



Volunteer Handbook

www.theopendoorpantry.org

Welcome to The Open Door!

Thank you for being a volunteer at The Open Door! Volunteers are the heart and hands of our organization, and we are so happy to have you join our team.

We could not provide access to healthy food throughout Dakota County without the support of over 1,000 volunteers!

We invite you to try any role that interests you. We firmly believe there is a volunteer position for everyone. Whether you like to work outside in our community gardens, schedule appointments for clients, or pick up donations as a Food Rescue Driver we have a role that will fit your lifestyle.

The following policies and procedures have been established to provide guidance for volunteers. Our staff is here to support you on your volunteer journey. If you have any questions regarding any of our volunteer roles or our handbook, please reach out to our program team. We look forward to getting to know you as a volunteer.

Thank you!

The Open Door Staff



ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Our Mission

A fresh approach to ending local hunger through access to healthy food

Our History

Founded in 2009, The Open Door has grown from a closet in a church to the largest food shelf in Dakota County, providing fresh and healthy food throughout Dakota County through a combination of innovative programs. Our efforts have provided more than 10 million meals in our first 10 years.

Through our healthy food focus and innovative programs, we seek to redefine how our sector approaches hunger relief and make healthy food a reality for thousands across Dakota County.

Our volunteers and staff know that hunger is about more than calories-it is about health. Our dedication to providing fresh and healthy food makes our community a healthier place for everyone.

From the founding of the Eagan Pantry to the expansion of our neighborhood-based program, The Open Door's staff and volunteers have been finding new ways to make fresh and healthy food available in the parts of our community where it is needed most.

Our Locations:

Eagan Pantry

3904 Cedar Grove Parkway, Eagan

Mobile Pantry Warehouse

14757 Energy Way, Apple Valley

Administrative Office 'The House'

3910 Rahn Rd, Eagan



HELPFUL INFORMATION

Volunteer Orientation Policy

The volunteer orientation is an opportunity to learn more about our organization and programs. For new volunteers with no prior volunteer experience with The Open Door, it is strongly recommended to complete an orientation within 3 months of their volunteer start date. The orientation is required before volunteering in the Client Attendant role. Supervision, on-the-job training, and more formal training will take place as needed, dependent upon volunteer role.

Volunteer Age Requirements

- 18+ may volunteer in any position
- 15+ may volunteer in all positions except Client Attendant and Driver positions
- 10–14 must be accompanied by an adult and are limited to volunteering at the Eagan Pantry.

Volunteer Training

Procedures and day of instructions will be emailed prior to your first shift. If it is your first time in a role, please arrive 15 minutes early. Either staff or a lead volunteer will provide on-the-job training and answer questions. When possible, sign up for your first shift where there is another volunteer scheduled.

Dress Code

Please dress comfortably and for the weather when volunteering at The Open Door. Jeans, T-shirts, shorts are acceptable and **closed-toed shoes are required** for all non-administrative roles.

Receiving food at The Open Door should be a welcoming and comfortable experience for all. Please refrain from wearing offensive or obscene clothing during your volunteer shift. Clothing endorsing or opposing a political party or candidate is prohibited during your volunteer time as it puts our 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt status at risk.

Name Tags

Always wear a name tag—with only your first name—during your shift. Name tags are available and stored by the Volunteer Sign-In Sheet. This helps staff, clients, and other volunteers know your name. Please return your name tag at the end of your shift.

Valuables

Please do not bring valuables to your volunteer work location, as we cannot be responsible for any damage or loss. If you bring a purse, please ask a staff member to show you a safe place to store it.



Cell Phone Use

Please limit your cell phone use to a minimum during your volunteer time. If you do need to take a call, please move to a private area. Taking pictures and videos at any time during your volunteer shift is only allowed with staff permission. Pictures or videos of clients is strictly prohibited at The Open Door.

Snacks and Beverages

Snacks and beverages may be provided during your volunteer shift. You are welcome to take a break and enjoy a snack and/or beverage while volunteering with us. Please coordinate these breaks with your fellow volunteers and supervisor to ensure we have enough coverage in your work area.

Volunteer Recognition and Appreciation

Our annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic is generally held in May. We use this opportunity to gather and thank all our volunteers for their service throughout the year. We also recognize volunteers throughout the year with volunteer t-shirts, social media spotlights, and in our volunteer newsletter.

Illness

Volunteers are asked to stay home if they are ill to help stop the spread of disease. Please remove your name from our volunteer scheduling system, VicNet, as soon as you know you're not able to make your shift. If it's within 24 hours of your volunteer shift, please contact the program supervisor. The phone numbers are listed on page 10 of this handbook. Volunteers should wash hands before and after working with food. Wear gloves when handling food directly.

POLICIES

Food Distribution Policy

The Open Door is a Second Harvest Heartland (SHH) partner. As such, we're required to follow all rules established by Feeding America. Failure to follow these rules could jeopardize our partnership with Second Harvest Heartland, significantly impacting our food supply.

All "distributable" items (food, supplies, etc.) donated to The Open Door ~~must~~ be given to clients of The Open Door or to an organization also partnered with Second Harvest Heartland. Items that are determined to be "non-distributable" are considered waste and do not fall into the above requirement. If volunteers choose to take food that has been deemed non-distributable, The Open Door isn't responsible for the safety of the food.

Examples of non-distributable food:

- Severely damaged canned goods
- Food dated beyond the USDA's food safety guidelines



- Perishable items with mold, punctures, or severe bruising
 - Dessert mixes (cakes, cookies, brownies) – we currently don't have a SHH partner willing to take

Only items meeting the above criteria are allowed to be placed in the “non-distributable” bins. At the Eagan pantry, non-distributable non-perishable food items will be placed in a HyVee tote next to the garbage bins. At the Mobile pantry, non-distributable non-perishable food items will be placed near the garage door of the nonperishable warehouse and on the cart in the perishable warehouse. Non-distributable perishable food items will go in compost (Eagan), pig food bin (Mobile) or trash. All items will be discarded daily.

Staff reserve the right to remove any item placed in non-distributable bin.

Volunteers as Clients

Our volunteers may be clients and, as such, will be treated the same as all other clients. Only registered clients will be eligible to receive food available for distribution unless it's open to the public. You must register as a client and have an appointment to benefit from The Open Door services. Once you have an appointment, you are required to check in on day of your appointment and shop outside of your volunteer shift. If storage for food is needed, it must be labeled with volunteer's name and placed in coolers.

Distributions Open to the Public

Volunteers are allowed to participate in distributions open to the public and will follow the same protocols as the public. No preferential treatment is given to volunteers at distributions.

Community Service Policy

The Open Door accepts court ordered community service volunteers on a case-by-case basis. A background check is required prior to volunteering. We do not place volunteers with the following offenses: theft, violence against people, vandalism, disorderly conduct, or felonies of any kind. Verification of service hours is available upon request.

Community service hours required for school, or church are also welcomed. Verification of service hours available upon request.

Civil Rights Statement and Training Policy

The Open Door is an equal opportunity provider. It is required all program staff and volunteers sign the annual Civil Rights Training handout per our agreement with The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Staff will inform volunteers when the updated Civil Rights training handout is available.

Computers, Internet, and Telephone Policy

Voice mail, email, and internet usage assigned to an employee or volunteer's computer or telephone extensions are solely for the purpose of conducting business. Only people appropriately authorized for organizational purposes may use the Internet. Internet use



brings the possibility of breaches to the security of confidential information and the possibility of contamination to our system via viruses or spyware. Keep in mind that The Open Door owns any communication sent via email or that is stored on equipment. Management and other authorized staff have the right to access any material on the organization's computers at any time.

Solicitations, Fundraising, Signs, and Literature Distribution Policy

All notices, flyers, posters, brochures, or any other communications must first be approved, signed, and dated by a staff member.

MN Clean Indoor Air Act Policy

In accordance to Minnesota state law, smoking is prohibited within 25 feet of any entrance of The Open Door and at outdoor events.

Substance Policy

Smoking, drugs and alcohol are not permitted at The Open Door.

Violence and Weapons Policy

The Open Door strictly prohibits the possession or use of weapons while on-site. This includes firearms, explosives, and other weapons that might be considered dangerous or that could cause harm. A license to carry a weapon does not supersede our policy. The Open Door reserves the right at any time and at its discretion to search, packages, containers, briefcases, purses, enclosures, and people entering its property to determine whether a weapon is being or has been brought onto the premises. Persons who fail or refuse to permit a search under this policy will be subject to dismissal.

Background Check Policy

Background checks are required for volunteers in driving roles, roles working directly with kids and court ordered community service volunteers. The checks are conducted through the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. Background checks come at no charge to volunteers. A legal name, birthdate, and permission are required to run the background checks. We do not place volunteers with the following offenses: theft, violence against people, vandalism, disorderly conduct, or felonies of any kind. Background checks are completed in compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act and other applicable legislation.

Driving Policy

Volunteers in a driving role must provide a copy of their driver's license for our auto insurance policy. Volunteers are covered with our auto insurance should an accident occur. If you are in an accident, please notify your supervisor as soon as it is safe. Do not flee the scene. A copy of our auto insurance and accident procedures are found in the glove box of all vehicles of The Open Door. Please notify staff if vehicles are running low on gas and/or if a dash light is on. Volunteers are not reimbursed mileage.



Behavior Policy

Volunteers must treat the organization's clients, volunteers, and staff with dignity and respect. Our goal is to make client experiences as comfortable as possible. Dismissal of a volunteer may take place when the volunteer fails to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

Grievance Policy

The Open Door welcomes feedback, including complaints, from our clients, volunteers, and staff. This communication allows us to correct any problems with our service, gives us a chance to re-establish our relationship with others, and enables us to learn how to improve our service quality and delivery. The organization defines a complaint as any client, volunteer, or staff formal expression of dissatisfaction with services, operations, or the organization.

Volunteers should discuss their complaint or grievance with their Program Manager, explaining their view of the situations and what they feel needs to be done to resolve the issue. If the complaint is about the Program Manager, the volunteer should bring the issue to the Volunteer and Client Services Specialist or the Executive Director. The appropriate staff will gather more information and determine the course of action to resolve the complaint. Complaints and feedback can also be emailed to volunteer@theopendoorpantry.org.

Client and Volunteer Confidentiality Policy

Confidentiality is a right guaranteed to our clients and our volunteers. Clients' needs, concerns, and personal situations are not to be discussed with anyone other than the appropriate staff members. Documents containing client personal information, including notes, should be shredded after each volunteer shift. Using personal contact information to connect with clients or volunteers without their consent is strictly prohibited and terms for volunteer dismissal.

End of Service

If possible, please provide notice prior to your last day of service at The Open Door. This will give us a chance to thank you for your dedication to our organization and wish you well on your next venture. We will then remove you from our volunteer database which helps us in accurately tracking our volunteers.

To remain an 'Active Volunteer' in our database, volunteers must complete 2 service hours in a 12-month period. Volunteers with fewer hours will remain in our database but will be coded as 'Archived'. To become active again, a volunteer simply needs to call/text/email the Volunteer Coordinator.

Harassment Policy

Harassment is considered to be any unwanted behavior or condition based on personal characteristics that creates an uncomfortable, hostile, offensive, or intimidating work environment. Harassment can include, but is not limited to, physical or psychological abuse,



derogatory remarks, insults, slurs, advances, jokes, touching, cartoons, pictures, requests or offers of favors, and decisions or actions based on personal characteristics. If you observe or believe you are the subject of harassment, tell the involved individual(s) that the behavior is unwanted if you feel comfortable doing so. If you'd like support in addressing the situation, or the behavior continues, please report the incident to your supervisor or the Volunteer and Client Services Coordinator.

Volunteer Liability Waiver

All volunteers are volunteering at their own risk. If an injury ensues when at The Open Door, volunteers must notify supervisor and fill out an incident report within 24 hours of the incident. Volunteers who are injured during their volunteer time at The Open Door are not covered by our workers compensation policy. The Open Door may seek emergency medical treatment in case of injury, accident, or illness. Volunteers are responsible for medical costs incurred by accident, illness, and injury.

PROCEDURES

Reporting Volunteer Hours

As a non-profit agency, we are required to supply verification of volunteer hours when applying for grants or documenting in-kind services. When volunteering with a scheduled shift, staff will post your hours into the volunteer database (VicNet). If you're volunteering at a garden on your own without a scheduled shift, you will be responsible for entering your hours into VicNet.

Entering Hours for Offsite Volunteer Roles (Garden to Table, Board, Committee Member, etc.)

- Visit VicNet Profile
- Go to the 'Timesheet' tab
- Enter the month you served your volunteer hours
- The Assignment of where you served your volunteer hours.
- How many hours you served
- Hit Continue

Self-Scheduling and Schedule Viewing

Volunteers are encouraged and empowered to choose volunteer shifts that fit with their lifestyle. Volunteers can log in to our volunteer scheduling system, VicNet, to schedule or cancel shifts, view your volunteer schedule, and get more information related to volunteering at The Open Door. Volunteers can schedule themselves for volunteer roles up to 6 months in advance. There is no minimum requirement for volunteer shifts each month and you can volunteer when it is convenient for you.

To log in to your VicNet profile after completing the application process:



Visit our website: www.theopendoorpantry.org/volunteer

- Scroll to 'Current Volunteer Login'
- Log into VicNet using your email address and temporary password: Amazing
 - If you need to reset this password, click 'Forgot Password'
 - Once in VicNet, go to 'My Schedule' on top to view your volunteer schedule and sign up for shifts
- There is also a video tutorial on the homepage of VicNet if you need it

Schedule Changes

VicNet allows volunteers to sign up for shifts up to the minute before the start of the shift.

If canceling a shift, please remove your name from our volunteer scheduling system, VicNet, at least 24 hours before the start of your shift. If you need to **cancel your shift within 24 hours** or will be more than 5 minutes late for the start of your shift, reach out to the appropriate staff:

- Eagan Pantry Site Manager at 651-368-1315
- Mobile Pantry Site Manager at 651-368-0361
- Garden to Table Site Manager at 651-600-9244
- Mobile Lunchbox Site Manager at 612-505-4338

Repeated failure to notify staff when absent or tardy may result in dismissal of volunteer.

Safety Procedures

The doors shall remain locked when there is one volunteer/staff at The Open Door. No clients or guests shall be invited into The Open Door unless at least two volunteers/staff members are present.

Volunteers and staff are not to offer rides to clients.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

To honor the family time of volunteers and staff, the facilities of The Open Door will be closed on these holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

