

Volunteer Code of Conduct



Becoming a Habitat for Humanity volunteer comes with great rewards and responsibilities. Volunteers like you are Habitat representatives. When you accept a volunteer role with Habitat for Humanity, you are committing to act with the highest standards of ethics, in a way that promotes Habitat's mission, respects the local community, and ensures the safety of every child, vulnerable adult, family who partners with Habitat, community member, volunteer and Habitat staff member. In addition to complying with all applicable laws, regulations and Habitat for Humanity policies, all volunteers are expected to follow the volunteer code of conduct outlined below.

1. Promote a respectful community.

- Treat all people with respect, courtesy and dignity.
- Engage others with cultural humility and contribute to a safe environment that celebrates diversity, practices equity, prioritizes inclusion and promotes belonging.
- Make an effort to understand and honor the local culture and follow all the rules and policies set forth by a Habitat program staff member or supervising volunteer.
- Avoid the use of humiliating, demeaning, offensive, degrading, sexually suggestive or otherwise insensitive language, particularly when engaging with children, vulnerable adults, families who partner with Habitat, community members, volunteers and Habitat employees.
- Do not engage in any form of harassment, including verbal, physical or sexual harassment such as comments, jokes, gestures or looks that are or could be interpreted as inappropriate, or other behaviors that may be unwelcome or result in a hostile and intimidating environment.
- Do not engage in any abuse of power, authority, privilege, position or influence. For example, withholding or restricting access to services, manipulating selection, or targeting processes for those we intend to serve.

2. Protect community members, Habitat representatives and the families who partner with Habitat from harm.

- Do not engage in any behavior, including touching a child or adult, that is or can be interpreted as inappropriate, grooming, harmful or abusive.
- Under no circumstances may volunteers engage in sexual activity with a child (a person under the age of 18, regardless of the legal age of consent and local laws), vulnerable adults, families who partner with Habitat, or community members.
- Do not exchange money, goods, special considerations or services for sex. This includes not procuring commercial sex acts, even where such activities are permitted by local laws.
- Do not meet, spend time alone with or show preferential treatment to any child, vulnerable adult, community member or family who partners with Habitat. A minimum of two adults should be present when interacting with a child. If it is not possible, ensure that you stay visible to others.
- Also, do not invite children, vulnerable adults, families who partner with Habitat, and community members to visit the residence or hotel accommodation; take them in a vehicle; or seek to make contact, visit or spend time with them outside the scope of the Habitat project.

- Volunteers are strongly discouraged from taking photos of children, vulnerable adults, community members or the families who partner with Habitat.
- Volunteers should not use any photos, videos or stories of children, vulnerable adults, community members or the families who partner with Habitat on their personal social media platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram), blogs or vlogs.
- Do not “friend,” direct message — or DM — or connect with children, vulnerable adults, community members or the families who partner with Habitat on any social media or online communication platform.
- Do not share or ask community members (e.g., children or vulnerable adults), families who partner with Habitat, or community volunteers to share personal social media handles.
- Do not use personal devices to communicate or make personal contact with children, vulnerable adults, community members or the families who partner with Habitat via social media or messaging platforms (e.g., WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, etc.).

3. Prioritize site safety.

- Safety rules and guidelines on the volunteer site (e.g., build sites, Habitat ReStores, offices, etc.) have been created to keep you and others safe as you volunteer and must be followed. Activities that pose a safety risk to yourself or others should be avoided.
- Report any unsafe working conditions to the on-site supervisor.

4. Uphold a zero-tolerance policy for alcohol, drugs and weapons.

- The purchase or possession of drugs or weapons is strictly prohibited on Habitat property and volunteer sites.
- The purchase or possession of alcohol is also strictly prohibited on and in transit to Habitat for Humanity volunteer sites, even if permitted by local laws or by the laws of the volunteer’s home country.

5. Follow the gift-giving policy.

To avoid potential misunderstandings, embarrassment, injured feelings or jealousy, volunteers are asked not to exchange gifts with the family who partners with Habitat or with staff members or community members without consulting the Habitat staff. Volunteers may speak with a staff member about appropriate ways to exchange gifts, and our staff is happy to suggest gifts that will benefit the entire community.

6. Protect Habitat assets.

Use reasonable care to protect all Habitat for Humanity resources. Stealing, misappropriation or diversion of Habitat for Humanity funds, property or other assets for personal benefit is not permitted, nor is otherwise engaging in fraudulent activity regarding Habitat for Humanity’s assets, operations, the families who partner with Habitat, or community members.

7. Maintain confidentiality.

- Build trust with other volunteers and Habitat for Humanity by respecting the confidentiality of volunteers, staff members, children, vulnerable adults, community members and the families who partner with Habitat. Unless you receive prior written approval from Habitat, you will not disclose confidential Habitat for Humanity information or confidential information given to you by others.
- Personal data should not be made publicly available, including on social media. This includes information that directly or indirectly identifies an individual or affirms the physical location (name, location, age, gender, family composition, etc.) of children, vulnerable adults, community members and the families who partner with Habitat.

8. Speak up!

Habitat for Humanity embraces a “see something, say something” culture. If you become aware of potential misconduct or violation of the volunteer code of conduct, help reinforce our culture of courage and accountability by sharing your concerns with appropriate Habitat staff members or supervising volunteers. You can also anonymously report to the confidential [Habitat Ethics and Accountability Line](#), or HEAL.

- I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to comply with this volunteer code of conduct.
- I commit to safeguarding the rights and dignities of all people I encounter during my volunteer service with Habitat.
- I understand that I have a responsibility to report any concern, suspicion or known violation of the volunteer code of conduct to appropriate Habitat staff members or supervising volunteers or through [the Habitat Ethics and Accountability Line](#).
- I understand that Habitat for Humanity has the right to release me from my volunteer position in its sole discretion for violation of this volunteer code of conduct. I also understand that I am responsible for any costs that I may incur due to a violation of the code of conduct.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

If the volunteer is a minor (child)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature of parent or guardian: _____

Name of parent or guardian: _____

