

A photograph of two young boys standing outdoors at what appears to be a food bank distribution event. The boy on the left is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and is holding a clear plastic bag filled with potatoes. The boy on the right is wearing a black t-shirt with a '50' logo and striped shorts, holding two white bags of potatoes. The background shows other people and tables with food items. The entire image has a semi-transparent reddish-orange overlay.

# Foodbank®

*St. Louis Area Foodbank*

**FIGHTING HUNGER, FEEDING HOPE.**

MEMBER OF FEEDING AMERICA

## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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@STLFoodbank on



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## Thanks for Making a Difference!

### Table of Contents

Welcome.....	2
Mission Statement .....	3
About the Foodbank .....	3
Volunteer Recruitment.....	3
Volunteer Background Check Policy .....	3
Equal Opportunity .....	4
Hours of Operation .....	4
Volunteer Opportunities .....	4
Internships .....	5
Work Environment .....	6
Grievance Procedures .....	6
Weapons-Free Environment.....	7
Drug-Free Environment .....	7
Alcohol-Free Environment .....	7
Smoking.....	7
Break Room.....	7
Volunteer Illness .....	8
Hours of Work.....	8
Volunteer Orientation - General.....	8
Volunteer Orientation - Safety .....	9
Volunteer Orientation – Dress Code.....	9
Volunteer Orientation - Project Specific.....	9
Absenteeism .....	9
Feedback .....	10
Conflict Resolution.....	10
Termination.....	10
Records .....	10
Inclement Weather.....	11
First Aid/Emergency Procedures .....	11

## **Welcome to St. Louis Area Foodbank Family!**

Thank you for choosing to volunteer your time and talents with the St. Louis Area Foodbank! Our volunteers are part of our family and our mission. You play a critical role in serving our neighbors in need, so – from the bottom of our hearts – thank you! Your commitment of time and energy helps prevent children, seniors, veterans and families in Eastern Missouri and Southwestern Illinois from going to bed hungry. Whether you are participating in our mission by offering administrative support, being out in our communities, or repackaging food in our warehouse, your assistance is always needed and greatly appreciated!

We know you will find our work rewarding and discover a strong sense of community among our family of staff, program partners, board members and community volunteers. Again, we are grateful for your efforts and energy to help us strengthen our services, projects, and events to ensure that no one in the bi-state region goes to bed hungry. The St. Louis Area Foodbank can make a difference because of our network – and we welcome you to the team! Thank you for fighting hunger and feeding hope.

Sincerely,

Meredith Knopp  
President and CEO



## **Mission Statement**

***Building stronger communities by empowering people with food and hope.***

### **About the Foodbank**

Everyone deserves access to food and the promise of a healthy diet, which is why the St. Louis Area Foodbank is committed to building a stronger, healthier bi-state region where no one goes to bed hungry.

With the dedicated partnership of over 550+ hunger-relief programs and local agencies – including soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and residential programs – we are responding to hunger in communities across 26 counties in Missouri and Illinois by distributing food to more than 392,000 people every year.

Since opening in 1975, and with the tremendous support and generosity of the community, the St. Louis Area Foodbank has grown to become our region's largest food distribution charity dedicated to feeding those in need. Together, we are feeding people and working to address the root causes of hunger for lasting impact every day.

With the help of donations of food and money from thousands of generous contributors, the untiring work of the 550+ partner agencies we serve, and the labor of more than 16,000 volunteers annually, the St. Louis Area Foodbank can provide millions of meals to people every year.

Even as we reflect on our 40+ years of service and celebrate the generosity of our community, the St. Louis Area Foodbank is preparing for the future. We know that the battle against hunger in our region is far from over, and we know that it is only with your continued commitment that we will be able to continue serving our neighbors in need for years to come.

### **Volunteer Recruitment**

Foodbank volunteers come from many sources. We welcome larger volunteer groups through close work with the United Way's Volunteer Center as well our partner agencies, companies, schools, religious groups, civic clubs and other social or professional organizations. In addition to groups, we also welcome individuals to volunteer. In fact, about 20% of our volunteers are referred to us by other volunteers.

We accept volunteers as young as three years old. We do require one adult volunteer to accompany every 5 -10 children under the age of 16.

Volunteers of all abilities are welcome. Sorry, we do not accept court appointed volunteers.

### Volunteer Background Check Policy

For the protection of clients, donors, staff and other volunteers, the St. Louis Area Foodbank will conduct background screenings on its volunteers as follows:

- A background screen will be conducted using Casenet for Illinois and Missouri and the National Sexual Offender Registry on each regular recurring volunteer, meaning an individual who volunteers more than once a month.
- Volunteers who have access to confidential client or donor data will be required to consent to a more thorough background check including using county of residence and federal criminal background check and social security trace.
- Episodic volunteers, meaning those who volunteer less than once a month will not be subjected to a background check.
- Volunteers working at a partner site such as a food pantry, school, etc. are subject to the background check requirements of that entity.
- Volunteers who do not agree to a background check may be refused assignment.

### Equal Opportunity

It is the policy of the St. Louis Area Foodbank not to discriminate against any volunteer or volunteer applicant because of age, race, color, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin.

### Hours of Operation

The St. Louis Area Foodbank is open Monday – Friday from 8:00AM – 4:30PM. Refer to the “Hours of Work for Volunteers” section (page 7) for specific volunteer times, opportunities and locations. We look forward to serving with you!

### Volunteer Opportunities

The St. Louis Area Foodbank currently offers a number of opportunities for volunteers to serve, support and strengthen the community with us. Visit our

website (<https://stlfoodbank.org/get-involved/volunteer/>) to learn about our available opportunities and to sign up. Some of our largest volunteer needs include (but are NOT limited to):

1. Volunteer Center – Volunteers sign up for a 3-hour shift at the St. Louis Area Foodbank and serve as part of a volunteer crew focused on packing meal boxes, sorting donated product, repacking produce for distribution and other tasks directly related to preparing food for distribution.
2. Mobile Distributions (Food Fairs, Block Parties etc.) – Volunteers serve OFF SITE in the community and help distribute food to our neighbors in need. Distributions occur multiple times a month and happen rain or shine.
3. Data Entry – Programs – Volunteers help us gather, input and use data to serve our clients (i.e. SNAP applications) and to better inform our strategic decisions.
4. Special Events Support – Philanthropy – Volunteers fill a variety of roles when providing special event support and help to ensure that brand awareness events, cause marketing opportunities and annual fundraisers (i.e. “Rock Out Hunger”) are successful and effective.
5. Lead Volunteer – Volunteer Center OR mobile distributions – “Lead volunteers” help coach, train, support and lead new volunteers. They work directly with staff members to ensure safety, outcomes and client dignity are top of mind at all times. These opportunities are ideal for individuals with flexible schedules who are interested in volunteering more regularly.

We are always adding new roles and will need volunteers in the future who have a passion and expertise in:

1. I.T.
2. Data collection and surveying
3. Advocacy and legislation

Stay tuned for more by visiting <https://stlfoodbank.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

### Internships

The St. Louis Area Foodbank is always looking for students who are currently enrolled or recently graduated from a college or university and are interested in learning more about the Foodbank through an internship. Foodbank internships are flexible, and interns are invited to tailor their experience to fit their interests and program requirements by working directly with Foodbank staff. In addition to their main area of focus, our interns are offered opportunities to learn about our

other programs as well including mobile markets, advocacy and outreach, SNAP, nutrition and other areas of interest. For more information visit:  
<https://stlfoodbank.aaimtrack.com/jobs/>

### Work Environment

The St. Louis Area Foodbank is committed to creating an environment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. It is the policy of the St. Louis Area Foodbank to promote an environment free from harassment including but not limited to harassment based upon race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sex, age, physical or mental ability, or any other characteristic protected by state, federal, or local discrimination law.

The St. Louis Area Foodbank prohibits supervisors, employees, and non-employees from the following behaviors considered sexual harassment under Title 29, Chapter XIV, of the Code of Federal Regulations:

- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Explicit or implicit request for sexual favors
- Verbal conduct of a sexual nature including jokes, remarks, or similar behavior
- Any physical or verbal conduct that could be construed to be of a sexual nature
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests in order to keep one's volunteer role or avoid some other loss, and offers of employment in return for sexual favors
- Any similar related behavior which interferes with an individual's work performance and/or creation of an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment

Examples of discriminatory harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted comments
- Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, writings, or gestures
- Physical conduct such as any unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interfering with work directed at a volunteer because of any protected characteristic

### Grievance Procedure

If you believe that you are or have been the victim of harassment, immediately report the incident, preferably in writing, to your immediate supervisor. Volunteers working in the Volunteer Center should report harassment to the Volunteer Center Manager. Skills-based volunteers should report harassment to the supervisor to whom they were assigned or the Director of Community Programs.

Every effort will be taken to resolve the problem in a satisfactory and expeditious manner. A full investigation will be conducted as confidentially as possible. The St. Louis Area Foodbank will not tolerate retaliation against any volunteer for bringing a complaint of sexual or discriminatory harassment. Any volunteer who violates this policy is subject to discipline up to and including the possibility of immediate dismissal.

### Weapons-Free Environment

The St. Louis Area Foodbank strictly prohibits carrying or possessing weapons while volunteering with the Foodbank, whether your volunteer activities are on Foodbank premises or in another location. Prohibited weapons include any form of weapon or explosive restricted, permitted/licensed and/or defined under local, state or federal law or regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, any and all firearms, knives and explosive devices. If you have any questions about whether an item is considered a weapon under this policy, please check with your supervisor or the Director of Community Programs.

### Drug-Free Environment

The St. Louis Area Foodbank strictly prohibits the use, sale, dispensing, possession, or manufacture of illegal drugs in the workplace or while engaged in Foodbank activities.

### Alcohol-Free Environment

The St. Louis Area Foodbank strictly prohibits being under the influence of alcohol or the consumption of alcohol while on volunteer time, including during break times.

### Smoking

The St. Louis Area Foodbank is a non-smoking facility. Per Missouri State Code, please refrain from smoking within 20 feet of doors, windows that open, or ventilation intakes. If you would like to smoke, there is a designated area outside of the agency dock. Your supervisor can direct you to this designated location.

### Break Room

The break room and all its amenities are available for use by all volunteers. Please wash any dishes you use and clean up after yourself when you are done using the facilities.



## Volunteer Illness

For both your health and the health of our clients, staff, and other volunteers, we ask that individuals experiencing any of the following symptoms not volunteer:

- Fever
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Cold or flu symptoms
- Open wound/ external bleeding
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Upper respiratory symptoms like a stuffy nose or cough that cannot be controlled

## Hours of Work

The St. Louis Area Foodbank is flexible with each volunteer's schedule and time constraints. Recurring volunteers should work directly with their supervisors to set a regular schedule that is convenient for the volunteer and meets the needs of the Foodbank.

Volunteers in our Volunteer Center must sign up online prior to arriving. Our Volunteer Center is open on the following days and times:

Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Thursday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday: 10:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.

Please note: Holidays or other events may cause slight adjustments to this general schedule, and specific volunteer shifts are posted online. If you have any questions, please contact us at (314) 292-6262.

## Volunteer Orientation-General

Volunteers are always encouraged to take on new challenges and share their skills and talents to support our mission. Additional administrative opportunities are elective in nature to ensure a positive experience for all parties.

Direct Supervisors have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training of those volunteers assigned to them. They are also responsible for the safety of all volunteers. Volunteers must follow all directions of their supervisor. Failure to do so could result in immediate danger to the volunteer or others and result in a volunteer being asked to leave.

## Volunteer Orientation-Safety

Rev. 3/2020

Each volunteer will receive a Safety Orientation on their first day or at the start of their shift in the Volunteer Center. Volunteers will be informed of hazardous aspects, materials, equipment, processes, and issues they may encounter while volunteering. Volunteers will be trained and equipped in methods to deal with all identified risks.

### Volunteer Orientation-Dress Code

For the safety, mobility and the enjoyment of all volunteers in our Volunteer Center we do have some clothing requirements, including but not limited to:

- Closed-toed shoes
- Clothing free of offensive language
- Clothing that limits mobility

If you're wearing open-toed shoes, clothing that may offend others or limit your ability to perform volunteer activities, the Foodbank's Volunteer Center staff would be happy to reassign you to an appropriate volunteer position or may ask you to leave.

### Volunteer Orientation-Project Specific

Volunteers will receive orientation from their supervisor. Volunteers participating in a repackaging project in the Volunteer Center will receive orientation from staff, including an explanation/demonstration of any projects they will be doing.

### Absenteeism

Volunteers are expected to sign up through the website or to work directly with their supervisor to set their schedule. When a volunteer expects to be absent from a scheduled day, the volunteer should inform their supervisor or change their schedule on the website as far in advance as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made. Volunteers are vitally important to the work of the Foodbank; when volunteers miss shifts, it could result in reduced service to our community. If you will be late or absent and cannot reach your supervisor or change your schedule online, we ask that you call the front desk at 314-292-6262.

Recurring Volunteers: Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer's work assignment. A mutual decision between the volunteer and their supervisor will determine the best course of action.

### Feedback

Rev. 3/2020

The Foodbank welcomes open and honest feedback and ideas. We encourage volunteers to provide feedback to their direct supervisor or another employee regarding their time at the Foodbank. In turn, volunteer supervisors will also provide open and honest feedback to volunteers. Volunteer supervisors try to choose projects and activities for volunteers that are the best use of their skills and talents while also meeting the needs of the Foodbank and the community.

We strive to utilize volunteers efficiently and in a way that creates the most positive outcome for both the volunteer and the Foodbank.

### Conflict Resolution

If at any time a volunteer or the St. Louis Area Foodbank is in conflict over a volunteer position, staff or volunteer behavior, and/or other issue, the Foodbank has the authority to request written complaints from all parties, discuss termination of volunteer activity, move the volunteer to a new position, or request the volunteer to discontinue volunteering at the St. Louis Area Foodbank.

### Termination

In rare instances, volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the St. Louis Area Foodbank or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment may be subject to dismissal. Possible grounds for dismissal include but are not limited to the following: gross misconduct or insubordination; harassment; being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; theft of property, food or other donated items; misuse of Foodbank equipment or materials; abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers; failure to abide by organizational policies and procedures (including safety procedures); failure to meet mental or physical standards of performance; and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

### Records

Volunteer records, including contact information, are entered into the St. Louis Area Foodbank's Volunteer Database. Each volunteer will be asked to sign a liability and photo release waiver and will have their number of volunteer hours recorded in their file. Please notify the Volunteer Center Staff with change of address, phone and/or e-mail as needed. Volunteers will be added to our email distribution and can opt out at any time.

### Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, including but not limited to snow, ice, rain, or sleet, volunteers are encouraged to use their best judgment. Safety is our number one priority. If you do not feel safe traveling to the St. Louis Area Foodbank for your volunteer assignment, we ask that you contact your supervisor or update your information on the website.

In some cases, the Foodbank may close due to inclement weather. You can check our website at [www.stlfoodbank.org](http://www.stlfoodbank.org) or call the front desk at 314-292-6262 for more information or to determine if the Foodbank is open. If the Foodbank is closed, do not report for your volunteer assignment.

### First Aid/Emergency Procedures

A first aid kit and automated external defibrillator (AED) are located in the Volunteer Center, the warehouse and the Hunger Engagement Center. In the event of an accident or injury, notify your supervisor or the nearest Foodbank employee immediately. Staff will immediately tend to any injuries and call 911 in case of an emergency. Volunteers and witnesses may be asked to fill out an accident report.