

Houston Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Code of Conduct

Becoming a Houston Habitat volunteer comes with great rewards and responsibilities. Volunteers like you are representatives of Houston Habitat for Humanity. When you accept a volunteer role with Houston Habitat for Humanity, you are committing to act in a way that promotes Houston Habitat's mission, respects the local community, and ensures the safety of all participants. In addition to complying with all laws, regulations and Houston Habitat for Humanity policies, all volunteers are expected to follow the volunteer code of conduct outlined below.

1. **Promote a respectful community:** Treat all volunteers, employees and community members with respect, courtesy, and dignity. This includes avoiding the use of humiliating, demeaning, offensive, or otherwise insensitive language that fails to respect the dignity of the person. Volunteers are also expected to refrain from engaging in intimidation, physical, sexual, and/or emotional violence toward others. Help promote a welcoming, respectful environment by making efforts to understand and honor the local culture and by following all rules and policies set forth by a Houston Habitat program staff member or supervising volunteer. Use of social media should be governed by the principles of respecting and protecting vulnerable populations while preserving their dignity and privacy. You are discouraged from posting anything on social media that permits beneficiaries from being identified and/or traced.
2. **Respect the human rights of all people and protect beneficiaries and community members from exploitation and abuse.** All Houston Habitat volunteers must model behavior consistent with the Houston Habitat for Humanity International Safeguarding Policy which protects staff, beneficiaries, and community members (especially vulnerable adults and children) from exploitation and abuse. Inappropriate physical or sexual relationships with other volunteers is prohibited. Under no circumstances, may volunteers engage in sexual activity with a child (a person under the age of 18, regardless of the legal age of consent and local laws), any Houston Habitat staff or beneficiaries, or any community members. This includes not procuring commercial sex acts, even where such activities are permitted by local laws.
3. **Prioritize site safety:** Safety rules and guidelines on the volunteer site have been created to keep you and others safe as you volunteer and must be followed. Activities that pose a safety risk to yourself or others should be avoided. Report any unsafe working conditions to the onsite supervisor.
4. **Uphold a zero-tolerance policy for alcohol, drugs and weapons:** The purchase or possession of drugs or weapons is strictly prohibited on Houston Habitat for Humanity property and volunteer sites. The purchase or possession of alcohol is also strictly prohibited on Houston Habitat for Humanity volunteer sites, even if permitted by local laws or by the laws of the volunteer's home country.
5. **Follow the gift giving policy:** To avoid potential misunderstandings, embarrassment, injured feelings or jealousy, volunteers are asked not to exchange gifts with Houston Habitat beneficiaries, staff members or community members without consulting Houston Habitat staff. Volunteers may speak with a staff member about appropriate ways to exchange gifts and our staff is happy to suggest gifts that will benefit the entire community.
6. **Protect assets:** Use reasonable care to protect all Houston Habitat for Humanity resources. Stealing, misappropriation or diversion of Houston Habitat for Humanity funds, property, or other assets for personal benefit is not permitted, nor is otherwise engaging in fraudulent activity regarding Houston Habitat for Humanity's assets, operations, or beneficiaries.
7. **Maintain confidentiality:** Build trust with other volunteers and Houston Habitat for Humanity by respecting the confidentiality of volunteers, staff, Houston Habitat beneficiaries, and community

members. Unless you receive prior written approval from Houston Habitat, you will not disclose confidential Houston Habitat's information or confidential information given to you by others.

8. **Speak up!**: Houston Habitat for Humanity embraces a "see something, say something" culture. If you become aware of potential misconduct, help reinforce our culture of courage and accountability by sharing your concerns with an appropriate Houston Habitat staff or supervising volunteer. You can also anonymously report potential misconduct through [MySafeWorkplace.com](https://www.mysafeworkplace.com).

I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to be guided by this volunteer code of conduct.

I commit to helping safeguarding the rights and dignities of all people I encounter during my volunteer service with Houston Habitat.

I understand that I have a responsibility to report any potential misconduct to an appropriate Houston Habitat staff or through [MySafeWorkplace.com](https://www.mysafeworkplace.com).

I understand that Houston Habitat has the right to release me from my volunteer position at its discretion. I also understand that I am responsible for any costs that I may incur due to a violation of the code of conduct.

I understand that signing up to a Houston Habitat event as a volunteer confirms agreement with the provisions within the Volunteer Code of Conduct regardless of whether there is a separate signed agreement.