

FAQ's for Individuals Volunteering with Harbor Habitat

1. How do I schedule a volunteer opportunity?

A: There are two ways to schedule a volunteer opportunity. The preferred method is to e-mail volunteer@harborhabitat.org (Please note that many mail servers filter e-mails from the @harborhabitat.org domain into spam folders. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours of sending an inquiry, please check your spam folders.)

The other method of scheduling a volunteer opportunity is to call Brenda Butler at 269-925-9635 x309. Our calendar fills up fast so schedule your volunteer opportunity in advance. This will ensure that there is ample work each day for the volunteer teams.

2. When can I volunteer?

A: Harbor Habitat has volunteer days year-round on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 8am-3pm on the construction site and during the week in the office (Mon.-Fri., 9-5) and ReStore (Tue.-Sat. 9-6) There are reduced ReStore hours in the winter.

3. Can I volunteer for a partial day?

A: Partial days are not preferred, but Harbor Habitat does respect the busy schedules of its dedicated volunteers. We do ask if you can only do a partial day to plan to volunteer in the morning and leave whenever you need to. It is difficult to engage volunteers who come after the 8am morning round-up.

4. How old do I have to be to volunteer?

A: Volunteers are required to be at least 16 years old in order to volunteer with Harbor Habitat. Volunteers age 16 & 17 must have a Liability Waiver signed by a parent or guardian in order to volunteer on the jobsite. Volunteers under the age of 18 cannot work on roofs or use power tools.

5. Are there any non-construction volunteer opportunities?

A: Harbor Habitat has numerous volunteer opportunities at the office and ReStore. There are also several opportunities to serve on various committees at Harbor Habitat. Please contact volunteer@harborhabitat.org or 269-925-9635 x 309 to find out more about these non-construction volunteer opportunities.

6. What kind of tools do I need to bring with me to the jobsite?

A: Harbor Habitat provides all necessary tools, including hand tools and power tools. However, many volunteers prefer to bring their own personal tool bags with items such as a hammer, tape measure, speed square, chalk line, and utility pencils.

7. What should I wear when I volunteer at Harbor Habitat?

A: The weather conditions in Michigan can vary greatly depending on the season. HHFH will work outside in most conditions, so plan to dress prepared to go outside. Layers are highly recommended as it can be cooler in the morning and significantly warmer by afternoon.

Please plan to wear items that you would not mind getting stained, ripped, or damaged. Much of the work at HHFH is very messy and we would hate to see someone ruin a nice pair of jeans on the jobsite.

All volunteers MUST wear closed toed shoes. Work boots or hiking boots are preferred, but any kind of sturdy tennis shoe will be sufficient. Please note that sandals and other types of open toed shoes will not be permitted on the jobsite at any time. A pair of work gloves might be a good idea also.

8. What type of safety equipment will I be required to bring?

A: Harbor Habitat requires that safety goggles be worn at all times while on the jobsite. We have safety goggles for you to use if you do not have a pair.

Work gloves are highly recommended but not required. Hard hats are required during certain stages of the construction process. HHFH will provide hard hats for use.

9. Do I need to bring water, lunch, snacks?

A: Harbor Habitat does not provide lunch every day, but will often receive a lunch donation. You will receive an e-mail with volunteer instructions a few days prior to your volunteer day. This e-mail will include details on lunch. If lunch is not provided, please plan to either pack a lunch or bring \$5 to place an order for lunch.

HHFH does provide drinking water. However, in an effort to reduce waste on our jobsites, it is recommended that you bring a refillable water bottle.

HHFH does not provide snacks, but highly recommends bringing a few healthy snack items with you to the jobsite. Examples of good items to bring are apples, granola bars, bananas, and trail mix. Volunteers are encouraged to take a 10 minute break in the mid-morning to refuel.

10. I keep hearing things about the Harbor Habitat ReStore, can you please give me more details?

A: Harbor Habitat has a Retail Outlet, known as the ReStore, located at 2302 Plaza Drive, Benton Harbor, MI. The ReStore takes in gently used house materials including appliances, furniture, windows, doors, cabinets, and lighting. The ReStore sells these items back to the general public at up to 75% off retail prices.

We are always in need of donations and volunteers. Free pick-ups are available on donations. Please call the ReStore at 269-927-0006 to learn more. The hours are as follows:

Summer Hours (June-August)

Sundays Closed

Monday: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Tues-Fri: 9:00 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Winter Hours (September-May)

Sundays and Mondays Closed

Tues-Fri: 9:00 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm