



HOMER COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

**Volunteer Information Handbook  
Rev 7/2025**

## **Thank you for volunteering with the Homer Community Food Pantry.**

Our food pantry could not operate without committed volunteers. Volunteers have donated hundreds of hours every year and play a key role in helping us fulfill our mission. It is important that we promote a favorable impression with all that we interact, including clients, donors, other volunteers and the community of Homer. Our volunteers are important to us and we ask for your help in creating a safe and meaningful volunteer experience.

### **Handbook**

This handbook is designed to introduce you to the Homer Community Food Pantry and to provide a basic overview of the policies and procedures that provide all of us with guidance and direction. As a volunteer, you are provided with necessary job training, supervision and recognition. We ask you to honor your commitment to the team, respect other volunteers and perform your assigned duties to the best of your abilities.

If you have questions or need clarification of the information contained in this handbook, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

Homer Community Food Pantry offers food assistance at no cost to any area resident in need. Every Monday, our team of volunteers start arriving at 9am and work together to sort and stock our pantry tables. We are located in the basement of the Homer United Methodist Church, 770 East End Rd, and open for clients every Monday from 12pm to 3pm.

We are a small facility with a big responsibility. Thanks to the donations of time, food, and money from community members, we can provide food to many each week.

### **Our Vision**

Continue to be a bridge in a caring community for the sharing of resources.  
Continue to address hunger and basic needs in collaboration with a strong local network.

### **Our Mission**

The Homer Community Food Pantry provides food and emergency assistance with compassion to those seeking our services.

## **Guiding Values**

### *Compassion:*

- We value the dignity and intrinsic worth of each person we encounter. We are committed to treating each individual fairly and with dignity and respect.
- We seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to address their own needs while also meeting their need to support their well-being.
- We value and protect our clients' privacy and ensure a safe environment for our clients.
- We honor our clients' dignity by offering usable, nutritious food and distributing it in a convenient and equitable manner.

### *Resourcefulness:*

- We bring our full resources to bear on the problem of hunger and collaborate with other agencies to best serve our clients.
- We are committed to providing healthy food in the most cost-effective manner.
- We will be well managed, sustainable and a good steward of resources.
- We will ensure we have the expertise to be effective, we are committed to learning and growing.

### *Community-Centered:*

- We are committed to act responsibly toward the community in which we work and for the benefit of the community we serve.
- We are committed to be responsible, transparent and accountable for all our actions. -
- We are committed to act honestly, truthfully and with integrity in all our transactions and dealings.
- We are "community driven" with neighbors working together to raise resources and awareness to meet our clients' needs.
- We honor and appreciate the contributions of our donors and volunteers.
- We treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and diversity.
- We value and respect the volunteer spirit and the people who give tirelessly of their time, talent and resources to help others.

## Food Handling Safety

Safe steps in food handling and storage are essential to prevent food-borne illness. You can't see, smell, or taste harmful bacteria that may cause illness.

**-Clean your hands often.** When available, wash your hands with soap and warm water, then rub your hands vigorously together and scrub all skin surfaces. Wash for 15 to 20 seconds. It is the soap combined with the scrubbing action that helps dislodge and remove germs. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers; rub the gel in your hands until they are dry.

**-Always wear gloves when in contact with food.**

**-Never cross-contaminate**, i.e.; touching meat and then fruits and vegetables.

**-Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.** Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.

**-Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth. Germs can live for a long time (some can live for two hours or more) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks and tables.

**-Stay home when you are sick** and check with a health care provider when needed.

Common symptoms of the flu include:

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea

## **Smoking**

Smoking is not permitted on the premises. Smokers must be 25 feet away from the entrance to buildings, per United States Health Department.

## **Service Animals**

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. The ADA does not require “certification” or proof of the service dog’s training. The ADA allows any person with a disability train their own service animal. The law does not require the animal be registered with any program, organization, state or local agency.

## **Weapons**

The United Methodist Church is officially a weapon-free zone. (2008 Book of Resolutions- United Methodist Church).

## **HCFP is a Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Environment**

The use, sale, dispensing, possession, or manufacture of illegal drugs or alcohol is strictly prohibited.

## **Volunteer's Code of Conduct**

All clients and volunteers must be treated with patience and respect. If you are experiencing difficulty with a client or volunteer, please call on the Volunteer Coordinator to intervene.

- Be courteous, friendly and cooperative.
- Follow the food distribution plan for the day you are volunteering. This plan was developed to help ensure we continue to provide similar amounts of food on an ongoing basis.
- Report any injury, accident or incident to the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Please let us know if you have any restrictions that prevent you from lifting or standing.
- If you are asked to perform a task or have a volunteer situation that is uncomfortable, please talk with the Volunteer Coordinator or any board member that is present.
- If a client asks for or takes more items than generally allowed, this is acceptable.

The following behaviors are not permitted. Individuals who exhibit any of these behaviors will be asked to leave and will not be allowed to volunteer in the future.

- Offensive or derogatory comments or jokes, including epithets or slurs.
- Yelling, intimidation, or threats.
- Pushing, hitting or any physical contact with a client, staff or volunteer.
- Questioning a client's right to food distribution or preventing a client from receiving food.

## **Volunteer Responsibilities**

- Weekly Volunteer sign-in on Sign-in Sheet with name and number of hours worked for the day. If you plan to take food, please put a star in the column by your name.
- Volunteers are welcome to shop for food at 11:30 am. You must be registered with your name entered in the computer database and starred on the volunteer sign in sheet.
- Please lock all valuables in your car or ask the volunteer coordinator for a secure location.

## Volunteer Task Description

**-Sorter:** Weekly sorting and display of fruits, vegetable, breads and baked goods.

**-Dry goods sorter:** Divide large containers/bags of dry good.

**-Stocking:** Set up weekly canned goods section.

**-Check-In:** We keep track of the number of people we serve. This position requires accuracy, speed, friendliness and discretion. This is a key role, as it sets the tone and pace of service in the pantry. Two people are recommended at the Check-in desk. One operates the computer, one assists with new clients, handicapped or elderly people who need assistance and assists with existing client updates as needed. They also offer proteins from the cooler and greeting people bringing in donations.

**-Client Aid:** Help clients with "other" basic needs.

**-Recycling:** Organize and sort through recycle materials.

**-Garage Sale Organizer:** Set up items for the free garage sale.