



NOURISH
PIERCE COUNTY
Food Banks for Healthier Futures

Volunteer Handbook

Nourish Pierce County Volunteer Handbook

Nourish Pierce County is an ecumenical organization of volunteers providing nutritious food and more to individuals in need with compassion, dignity and respect. Through our seven fixed locations and innovative mobile food bank, we provide enough nutritious food for individuals and families to make three meals a day for three days. Individuals are asked to limit visits to the food bank to once a week; however, if there are extenuating circumstances, no one in need is turned away.

This manual will serve as a reference by providing information that is needed to operate an effective and efficient food bank. Information includes state and federal policies, food safety, client enrollment, driver information, insurance and how much food to provide.

FUNDING

Nourish relies on the generosity of citizens, corporations, businesses, government and foundations to support the mission of providing food to individuals in need. We receive support through financial donations, food drives and volunteers.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are vital to the mission of Nourish Pierce County. Our success depends on our volunteers' diverse talents and generous commitment in helping neighborhoods in need. We thank you for offering your time and talents to the mission of Nourish.

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION AND SCREENING

Nourish is committed to providing a safe, non-threatening, non-discriminatory and healthy environment for all of its employees, volunteers, and customers in order to carry out our services in a professional and efficient manner. One way that we meet this commitment is by screening all potential volunteers.

Volunteer Application and Screening Process:

- Attend volunteer orientation
- Submit volunteer application with background check (Washington State Patrol and National Sex Offender Registry)
- Receive volunteer handbook
- Volunteer Manager approves application and sets up Volunteer Up profile
- Volunteer signs up for first shift on Volunteer Up

EXPECTATIONS

What you can expect from Nourish Pierce County:

- A volunteer opportunity to contribute to the community in a meaningful way
- A volunteer opportunity that meets your capabilities, for which you can be trained
- Guidance and direction from the Food Bank Manager, a co-volunteer or the Volunteer Manager
- Opportunities to make suggestions for improving services
- Respect and appreciation for your efforts, time and dedication
- A safe and well maintained work environment

What Nourish Pierce County Asks of You:

- Do not use or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while volunteering
- Smoke only in designated areas 25 feet away from the facility and encourage others to do the same
- Serve all people regardless of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or veteran status, the number of times the food bank is used or where the person lives. We are a non-discriminatory organization.
- Keep all food recipient information confidential
- Practice proper lifting procedures (for example, bending at the knee, not at the waist) and act in a safe manner
- Be professional, respectful and courteous to food recipients, staff, other volunteers, and the public
- Establish hours of work with the food bank manager
- Be prompt, reliable and dress appropriately
 - Appropriate dress includes
 - Closed Toed Shoes (no sandals or flip flops)
 - Shirt with sleeve (no tank tops, underarms must be covered)
 - Clean clothes
 - Long Hair should be tied up
- Give the volunteer manager adequate notice if you are unable to fulfill an assignment or commitment
- Report any safety concerns or injuries to the Nourish Executive Director. (Please be advised that Nourish is not an employer of volunteers and is not covered by Labor & Industry. There is no medical coverage for injuries or illness.)
- If you need food please follow the appropriate process for food recipients. (On occasion, at the discretion of the Food Bank Manager, perishable foods may be made available to volunteers to prevent waste.) Please do not take food without following the proper procedures.

WORKPLACE POLICIES

HARASSMENT: Nourish Pierce County is committed to a work environment and climate in which relationships are characterized by dignity, respect, courtesy, and equitable treatment.

Harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, income status, disability, or citizenship is a violation of the law. Nourish expressly prohibits any form of harassment on this basis.

All Nourish paid and volunteer staff is responsible for helping to ensure that all harassment is avoided. Any individual who believes that she or he has been the victim of or a witness to harassment should report the alleged incident to the Volunteer Manager or Food Bank Manager, or in the absence of the Volunteer Manager or Food Bank Manager, to the Executive Director, who will begin a prompt review of the circumstances.

In the event that an individual believes that she or he has been the victim of harassment by the Food Bank Manager or Volunteer Manager, the volunteer should report the alleged incident to the Executive Director, who will promptly begin a review of the circumstances.

Volunteers are assured that the utmost discretion will be used consistent with the requirement of the law in the conduct of the review. If a review indicates that harassment has in fact occurred, immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination.

Further, retaliation against anyone who has reported an allegation of harassment is expressly prohibited. Retaliation is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT/MISCONDUCT: Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination. Sexual harassment by any volunteer towards anyone (male or female), including any supervisor, co-worker, volunteers, food bank representative, or a food bank recipient will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment may consist of “unwelcome” sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and physical acts of a sexual nature where submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or a condition of an individual’s employment; where an employment decision is based on an individual’s acceptance or

rejection of such conduct; or where such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment also encompasses other actions that create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating work environment. Such actions can include, for example, inappropriate or overly familiar touching, sexual innuendoes, obscene gestures, jokes and remarks of a sexual nature, especially where exposure to such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or ability to do her/his job.

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and is incompatible with the values, traditions, and purposes of Nourish Pierce County.

Nourish maintains an environment that encourages any volunteer who believes that she/he has been subject to or has witnessed sexual harassment as defined in this manual to report the incident(s) to the food bank coordinator, or in their absence to the Executive Director, or in the absence of the Executive Director to the Board President.

Further, retaliation against anyone who has reported an allegation of harassment is expressly prohibited. Retaliation is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

WEAPONS IN THE WORKPLACE: Nourish strictly prohibits paid and volunteer staff from being in the possession of weapons at any time in any facility occupied or vehicle in use by Nourish, including personally-owned vehicles that are parked in any area provided for Nourish paid and volunteer staff, regardless of whether the paid and volunteer staff is licensed to carry the weapon or not. Paid and Volunteer Staff is further prohibited from being in the possession of weapons off Nourish premises if involved in any activities for Nourish. Under the policy, prohibited weapons include any form of weapon or explosive that is restricted by local, state, or Federal law. This includes firearms, even if licensed, illegal knives, or other weapons.

COMPUTERS AND E-MAIL: Software installed on Nourish computers is the property of Nourish. Making copies of the software installed on the computer network or individual workstations is prohibited. All computer files are the property of Nourish and may be reviewed by the Executive Director at any time. E-mail is for work-related matters and is not confidential. E-mail is owned by Nourish and may be reviewed by the Executive Director at any time. In addition, downloading of software can create problems with the computer system and is prohibited without permission from the Executive Director.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE: Nourish strictly prohibits possession or illegal use of drugs or alcohol at any time on Nourish premises, or in the conduct of Nourish business.

If paid or volunteer staff are intoxicated or under the influence of illicit drugs in the performance of their duties, they will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination without notice.

Nourish may make reasonable accommodations to the needs of any staff that is participating in or has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation or alcoholism recovery program and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs or abuse of alcohol. Nevertheless, any paid or volunteer staff for which such an accommodation is made is expected at all times to continue to satisfy her or his job requirements.

Staff must advise the Executive Director if they are taking prescribed medication before operating a vehicle or machinery whenever that medication is known to impair such abilities.

SMOKING: Nourish Pierce County provides a smoke-free work environment. Smoking inside all facilities, including vehicles, is **prohibited**. Smoking is permitted in exterior designated smoking areas located at least 25 feet away from all building entrances and exits. Smokers have an obligation to keep outside smoking areas free of litter and to dispose of all smoking materials in proper receptacles.

DEBTS, OBLIGATIONS, CONTRACTS AND ENDORSEMENTS

No debt, obligation, contract or endorsement may be created by a volunteer of Nourish on behalf of the organization without prior written authorization from the Executive Director and/or the Board of Directors.

GRIEVANCES

Nourish provides the opportunity for volunteers to request a formal review of involuntary termination or personnel action that has resulted in disagreement as follows:

- (A) The volunteer should discuss the situation with the Food Bank Manager within 5 working days of dismissal
- (B) If the situation cannot be resolved, the volunteer may request in writing a formal review by the Food Bank Advisory Committee within 10 working days of the incident.
- (C) If the situation cannot be resolved, the volunteer/community service worker may request in writing a formal review by the Nourish Executive Director within 20 working days of the incident. However, if the complaint is against the Executive Director, the volunteer has the right to voice their concern/complaint in writing to the Executive Committee of Nourish within 30 days of the incident.

Nourish encourages volunteers to take advantage of the grievance procedure and is committed to preventing any retaliation against persons who do so.

FOOD HANDLING PROCEDURES

Each person who handles food should practice safe food handling practices. Following are some guidelines to safe food handling practices.

KEEP FOODS SAFE FROM CONTAMINATION:

- **Wash your hands before handling food**
- Always wear the plastic gloves provided when handling food
- Use utensils to repack bulk foods
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize the work surface and all utensils **every time** you finish with a job or between packaging different foods
- Store bulk foods in metal covered bins and containers

FOOD STORAGE:

- Keep all foods off the floor.
- Cover, label and date dry foods and rotate stock so older foods are used first.
- Store foods away from cleaners and poisons.

HAND WASHING:

The best way to wash your hands is:

- (1) Wet your hands with warm water.
- (2) Use soap.
- (3) Rub your hands briskly together to loosen any dirt and germs. Pay special attention to your fingernails where germs can hide. **Wash for at least 20 seconds.**
- (4) Rinse your hands under clean, warm water.
- (5) Dry your hands on paper towel.

Remember to always wash your hands

- Before you touch anything used to prepare food
- Before you touch food
- After you handle trash and take out garbage
- After using the restroom, wash twice
- After you eat
- After you touch your face, hair or body
- After you blow your nose, cough, or sneeze
- After your break
- After smoking

MAINTAINING A CLEAN WORKPLACE:

- Keep all chemicals away from food. They must be stored below food, never on a shelf above food, or above any area where food is packaged.

- As much as possible, keep all chemicals in the bottles or boxes they come in. If you should need to put them in a different container, label them clearly.

WORK ONLY WHEN YOU ARE HEALTHY

If you feel sick, you should not go to work. Contact your volunteer manager or food bank manager. The germs you bring to work can spread when you sneeze and cough, and when you touch food, dishes, counters, utensils, and other people.

Do not work if:

- You have a cold, flu, a runny nose or sore throat
- You have diarrhea
- You are vomiting
- You have Hepatitis A
- You have an infected cut, a burn or a sore on your hand you should not handle food. If the sore is not infected, cover it with a bandage and wear a plastic glove