

Habitat for Humanity Construction Volunteering Guidelines

Thousands of volunteers come together each year to help Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity literally build homes – nail by nail, board by board! Our work would not be possible without the support of volunteers!

Types of Construction Volunteering

Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity welcomes those volunteering on an individual basis as well as those volunteering as part of a Build Group. All individual volunteers are required to obtain the Construction Guidelines and read it prior to volunteering. All individual volunteers are also required to fill out and return the required paperwork. All Build Groups are encouraged to fund-raise in conjunction with volunteering. Local Collegiate Challenge groups are encouraged to make a donation of \$10.00 per person/per day spent with Habitat for Humanity. Build Groups commonly hail from corporations, faith-based communities, schools, non-profits, alumni associations, and any other professional association. To secure a group slot, Build Group Contacts are asked to submit a Group Registration Form. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 269-966-2502 to obtain forms or for further information.

Schedule

Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity's Build Days take place year-round on Tuesday's, Thursday's, and Saturday's from 9:00am – 3:00pm. We manage our calendars and scheduling by calling the Volunteer Coordinator at 269-966-2502.

What to Bring

Volunteers need to bring a lunch and any snacks or drinks that they may want. Lunch may be provided, please check with the Volunteer Coordinator or the Site Supervisor before hand to see if lunch is provided or not. Additionally, volunteers are required to turn in their signed Individual Volunteer Waiver of Liability Form (for individual volunteers) or a completed Group Waiver of Liability Form (for group volunteers) prior to volunteering; we also require volunteers to bring their own work gloves. You may bring your own hand tools if you like, but please be sure to label them with your name. If you have your own tool belt, safety goggles, utility knife, tape measure, hammer or pry bar, you may want to bring them as well.

Changes in Weather

Being in Michigan, the weather varies greatly from place to place. As such, it might be raining on one side of town, but sunny on another, and possibly snowing across the street. We try to figure enough projects in case of changes in weather; construction supervisors can and often reconfigure the tasks to fit the weather for any given day.

Therefore, we ask our volunteers to follow the weather report and bring things appropriate for the day – rain gear, sunscreen, insect repellent, hat, or extra layers of clothing may be useful things to have with you. If for any reason a workday is cancelled, it is done so at the build site the day of; please use your judgment in deciding if volunteering during certain weather is safe for you.

No Hands But Yours

Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity ReStore 595 North Ave., Admin. 286 Capital Ave., NE Battle Creek, MI 49017 p: 269.966.2502 f: 269.966.2568

www.habitatbc.org

volunteer@habitatbc.org

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Type of Work

Volunteers work on nearly every facet of home construction, helping with dozens of tasks ranging from painting and tiling to framing and insulating. Volunteers do not need to have any prior experience in construction. The Volunteer Coordinator is often but not always able to let volunteers know what tasks are scheduled for their Build Day so that they may plan accordingly.

Age Requirements

Volunteers that are 16 and 17 years of age are permitted on site with an accompanying adult and may do limited construction work. They are allowed to do general carpentry but are not allowed to use any power tools or work off the ground more than 6 ft. They are not allowed to do roofing or excavation work. With prior approval of their parent or guardian and the site supervisor or house leader, they may participate in limited demolition work.

Dress Code

It is important to dress appropriately for the work being performed each day and for the weather. In general, comfortable, breathable, old clothing that you do not mind getting dirty is the most appropriate. We will do our best to let you know what kind of work to expect during your Build Day so that you can plan accordingly, though it is mandatory that volunteers wear closed-toed shoes (work boots are preferable). Sandals are not permitted in the ReStore or on site. Volunteers are required to bring work gloves with them to the site. Volunteers may want to refer to the “what to bring” section for other items.

Food/Drinks

Volunteers are responsible for providing their own lunches, drinks and any snacks unless otherwise stated. It is important to bring water with you as we cannot guarantee running water on site. A lunch break is taken each Build Day from roughly 12:00pm – 1:00pm. You may choose to go out to lunch or you may be leaving at lunch depending on your work schedule. We do our best to post that lunches are provided on our website, but cannot guarantee to let you know ahead of time. You are not obligated to eat a donated lunch and may still choose to eat your own; that is your decision. Please check with the Volunteer Coordinator for specific lunch information.

Directions/Parking

Directions to sites are provided to those registered to volunteer, normally sent via e-mail. Sites are generally accessible by public transportation; buses stop within several blocks of most of our sites. For bus schedules, please visit www.battlecreektransit.com or call them at 269.966.3474. As our sites are in suburban and urban areas, parking is somewhat limited, and volunteers may need to drive a few blocks from the site to find open on-street parking. Please do not park on the site location’s grass or in the neighbor’s driveway, do not block any mailboxes. Carpooling is strongly recommended when possible.

Restrooms

Most construction sites are equipped with portable toilets and hand sanitizer.

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Meeting the Partner Families

Habitat partner families are required to invest a minimum of 500 hours of ‘sweat equity’ on not only their own homes, but other potential homeowners as well. Volunteers may have the opportunity to meet and work alongside the families, though we cannot guarantee that families will be there on any specific day.

Arriving on Site

After you arrive at 8:50 am please look for the Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity staff member. Secondly, please sign-in using the binder provided at the site and then obtain your safety equipment (**Hard hats, work gloves, and safety goggles are required!**). If for some reason you forgot your Release and Waiver of Liability, there will be extras in a second binder. **Please listen to all directions from the construction staff so that the day goes as smoothly as possible.** Also, feel free to introduce yourself to others on-site – there are lots of great volunteers on our sites each Build Day!

Safety Information

Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity, together with volunteers, shares the responsibility for establishing and maintaining a safe work environment. Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity will attempt to assure a safe work environment and to comply with federal, state, and local safety regulations. In turn, volunteers are expected to obey safety rules (wearing hard-hats for example) and to exercise caution in all volunteer activities. **If a volunteer does not comply with Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity safety procedures, they will not be allowed to perform the activity or may be asked to leave the site.** Volunteers are also to report any unsafe conditions to a Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity staff member right away! Any accidents, which result in injury – regardless of how insignificant –, must also be reported immediately and the resulting paperwork must be filed no later than 24 hours within the consequential accident. Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity will have at least one first aid kit located in various areas of the construction sites. Please ask a construction staff member for the exact location. For Build Groups, the safety captain will have the responsibility of locating the first aid kit and all exits. A safety manual is available online that we highly suggest safety captains familiarize themselves with.

Finally, each and every volunteer is required to read and sign the Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity Individual Waiver of Liability (for individual volunteers) or the Group Waiver of Liability (for groups). Copies of these forms can be found in our in this manual, in our office, on our website, and at our construction sites.

Equipment

For your safety, please do not pretend to know what you are doing. All volunteers at a Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity construction site must have approval and proper instruction from a member of the construction staff before using any type of power tool. Use of any large bobcats or forklifts is prohibited for all volunteers unless specifically approved. Use of the truck lift or any motor vehicles

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owned or rented by Habitat require separate paperwork and written permission from the ReStore Director.

Leaving the Site

Before you go home after what hopefully was a hard, but rewarding day helping make family's dreams come true, please make sure that you have not left anything behind. In the event that you realize late that you may have left something on the site, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know as soon as possible. We do not take any responsibility for lost, stolen, or items left behind.

Construction Staff

The Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity staff includes a Construction Director (Dirk Van Stralen), an Construction Manager (Mike King), and Assistant Volunteer Construction Supervisors. They can be identified onsite by their Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity shirts and/or nametags and are there to make your volunteering experience productive and rewarding. They are happy to address any concerns you may have.

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