

VOLUNTEERS OFFER HOSPITALITY

Together, we are sharing resources, building relationships and creating community in the West Side! The Westside Free Store is a Christian organization that offers hospitality to all.

Volunteers come to serve. Thank you for sharing your skills and time! You are a valuable member of our community. We ask for the following commitment from you:

- Love your neighbor. Smile. Be willing to slow down, greet guests, and make space for conversation.
- Talk with the Store Manager to directly ask questions that arise. If you aren't sure, please ask.
- Never give money to guests. The Store Manager is equipped to help people find resources as necessary. If you are approached for money, please say “no” or engage the Store Manager in the conversation.
- Honor the dignity of guests. Do not take pictures. Do not share identifying information about a guest. If you hear concerning information about a guest (i.e. violence, danger), please bring your concern to the Store Manager.
- Understand that customers all have unique needs and circumstances. Involve the store manager if customers ask for special items or services. Please don't “shop from the back” to find specific items for guests that make requests. Please ask the store manager and area coordinators regarding exceptions.

Gentleness and Respect

- WFSM offers hospitality to everyone. We do not make judgments or request financial information.
- Hospitality is beautiful. A warm welcoming smile should be the first thing people see when they enter the store!
- Relationships are healing. We'd like to become a community of friends. We connect with people in a safe and non-threatening way.
- Guests participate in the leadership of the store and are encouraged to share in the work.

First Steps when Volunteering

- Check in with the Store Manager. Complete a volunteer application.
- Attend volunteer orientation and training. Actively participate as we continuously develop together.
- Sign-in on the computer when you arrive. Please make sure that you also sign out after your shift.
- Volunteers may shop at the free store but must follow the standard shopping guidelines. Volunteers check out by presenting their items to the Store Manager.

Opportunities to Share with Guests:

- Welcome guests, warmly greet them and help them to know where to go. Offer coffee. Explain next steps.
- Assist new customers by entering their application data online. Be mindful of privacy concerns.
- Assist customers within the store in shopping for appropriate clothing.
- Offer warm and patient service during checkout.
- Share a cup of coffee with guests. Try a game of cards or checkers. Listen well.
- Play, sing or read with children. Try playdough.

Opportunities to Serve “Behind the Scenes”:

- Sort donated items in the “sorting room”. Place clothes in appropriate boxes. Place damaged clothing in recycling bin.
- Restock inventory in the store.
- Accept donations through the back door. Thank our donors for their gifts.
- Follow sanitary procedures in serving food and drink. Place food items on plates.
- Clean tables and sweep floors. Wash kitchen sinks and countertops. Take out the trash.
- Donate clothing, ground coffee, 13 gallon trash bags, office paper or other supplies.

Donations

- Clothing and household goods are accepted from the back door.
- Donor may receive a “Donation Receipt” which is located in a file folder on the back door.
- Westside Free Store does not pick up donations.
- Westside Free Store does not deliver items.
- NO medications can be accepted.
- Car seats and crib bumpers are NOT accepted. Ohio state law forbids the distribution of used carseats.
- Furniture is NOT accepted.

Security

- No weapons may be brought into the store.
- Smoking and drug use is not allowed in the building.
- Please lock your car. Do not leave valuable items visible in your car.
- Small lockers are available for your use. Please bring a minimum of personal items into the store. Please be mindful of where you stow your jackets or sweaters so they aren't given away.

Unexpected Events - Westside Free Store Ministries will be closed when Columbus City Schools are closed and/or Franklin County is under a Level 1 Emergency. If you unexpectedly need to cancel your shift, please call the Store Manager.