



Volunteer Information

What are the requirements to be a construction volunteer?

- All volunteers must be 16 or older.
- Construction is a physical task, and you should be comfortable being on your feet for extended periods of time and working outside in all sorts of weather.
- All volunteers must sign a release of liability.

Do I need construction experience to volunteer with Habitat?

- No! You need a willingness to learn and a desire to help, that's all!
- All skill levels are welcome, and our trained staff and experienced volunteers will help you to learn.
- If you do have some construction experience, mention it to the Volunteer Coordinator when you register.

What type of work will I be doing on the job site?

- It is difficult to know far in advance, but we will try to do our best to let you know.
- Volunteer projects are determined by the Construction Manager, and many factors, such as weather, volunteer numbers and supplies, determine what will be done.
- Volunteers do everything on the job site from raising the walls, shingling the roof, hanging siding, insulating the house, hanging drywall, painting, landscaping...you name it! (Note: Licensed professionals perform the skilled tasks, such as electrical wiring and plumbing.)

Do I need to bring my own tools?

- No. Habitat provides all the tools and supplies that you will need.
- If you have small hand tools, such as a hammer or tape measure, or your own tool belt, you are welcome to use those on the job site.
- We recommend that you bring work gloves if you have them, but we do have some on site.
- Please label all of your belongings with your name. Habitat is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

What else do I need to bring?

- Your own water bottle and a small snack, such as a granola bar or apple. Habitat does provide bottled water on site, but it's always great to bring your own to cut down on job site litter!

What should I wear?

- Clothes you don't mind getting dirty—think what you might wear to work in the yard for a day.
- Weather-suitable clothing; if it's cold, dress in layers because you might get hot as you start working. If it's hot out, bring a hat and sunglasses.
- Sturdy, close-toed shoes—**NO SANDALS OR OPEN-TOED SHOES ALLOWED.**
- Try to wear pants and shorts with pockets to hold your keys. There is no place on the job sites to store purses or other belongings.

Do we work in the rain/snow/excessive heat?

- Yes, as long as we can be safe and productive.
- We will stop work if there is lightning.
- We will only cancel work if there is no work we can complete given the weather conditions.
- We will do our best to inform you ahead of time if work will be cancelled, but if you feel comfortable coming out to work, head for the job site. Chances are we will be working!
- Dress weather-appropriate!

Where are the sites located?

- Habitat for Humanity of St. Joseph County serves the entire community, but most of our homes are built in the South Bend and Mishawaka area.
- When you sign up to volunteer, the Volunteer Coordinator will let you know where to go.

Changes in the Build Schedule or Location

Keep in mind that when you register to volunteer, it is difficult to definitively predict what projects will be happening on a specific build on a given day. Many factors, including weather, number of volunteers, supplies, etc., play a role in the progress of a home. If you or your group are given a location for a build day, please understand that is tentative, and that Habitat for Humanity reserves the right to change it if we have a greater volunteer need on another project. You will be notified well in advance of any changes, but rarely can we guarantee a project and a location on a given day.

Arrival on Site

As a volunteer, you are our work force for the day, and we plan our projects based on the number of volunteers we are expecting. Like any job, you should arrive on time and be ready to work. When you arrive, our Construction Manager, Executive Director or other crew leader will open with an introduction, prayer, safety talk and overview of the day's projects. Please arrive by the time specified by the Volunteer Coordinator or your volunteer literature so that work can begin promptly.

Release of Liability

Every Habitat volunteer must sign a liability waiver in order to work on the job site. Most individuals have a person health insurance plan that would cover them while doing volunteer work. Verify your coverage prior to volunteering.

Kids and Construction

- Construction volunteers must be at least 16 years of age. Teens, 16 and 17, must fill out a Minor Liability Waiver, complete with a parent or guardian's signature. Those under 18 must not use power tools, use ladders or be up on a roof. Children under 16 are not permitted on the job site, even under parental supervision.
- There are exceptions to this rule, specifically on days when we are doing landscaping (laying sod, planting flowers, etc.).

Other questions can be directed to Shannon Burke, Volunteer Coordinator, at (574) 288-6967 ext. 17 or volunteercoordinator@habitat-for-humanity.org.