



VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION MANUAL

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Sandtown Habitat for Humanity! The following information will help to answer any questions you might have regarding your volunteer experience. After reading through this manual, if you still have further questions, please contact Mike Barb, Co-Executive Director via e-mail at volunteer@sandtownhabitat.org. Over more than 22 years of working with sponsors and volunteers, Sandtown Habitat has developed a set of operating procedures. These procedures aim to make sure volunteers have good experiences and Sandtown community residents can purchase high quality, affordable homes.

Scheduling Your Work Day:

Volunteer Scheduling Forms: Individual and/or Group Scheduling forms must be submitted at least 3 weeks in advance of your desired date to volunteer. Due to limited space it is recommended that you submit your scheduling form as far in advance as you are able to ensure availability. The Volunteer Coordinator will strive to contact you within 5 business days of receiving your application. In order to be put on the schedule, you must indicate what day(s) you would like to volunteer and for groups, the number of volunteers anticipates. We only accept up to 10 non-sponsor group volunteers per Saturday so we can accommodate all the requests we receive. *Please e-mail your scheduling form to the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteer@sandtownhabitat.org.*

Cancellation Policy: We understand that unforeseen circumstances arise. If your group needs to cancel a scheduled volunteer day, please do so as far in advance as possible to allow us time to rearrange our construction schedule. Because we may have turned down other groups for your scheduled day, if your group does not show up on the scheduled day, or if you cancel within 24 hours of your scheduled work day, we may need to reassess the feasibility of any other work days for your group.

Waiver of Liability: Each volunteer is required to sign a form assuming the risk for accidental injuries and releasing Sandtown Habitat from liability. These forms are kept on file, so a volunteer only needs to sign the form once per calendar year, no matter how many times they volunteer. All volunteers under 18 years of age are required to have a parent or legal guardian sign their form as well. Volunteers without proper paperwork will not be allowed on the construction site. No exceptions will be made.

Office Hours: Our office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00am until 5pm. All non-construction volunteers should report to the office at your prescheduled time.

Construction Hours: Our construction sites are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. *We require all volunteers to check in at the warehouse at 7:45am* so that you can be placed at your site.

Skills: Construction volunteers are not required to have any building skills. However, it is very helpful to know in advance what skills each volunteer possesses. For this reason, we ask that all skilled/semi-skilled volunteers fill out the skills section of the individual scheduling form prior to volunteering. If you are part of a larger group, be sure to note that on the form. Please provide these to Sandtown Habitat two weeks before your first scheduled work date. *We recommend at least one skilled person per group to ensure the best possible volunteer experience.*

Age Restrictions: In compliance with Federal law that has very clear rules about the age of persons working construction, it is the policy of Sandtown Habitat that:

- The minimum age to volunteer is age 16.
- Young persons ages 16 and 17 may work in construction but may not use power tools or perform work involving wrecking and demolition, excavation or roofing.
- It is the responsibility of the volunteer group to supervise minors who are working with you. There should be at least one adult for every five minors.

Preparing for Your Visit:

Lunch: Lunches will not be provided by SHFH. You may either bring lunches to the worksite or go out to lunch during the lunch break.

What to Wear: Each volunteer should wear hard-soled shoes (no sneakers). Regardless of how you’ll be volunteering, proper working attire will help make your day more comfortable. Baltimore summers are typically hot and humid and the winters can get very cold, so dress accordingly.

What to Bring: Sandtown Habitat has all the tools your crew will need. If you have your own tools, however, you may bring them, as we have a limited number of power tools, extension cords and hand tools. A Basic Tool List is below. We recommend that each volunteer bring work gloves with them. Be sure to put name tags on all your items!

Sandtown Habitat supplies each construction site with a cooler of water. However, we ask that you **please bring your own water bottle.**

BASIC TOOL LIST

Hammer	Work gloves
Goggles	Circular saw
16' or 25' measuring tape	Screw gun
Nail apron	Carpenter’s pencil

On the Worksite:

Where to Report: Each crew must report to the Habitat warehouse located at 1300 North Fulton Avenue. A normal workday is from 7:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., with wrap-up beginning at 2:45 p.m.

Construction: Volunteers should be prepared to work on any aspects of housing rehabilitation including (but not limited to) demolition, masonry, framing, roofing, electrical, plumbing, heating systems, drywall, painting, landscaping, loading and unloading materials, and cleaning up. No experience is required.

Personal Valuables: While some monitoring will be provided at the work site, Habitat accepts no responsibility for lost or stolen items. We recommend that you not bring items with high monetary or sentimental value, that you remove all valuable items in your car from view, and that you put your name on any items you do bring.

Safety and Risk: Sandtown Habitat takes safety very seriously. Our construction supervisors are experienced, well trained specialists. For safety sake, we expect volunteers to follow instructions and cautions from the supervisors. *See safety manual for additional information on safety.

Illness or Injury: There will be provisions for on-site medical assistance for any worker who becomes ill or injured. You will be welcome to rejoin your work team after you recover and can again participate fully. In the event of a serious injury or illness, arrangements for transportation to appropriate medical facilities in Baltimore will be made.

Communication and Supervision: Your volunteer crew will be supervised by members of our full-time construction staff. Once the crew is working, the Sandtown Habitat construction staff rotates through all houses under construction to provide technical assistance and additional direction where needed. Please be patient in waiting for assistance, as there are as many as 15 houses under construction at once.

The Construction Team is responsible for all construction activities at Sandtown Habitat and is our primary technical construction experts. The house you are working on will be overseen from beginning to end by a staff team. Technical questions on site can be directed to any member of that team.

Sandtown Habitat staff members communicate throughout the day for technical assistance or if materials are needed.

Restrooms are located at the warehouse.

What More Can I Do To Support This Project Financially?

We are most grateful for your willingness to volunteer your time to help transform vacant housing in Sandtown into new homes owned by Sandtown families. The work that you will do helps to rebuild not only homes but our community as well.

If you desire to do more, there are many other things you can do. You can personally provide financial support; approach family, friends or your place of work to pledge support for each hour worked; or request a special offering from your congregation or civic group to provide additional support. Your commitment of time and energy will make people take notice of the excitement which we know as Habitat for Humanity. Checks should be made payable to "Sandtown Habitat for Humanity."

Directions to Our Office

(The warehouse is located in the back of our office on Laurens Street)

Directions from I-95

Take I-395 exit in Baltimore. Stay in right lanes and you will be on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Turn left at 9th traffic light onto W. Franklin Street. Turn right at 7th traffic light onto N. Fulton Avenue. Proceed to 1300 N. Fulton Avenue (cross street is Laurens Street and has a traffic light). Building is on the left. Come to the door with the SANDTOWN HABITAT sign. The warehouse is located in the back of our office on the Laurens Street side.

Directions from 295

As you are entering the downtown area of Baltimore, just past M&T Bank Stadium (to your right) exit to the right onto Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Turn left at 9th traffic light onto W. Franklin Street. Turn right at 7th traffic light onto N. Fulton Avenue. Proceed to 1300 N. Fulton Avenue (cross street is Laurens Street and has a traffic light). Building is on the left. Come to the door with the SANDTOWN HABITAT sign. The warehouse is located in the back of our office on the Laurens Street side.

Directions from I-83

Take North Avenue exit in Baltimore City. Turn right on North Avenue and proceed to N. Fulton Avenue (8th traffic light). Turn left and proceed to 1300 N. Fulton Avenue. The building is on the right side. Come to the door with the SANDTOWN HABITAT sign. The warehouse is located in the back of our office on the Laurens Street side.

