

## **Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee Volunteer FAQ**

### **What will I do when I volunteer?**

Volunteers typically work at Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee's warehouse, completing a variety of essential tasks, most of which involve inspecting, sorting, and packing food for distribution.

Volunteers also pack BackPacks for our Backpack program. Last year, volunteers packed enough backpacks to feed 6,900+ hungry children every weekend in 2014. This project is reserved for youth, senior adult and special needs groups.

Other volunteer opportunities include: working in our Culinary Arts Center, helping in administrative roles and working at fundraisers, special events and food drives, all which are held offsite

### **Can I bring a group?**

Yes, volunteering at Second Harvest Food Bank provides team-building opportunities. We welcome corporate teams, office groups, schools, service organizations, alumni groups, associations, families, fraternities and sororities, and religious organizations. The group leader must schedule the group's visit and will be the main contact for that group. The group leader must forward volunteer information and registration details to all members of the group before the visit.

### **How many people can I bring with a group?**

Food sorting groups range in size from 5 - 100 people. We have 3 project workspaces within our warehouse, and we can accommodate up to 100 people during one shift. The non-perishable, main sort room can accommodate up to 50 people, the backpack/special project room can accommodate up to 30 people and the 40 degree cold-food sort room can accommodate up to 20 people.

### **When can I volunteer?**

We offer group food sorting opportunities Monday - Friday (8:30 -11:30 am and 1 - 4 pm), Monday - Wednesday (5:30 - 8 pm) and Saturday (9 - noon and 1 - 4 pm).

We offer individual food sorting opportunities Monday - Thursday (5:30 - 8 pm), Tuesday and Thursday (8:30 - 11:30 am) and Saturday (1 - 4 pm).

Family Night, open to ages 6+, is every Thursday (5:30 - 8:00 pm). We are closed on Sunday.

Additionally, we have special event, Culinary Arts Center and administrative volunteer opportunities available at various times.

### **How do I schedule my volunteer visit?**

All volunteer visits **MUST** be scheduled in advance. Registering is easy, follow the link to our registration website.

Individuals who are registering for the first time must complete an application for the opportunity they would like to sign up for. Individuals that are returning volunteers can log in directly to the Volunteer Information Center to sign up for the opportunity.

Groups who are volunteering for the first time must complete the group application and wait for a response from a representative at the Food Bank to schedule their group. Returning groups can schedule by emailing [volunteer@secondharvestmidtn.org](mailto:volunteer@secondharvestmidtn.org).

All Court Appointed Community Service volunteers must schedule by emailing [lisa.wagar@secondharvestmidtn.org](mailto:lisa.wagar@secondharvestmidtn.org)

After you schedule your volunteer visit, you will receive a confirmation email which will include specific information about your volunteer assignment, directions for parking at Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee or special event project site, and a list of our policies and procedures.

**Do my group members need to register online since I already completed an application for the group?**

Yes! Every member of your group 18 years and older must pre-register on our website before arriving to volunteer. This allows us to have a record for each volunteer, and it also serves as the volunteer waiver for adults.

All minors **MUST** have a parent or legal guardian sign the attached Youth Volunteer Waiver. This form can be turned in the day of the volunteer project. In addition, minors are able to complete the Group Volunteer Application referenced above in order to track their volunteer hours, or sign up for individual volunteer shifts. The online form is optional for minors, however, every minor **MUST** also have a hardcopy Youth Volunteer Waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian.

**Do you allow school groups to volunteer?**

Yes! The minimum age for the Individual Food Sorting shifts is 12 years old so we encourage middle school or high school groups for this volunteer project. We encourage elementary school groups to attend a warehouse tour to learn about hunger issues and see firsthand how the Food Bank serves the community.

Children ages 6+ can volunteer on Family Night.

**Do I need to train to become a volunteer?**

Food sorting volunteers do not need to attend a training session in order to volunteer. Simply sign up to volunteer, and be present on your scheduled day. After a brief orientation, you will start working right away.

Training may be required for specialized administrative or volunteer leader roles.

### **Can children volunteer?**

The minimum age for Individual and Group Food Sorting shifts is 12 years old, and the minimum age for Family Night is 6 years old. While volunteering is a great way to teach children about service, it is important to assess a child's maturity levels and their ability to listen and follow directions before signing up. Our projects take place in an industrial warehouse with dangerous operating equipment, and safety is a major concern, particularly for young children.

### **Can I complete court appointed community service hours?**

Court Appointed Community Service shifts are ONLY available during regular business hours, Monday - Friday (8 - noon and 1 - 4 pm). Court Appointed Community Service hours will not be credited to volunteers working at any other time, or for any other volunteer opportunity!

Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee will only consider misdemeanor offenses (traffic violations, etc.); no felonies, violent crimes or theft charges will be accepted. Please refer to our Court Appointed Community Service Policies and Procedures Document. All court ordered community service volunteers require additional documentation.

### **What should I bring to my volunteer shift?**

There are volunteer projects at Second Harvest that include refrigerated food sorting. Please have everyone bring a sweatshirt in case you are asked to do a "cool" volunteer project!

Please leave bags and purses at home or in your car. These items are not allowed inside the warehouse. Also, please keep personal and valuable items to a minimum (i.e. electronics, jewelry, etc.), as the Food Bank is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

### **What should I wear?**

The dress code for warehouse volunteers at the Food Bank is casual and comfortable. Due to safety concerns, all volunteers must wear close-toed shoes (no sandals or flip flops) and clothes appropriate to work in a warehouse environment. It is also recommended to bring a sweatshirt in case you are needed to work in the 40 degree cooler. Please do not wear or bring anything that may be considered offensive.

Volunteers may be required to follow another dress code for special event or administrative volunteer positions.

### **Where are you located?**

All food sorting, packing and administrative projects take place in our warehouse located in Metro Center off of Rosa Parks Boulevard, which is exit 85 from I-65.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee  
The Martin Distribution Center

331 Great Circle Road  
Nashville, TN 37228

If you will be volunteering for an offsite special event, the address will be provided when you sign up to volunteer.

**Where should I park?**

Volunteer parking is available anywhere in the Second Harvest parking lot.

**Where do I go and who will be my contact when I arrive at the food bank?**

During business hours of Monday - Friday from 8 am - 4:30 pm, volunteers will enter the building through the second door on the left into the lobby and check in with the receptionist. She will notify the Volunteer Coordinator that you have arrived. Outside of business hours, during evening and Saturday shifts, volunteers will enter the building through the first door on the left into the Culinary Arts Center. The Volunteer Coordinator will be there to greet volunteers upon arrival.

**Who do I contact with questions?**

Please feel free to reach out to us with any further questions at [Volunteer@secondharvestmidtn.org](mailto:Volunteer@secondharvestmidtn.org)