



Habitat for Humanity®

Mid-Vancouver Island Society



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY MID-VANCOUVER ISLAND

Nanaimo:

Mon.- Sat. 9-5

#1 – 4128 Mostar Road

Nanaimo, BC V9T 6C9

ReStore 250-758-8078 ext. 101

restoremanager@habitatmvi.org

Office 250-758-8078

Build Manager:

buildmanager@habitatmvi.org

Duncan ReStore:

Mon. – Sat. 9-5

251 Government St.

Duncan, BC V9L 1A6

Phone: 778-455-1888

ReStoreDuncan@habitatmvi.org

Mission



Habitat for Humanity Mid-Vancouver Island Society Building Homes. Building Hope.

Everyone should have a simple, secure, affordable place to live, where they can dwell in dignity and safety. Our mission is to eliminate poverty housing in our community.

We are a non-profit, charitable organization that builds or renovates homes, and we sell them no interest to low-income families. We work in partnership with volunteers, donors, sponsors, and the homeowners themselves to build these homes. In the process we build newfound hope and a stronger sense of community.

VOLUNTEERING WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

As you can see from our Mission Statement, volunteers play a prominent role in delivering our program; in fact, they play important roles in most aspects of Habitat for Humanity's programs.

Habitat relies on volunteers to accomplish the many tasks needed to take us to the level of building homes for Habitat families. This is a brief description of the areas in which you can make a contribution.



ReStores across Canada are a vital link to the success of Habitat for Humanity. The revenues raised assist us with operational expenses, and also divert thousands of tons of re-usable building materials and renovation products from landfills.

If you are looking for a meaningful volunteer experience where you can share some of your skills, there are many options to choose from. Due to training and orientation needs, Habitat asks that all ReStore volunteers consider that we have a **minimum commitment requirement of 40 hours per year**.

Volunteering at the ReStore:

Drivers/Swampers	Drivers and Helpers are required to help the curbside pick up donations from residential and corporate addresses and to load/unload the truck in the warehouse.
ReStore/ReFresh Associate	Volunteers greet customers when they enter and exit the ReStore, providing customer service, and assisting customers in their search for the right product, while also cleaning and merchandising products to floor.
Warehouse	Volunteers help with the cleaning of new products, sorting and preparing products to go onto floor. There is also wire stripping and upcycling projects to be done, as well as building of items that get donated in boxes.
Cashier	Accepting payments for merchandise and operating the cash register for sales.

Volunteering at a Build Site:

General Construction Labourer	Wide range of skills and skill levels (trades people, skilled amateurs, and eager helpers) are required in all phases of the construction of a Habitat home.
Disposal Driver	Clean up construction area and drive to landfill or recycle depot to dispose of garbage.



Administrative Opportunities:

Administrative tasks	To assist with day-to-day administrative operations such as data entry, filing, mailing, and photocopying.
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Other Volunteering Opportunities:

If you would like to volunteer and have skills in a specific area that may prove useful in a Habitat for Humanity committee, please email us at Volunteercoordinator@habitatmvi.org for more information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Habitat for Humanity?

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, registered charity, which seeks to eliminate substandard housing. We use donated materials and volunteer labour as much as possible to build new homes or to renovate existing houses. These houses are then sold at fair market value to selected families through zero interest mortgages, which can save families hundreds of thousands in interest charges and enabling them to pay a reasonable mortgage payment based on a maximum of 30% of a stable family income.

Who can get a Habitat house?

Habitat works with low-income, working families with children. Low-income families are eligible to apply as prospective homeowner “partners”.

How are partner families chosen?

Habitat partners with families who are in greatest need for better housing. Families who are eligible are required to complete a written application. The application form contains questions which establish the family’s size, age, gender of dependents, annual income, and other related information. The applicant is also required to supply names of character, employment, and landlord references as well as proof of income. If the application verifies the eligibility of the family, members of the Family Selection Committee may visit them at their current residence to establish the family’s need for better housing and to assess their willingness to become partners with Habitat. From the list of families who qualify after the written application and the home visits, the Family Selection Committee makes their recommendations to the Board of Directors who make the final decision.

Are Habitat houses given to the families?

No! Habitat houses are not given away. Houses are sold to the selected families at fair market value, with a zero-interest, long-term mortgage. Monthly mortgage payments are determined in consultation with individual families according to their ability to pay and are based on a maximum of 30% of their monthly income. This calculation is reviewed annually, and families are required to provide Habitat with documentation regarding all household income.

What other obligations are there for the partner families?

As well as monthly mortgage payments, each family is required to put in 500 volunteer hours before they qualify for a Habitat home. Families volunteer helping to build their own home, the homes of others, or other work within the Habitat organization, including in our ReStore and now our brand-new ReFresh store! It is also strongly recommended that these Partner Families also continue their relationship with Habitat as ambassadors by further volunteering, attending future Habitat ceremonies, and by being a leader in their community.



How is Habitat for Humanity financed?

Habitat is able to carry out its work through the generosity of individuals, corporations, companies, service organizations and others. Our ReStore is our biggest contributor and pays all the administrative costs for this affiliate as well as providing tens of thousands of dollars a year towards building our homes and buying land.

VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIP

Nature of Volunteering – At Will

This handbook is not an employment or volunteer contract and is not intended to create a contractual obligation of any kind. Neither you nor HFHMVI is bound to continue the volunteer relationship if either of you or HFHMVI chooses, at will, to end the relationship at any time.

Personal Information

It is important that you notify HFHMVI of any changes in your address or telephone numbers for contact and emergency reasons. All personal information is kept confidential as per Bill 38, Personal Information and Protection Act (PIPA).

Attendance and Punctuality

To ensure a smooth operation, we ask that volunteers inform us of absences, late arrivals, and early departures. Please phone or email us to let us know if you are not able to make a scheduled shift:
Nanaimo: 250-758-8078 ext. 101, email restoremanager@habitatmvi.org
Duncan: 778-455-1888, email RestoreDuncan@habitatmvi.org

Volunteers are essential to Habitat – we depend on you and miss you when you are not here!

Customer Service

Customers and donors are our #1 priority! As ambassadors of HFH we want to ensure that everyone has a remarkable experience.

Customer Questions: Help the customer to the best of your ability: locating items, inventory. If you do not know an answer to their questions please reply with, “I will find that out for you”. A staff member or mentor volunteer will likely know the exact answer/solution that you are looking for.

Price Inquiries: Most items in the ReStore have a price tag, however, if there is a missing price tag, please ask a staff member for the price. We do not give discounts on priced items as they are intentionally priced fairly, and all profits go back into our local Habitat organization.

Customer Complaints: Refer all complaints to our ReStore Manager.

Customer retention is very important. Our goal is to offer a warm and inviting atmosphere. We want our customer experience to be very positive so that they tell their friends about us!

Dress Code

All volunteers are expected to dress appropriately for the job in which they are performing. Volunteers are required to wear identifiable ReStore clothing (i.e., ReStore apron or shirt) while volunteering.

General guidelines include:

- Gloves must be worn when working with or handling heavy merchandise.
- Volunteers are required to wear long pants for safety (i.e., when lifting heavy and/or breakable merchandise) and no caps or hats to ensure a view without obstruction
- Steel-toed shoes must be worn by all volunteers; these are available at the build sites and ReStores



General Safety Guidelines

At Habitat for Humanity, safety is our first priority no matter where you are working! If you ever feel unsafe or are asked to do anything you feel is unsafe, please say no and let your supervisor or manager know your concerns.



The operation of any ReStore equipment is not allowed without proper training and the approval of their manager. It is the volunteer's responsibility to get approval from their manager prior to operating any equipment.

Here are some general guidelines that all staff and volunteers are to follow:

- Lift with your legs, not with your back. Remember to ask for help when you need it.
- Always wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Each ReStore and build sites have gloves, safety glasses, masks, hard hats, etc. for you to use.
- We request that the personal use of *cell phones* and other devices are not to be used while volunteering, as they could hinder your ability to hear in the event of an emergency.

Fire and Emergency Response Plan

In case of fire or emergency evacuation situations, please exit the building from the nearest door. **Nanaimo ReStore volunteers meet on the lawn in front of the Shaw building. Duncan Restore volunteers meet in our designated assembly area, which is in next door parking lot.** We will gather there so that the Manager can account for each person.

Be aware of where the fire extinguishers and the exits are located. Management or staff will call 911 for fires or applicable emergencies.

Harassment and Discrimination

Harassment may be verbal, physical, deliberate, unsolicited, or unwelcome. It may be one incident or a series of incidents. At Habitat for Humanity, we have policies around harassment and discrimination. Any volunteer who feels that he or she is a victim of harassment or discrimination is encouraged to let that individual know that his or her behaviour is unwelcome. Additionally, volunteers who feel they have been harassed are required to report the matter to the ReStore Manager, Construction Site Supervisor or Executive Director so that it can be resolved in a timely manner.

Work Environment

You and Habitat for Humanity share the responsibility for establishing and maintaining a safe work environment. Habitat will attempt to ensure a safe work environment and to comply with provincial and WorkSafeBC (Worker's Compensation Board of British Columbia) safety regulations. In turn, you are expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all your activities. You are also expected to report any unsafe conditions to your supervisor immediately. Any accident which results in injury, regardless of how significant, must be reported promptly to your supervisor.

We want everyone at Habitat for Humanity to feel safe and have a positive experience. If you have concerns about your safety or something is impacting your experience, please let the ReStore Manager or Volunteer Coordinator know so that we may be able to remedy the situation.

Volunteer Conduct

Although it is not possible to list all forms of behaviour or conduct that are considered unacceptable, the following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in limitation and/or termination of the volunteer relationship:

- Repeated failure to follow a supervisor's reasonable request or to carry out a reasonable volunteer assignment
- Violation of safety and health rules
- Discriminatory or harassing behaviour
- Smoking in HFHMVI buildings or vehicles
- Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or any absences without notice
- Possession, distribution or consumption of alcohol or drugs while on HFHMVI property
- Theft or inappropriate removal, possession or use of HFHMVI property/equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence on HFHMVI property
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of HFHMVI or another person's property
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct
- Falsification of records

COVID-19 safety: All volunteers, staff, and customers while on HFHMVI property, must follow current BC Covid guidelines as per the Provincial Health Authority. Here is a useful link:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/response>

USEFUL THINGS TO KNOW

Nanaimo ReStore hours of operation:

Monday to Saturday 9:00 am –5:00 pm Phone: 250-758-8078 ext. 101

Duncan ReStore hours of operation:

Monday to Saturday 9:00 am –5:00 pm Phone: 778-455-1888

We are closed on the following most Statutory Holidays:

New Year's Day	Christmas Day	Thanksgiving	Family Day	Victoria Day
Canada Day	Labour Day	Good Friday	Remembrance Day	

Ready to volunteer?

Now that you have had a chance to get to know us a little better through an orientation and this handbook, we are eager to show you how you can make a difference by volunteering!

*Thank you for considering Habitat for Humanity as a place to donate your time.
Together, we can truly make a difference in the lives of others.*