbank.org), or Patricia Fry, Volunteer Engagement Manager, at 501-569-4350 (pfry@arkansasfoodbank.org).
- Volunteer hours are typically Monday – Friday from 9 am to 12 pm and 1pm to 4pm. Arkansas Foodbank tries to offer two Saturday mornings and one Tuesday evening (Family Night) per month; however, this is not always possible. **Please visit arkansasfoodbank.org → "I Want To Help" for more information.**
- Volunteers must be at least **ten (10)** years of age to work in our warehouse located at **4301 W 65th Street in Little Rock, AR, 72209**. Volunteers must be at least **eight (8)** years of age for Saturday workdays and after-hours volunteer shifts during the work week. Volunteers **8-15** years old must be accompanied by an adult. Volunteers **16-18** years old do not require an adult to accompany them to volunteer in our warehouse.
- Occasionally we offer special volunteer opportunities for children **5-7** years of age. These opportunities include a tour, an educational activity and a special volunteer project (Ex: Girl Scout Day). These opportunities must be planned and scheduled in advance. To find out more information, please call the Volunteer Coordinator at 501.569.4320.

- If an individual volunteer or volunteer group does not schedule in advance and just “shows up” to volunteer, please understand that you may be turned away due to limited space or available supervision.
- At least three days prior to a scheduled volunteer shift, please submit a completed copy of the *Volunteer Consent and Release* form for each volunteer in your group. **Please note: Volunteers who arrive without a *Volunteer Consent and Release* form will not be allowed to volunteer that day. If it is not possible to have this form on file prior to arriving at the Arkansas Foodbank, all volunteers will have to complete this form prior to beginning their volunteer shift and this will delay your volunteer project scheduled for the day. Additionally, if you are under the age of 18 and don’t have a parent or guardian on site, you will be required to have a *Youth Volunteer Consent & Release* form signed prior to arrival. Volunteer consent forms must be updated annually by every volunteer.**
- If a scheduled volunteer time must be cancelled or rescheduled, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at least 24 hours in advance, unless there is an emergency.
- Any individual with special needs should make the Volunteer Coordinator aware of these needs in advance in order to best serve that individual.
- Volunteers are expected to volunteer for a minimum of 1.5 hours. The average volunteer shift is 3 hours and includes a brief introduction to the Foodbank, an overview of the project the volunteers will be working on, and a brief overview of warehouse safety. If you have any questions about volunteer shifts please contact Amber Bryant, Volunteer Coordinator, or Patricia Fry, Volunteer Engagement Manager.
- All volunteers must sign in upon arrival and sign out upon completion of their service.
- Volunteers must wear ID stickers in all parts of the Arkansas Foodbank building. These stickers are given out at check in.
- The Arkansas Foodbank is a food bank which helps to feed those in Arkansas facing hunger as well as distribute Disaster Relief supplies to those who need it. Please do not remove anything from the facility at any time. This includes items that are believed to be unfit and are designated for disposal. If special assistance is needed for a volunteer or loved one, please inform Arkansas Foodbank staff in order to go through the appropriate process to receive assistance.

Individual Volunteers

- Volunteers under the age of 16 are not allowed to volunteer without an adult, 18 years of age or older present.
- Any individual volunteer under the age of 18 must provide a *Youth Volunteer Consent and Release* form signed by their parent or guardian that includes their emergency contact information in order to volunteer. If the volunteer wishes to leave the building for any reason during the scheduled volunteer time, Arkansas Foodbank must have verbal or written permission from the parent/guardian.
- If a record of service hour’s form needs to be completed, it is the volunteer’s responsibility to bring the form and have it completed by a supervisor. Your supervisor will not complete this form until the end of your shift. If your group, school, job, etc. does not provide a form to fill out, we have service hour forms on site for your use.

Volunteer Groups

- Groups of children between the ages of 8 and 14 must have one adult per 5 children. Groups with children between the ages of 14 and 18 must have one adult per 10 children. Adult chaperones must remain with the group at all times and have emergency contact numbers and/or permission slips from a parent for each child.

- Groups need to arrive 15 minutes prior to their scheduled volunteer shift. If the group is scheduled for an evening activity, please understand that anyone arriving after 15 minutes of scheduled time may not be able to get into the building.
- Conference rooms at the Arkansas Foodbank are not allowed to be used by visitors unless prior arrangements have been scheduled with the Volunteer Coordinator or the Volunteer Engagement Manager. If you would like to use these spaces for your group, please email Amber at abryant@arkansasfoodbank.org or Patricia at pfry@arkansasfoodbank.org.

Attire

- Volunteers will most likely be working in the volunteer center or warehouse where work conditions might expose volunteers to dust and hot or cold conditions depending on the season, so please dress accordingly. Volunteers should also consider any health concerns like allergies to dust prior to signing up to volunteer.
- Winter months: dress warmly, layers are suggested. We do have heaters in the facility, but having additional layers helps.
- Summer months: dress lightly, however, appropriate clothing is required. Low cut shirts and spaghetti strap tank tops are not allowed.
- If working in the Clean Repackaging Room or with open food products, caps or some form of hair restraint (pony tail holders, hair nets, etc.) should be worn. Gloves and hair nets will be provided on site for your use.
- All volunteers must wear closed toe, closed heel, secure shoes to work. If shoes are deemed unsafe, volunteers will not be allowed to work. Flip flops and sandals are not permitted.
- It is recommended that volunteers leave purses or valuables in their car. The Arkansas Foodbank cannot be held responsible for any missing personal belongings. We do have available locker storage on site, however, personal items will not be allowed in the Volunteer Center or Clean Repackaging Room.

Facility Safety Rules

- Anyone under the influence or in the possession of drugs and/or alcohol will not be allowed to volunteer.
- Many of our volunteer projects take place in the warehouse. While walking to the designated volunteer area of the warehouse, please keep behind the yellow line for safety. Please understand that the warehouse is full of heavy machinery and in order to maintain safety it is important that volunteers remain in designated areas and use caution while in the warehouse.
- Volunteers must wash their hands prior to and after working on a volunteer project, as well as throughout the projects as needed. There is a handwashing station in the volunteer center of the warehouse as well as two restrooms in the main building that can be used.
- Volunteers must enter and leave the building through front office doors at all times. No one should enter or leave through the warehouse loading dock unless picking up or delivering food.
- Volunteers are not permitted to operate electric pallet jacks, pallet stackers, forklifts or other equipment. Manual pallet jacks may only be operated by volunteers 18 and older with the permission and supervision of the Volunteer Supervisor, Volunteer Coordinator, or a Volunteer Lead.
- Running, climbing pallets, throwing food and supplies, and other horseplay is not permitted as it may cause injury. Doing any of these things will result in the removal of the volunteer from the premises.
- Volunteers should not eat or drink in the Volunteer Center or the warehouse. During designated break times eating and drinking will be permitted in the break room only.

- Tobacco products are not allowed in the warehouse. Smoking is only allowed in designated areas of the Arkansas Foodbank property. If you need to smoke, please ask the Volunteer Supervisor where this designated space is. Upon returning, you must rewash your hands.
- If you see any activity of pests or notice any spills, please report these to either the Volunteer Supervisor, Volunteer Coordinator, or a Volunteer Lead.
- Arkansas Foodbank requests that volunteers clean up their work area to the best of their ability in order to assist us in maintaining a clean and safe environment. The last 30 minutes of the shift will be designated for clean-up.
- Bin or Tote Safety – Do not crawl inside of the bins or totes to retrieve food. Please notify the Volunteer Supervisor or Volunteer Leads if you need assistance with removing food from within the bins.
- Do not carry boxes in front of your face to impede your line of sight when walking. It is important to be able to see where you are walking at all times while volunteering in the warehouse.
- Do not carry items over 40lbs. Please pick a second volunteer to carry the item together. Children under the age of 16 should not carry over 20lbs without a second person.
- Only adults over the age of 18 are permitted to use a box cutter or scraper. Children under the age of 18 can use scissors for cutting when needed but must follow safety instructions provided by the Volunteer Supervisor or Volunteer Lead.
- Trash Compactor Use – Only staff approved volunteers are allowed to use the trash compactor or a volunteer must be accompanied by a staff member when using the trash compactor at all times.
- Children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult at all times when leaving the assigned volunteer work area; this includes going to the bathroom.

Food Safety Rules

- Volunteers will need to wear a cap or hair net and gloves when working with open food (rice and bean pouring). Gloves and hair nets will be available on site for your use.
- Hands and forearms must be thoroughly washed for at least 20 seconds with warm soapy water before starting volunteer projects, after returning from breaks, and at the end of your shift.
- Any volunteer who has been sick needs to be without symptoms (fever, vomit, diarrhea, jaundice...) for a minimum of 24 hours before volunteering. Volunteers must notify supervisory personnel of any relevant infectious diseases or conditions to which they have been exposed. If you have had or been in contact with one of the six reportable illnesses (E.coli, Salmonella Typhi, Nontyphoidal Salmonella, Shigella, Hepatitis A Virus, or Norovirus) you will not be able to volunteer without a doctor's note.
- Long, false and painted finger nails along with jewelry that could contaminate food should be covered with a food safe glove or removed if working with open food products in the Clean Repackaging Room.
- Cuts and wounds should be washed, covered with a clean bandage and finally covered with a food safe glove before handling ANY food. Volunteers are not allowed to participate with any improperly undressed boils, sores or wounds; or communicable diseases.

***Please read these policies and guidelines carefully before volunteering at the Arkansas Foodbank as we will remove any volunteer from the premises for noncompliance with these stated policies and procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, you may direct them to the Volunteer Coordinator or Volunteer Engagement Manager.*

We are so glad that you are here and have chosen the Arkansas Foodbank as a place to give back to your community and help our neighbors that are facing hunger. We couldn't do this work without you!

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