

# What To Expect When Volunteering In The Restores



**Thanks for lending a hand!** Your help at the ReStore allows Habitat to raise more funds for affordable housing right here in our community. You may volunteer for any amount of time whenever the stores are open. But please know that our business is determined by donations so we can't predict when we'll be busy or slow. Some days might be so busy we cannot guide you, so if you have questions, ask early, ask often! Work at a non-profit can be challenging at times, but we find that it is always fulfilling. Here's the information you need to get started!



## 1. Stay Safe

- **Please wear comfortable closed-toed shoes** — you will be working on your feet.
- **Do not wear headphones.** We play the radio, but headphones and earbuds can block out safety alerts, and the cables can get entangled with other objects.
- **Please be aware of your surroundings** as large furniture items are regularly being moved around and we wouldn't want you to get bumped or trip.
- **Bring a water bottle.** Our sorting areas are open-air and can get warm so it's important to stay hydrated.



## 2. Special Requests From Staff

- **Please wear the green T-shirt** so we know you're not a customer sneaking into the back to shop. (We have some very enthusiastic treasure hunters at our stores!)
- **Be sure to sign in and sign out properly.** The better our volunteer records, the more likely we are to get additional funding sources.
- **Please park behind the office building or on side streets** to keep closer parking spots open for customers.
- **Do not shop through items that are being sorted.** You're welcome to shop the items that have already been placed onto the floor, but items being sorted need to be priced by an employee. If you do want to make any purchases, please wait until you are done volunteering for the day and have signed out.
- **Make a note of the staff members working with you** in case any customers ask you questions you can't answer. If you know who's on the sales floor, dock, and register, you can point them in the right direction. All employees wear **blue T-shirts**.
- **Know the roles:** We have opportunities for people to complete community service hours in our stores. They wear **red T-shirts**. These folks are an important part of our team, but you shouldn't send a customer with a question their way.
- **You may use the break room for lunch or snacks.** Please, no food in any other area.

# 3. Sort, Sort, Sort!



Our highest sorting needs are in clothing and books/media.

**These are also the easiest sections for volunteers** because these items all have set prices. For example, all hardback books are \$1, paperbacks are 25¢, etc. So all you have to do is organize the items by category (e.g., books, music, and video, or men's and women's clothes) and mark them with the designated sticker or tag color for that week. We use this color system to keep track of how long items have been on the floor so we know when it's time to move them to clearance.

For clothes, we use a tag gun with colored barbs that match our sticker colors. Specially priced clothing items have price tags attached with a black barb. All others get only a barb in the color of the week on a hem, in order to avoid putting a hole in the clothing. Any piece of clothing that cannot be sold at that time (out of season, torn, stained) gets placed in a large plastic bag and set to the side for recycling.

Books and media are organized by type, then by genre. Then when a corresponding shelf on the floor has space, you mark those books with color stickers and stock them on the appropriate shelf on the sales floor. Please place the stickers on the book's spine so we can see them at a glance, but try to avoid covering the title or author so shoppers can see what is available.



What to do at the electronics table

**Here you just test the items to see if they work**, and if so, place it on the sorting table to be priced. If you have the skills to do a simple rewiring to make an old stereo work, please let us know! Many items that get donated only need a simple adjustment to be sold at a better price, and we are grateful for this knowledge and willingness to help!



If something looks like it should cost more than \$1

When sorting, if you come across say a pair of designer shoes, a handbag that is barely used, an antique bible, a vintage record player, or generally anything in these sections that should clearly be sold for more than a dollar, please bring those items to the front register and have the employee at the register price the items and put them on display to be sold up there. If you are unsure, go ahead and bring the item up and check. We can always look it up. Occasionally we will discover something is much more valuable than we anticipated and we can put it up for auction. This is part of the fun of working in a by-donation business!



Sorting furniture in the back of the ReStore

Generally the furniture gets brought in and is immediately priced and placed on the floor to be sold so it doesn't take up space in the back. Please be mindful of this — if we get a large drop-off of furniture and you are unable to lift, please steer clear of the unloading crew. If you are able and willing to lift, by all means lend a hand! But we recognize you are primarily here to sort, and we have community service workers who are there to assist with heavy lifting.



**If you have special skills** that you think you can apply to other tasks like organizing sales floor sections, let the store manager know in case we have a need. Please do not self-assign tasks, however.