



# Volunteer FAQs

## **Q. What will I do when I volunteer?**

Volunteers typically work in Great Plains Food Bank's Fargo warehouse, completing a variety of essential tasks, most of which involve inspecting, sorting, and packing food for distribution. Volunteers also pack assorted bags and boxes of food for special programming including the Backpack Program, Mobile Food Pantry, and Senior Food Pack Program.

These warehouse jobs are referred to as "repack" tasks and are open to both groups and individuals. We also have additional skilled volunteer opportunities like delivering backpack bags to schools or picking up donations from local donors. For a list of the current skilled volunteer opportunities available, please visit our website at [www.greatplainsfoodbank.org](http://www.greatplainsfoodbank.org).

## **Q. Can I bring a group?**

Yes, volunteering at Great Plains Food Bank has many team-building benefits. We welcome corporate teams, office groups, schools, service organizations, alumni groups, associations, families, fraternities and sororities, and religious organizations. The group leader must schedule the group's visit and will be the main contact for that group. The group leader must forward volunteer information and registration details to all members of the group before the visit.

## **Q. How many people can I bring with a group?**

Repack groups range in size from 5 to 25 people. We have one volunteer workspace within our warehouse, so we can only accommodate up to 25 people during one shift.

## **Q. When can I volunteer?**

We offer individual and family repack opportunities in our warehouse Monday-Thursday 9-11:30am & in the afternoon at various times from 1:30 - 5pm. These times are open for up to 10 individuals to fill each shift.

Group repack opportunities are scheduled as-needed during business hours (8am-5pm) Monday-Friday and after hours (5-8pm) Monday-Thursday as well as Saturdays (9am-3pm). In order to schedule after-hours volunteer opportunities, we require a guarantee of at least 10 volunteers in attendance that day. We suggest scheduling after-hours volunteer opportunities at least 6 weeks in advance in order to secure your ideal shift.

Other individual volunteer opportunities have a specified schedule according to the needs of the position. Those times are listed on each volunteer opportunity job description.

## **Q. How do I schedule my volunteer visit?**

All volunteer visits **MUST** be scheduled in advance. We suggest scheduling a group volunteer experience at least 6 weeks in advance in order to secure your ideal shift.

Groups of more than five (5) people who are volunteering for the first time must complete the group application and wait for a response from a representative at the Food Bank to schedule their group. Returning groups can schedule by emailing [volunteer@greatplainsfoodbank.org](mailto:volunteer@greatplainsfoodbank.org). After you schedule your volunteer visit, you will receive a confirmation email which will include more information about volunteering at Great Plains Food Bank.

Individuals and families who are registering for the first time must complete an *Individual Volunteer Application Form* (youth or adult) where you can create a login for our Volunteer Information Center. **You can then sign up for volunteer shifts directly from your online account. Individuals that are returning volunteers can log in directly to the Volunteer Information Center to sign up for opportunities.**

**Q. Do my group members need to register online since I already completed an application for the group?**

Not at this time. Your group contact is responsible for relaying all necessary information to the volunteers in your group. Please note that this requirement may change in the future.

**Q. Do you allow school groups to volunteer?**

Yes! Volunteering at Great Plains Food Bank is a great way to inform and engage youth about hunger in our communities. We offer all of our groups and individual volunteers a full tour of our facility on their first time volunteering with us. We do ask that for every four youth volunteers, we have one adult chaperone.

**Q. Do I need to train to become a volunteer?**

We offer a full tour of our facility to all new volunteers, although it is not required. Repack volunteer opportunities do not require prior training. Other individual volunteer opportunities will require some prior training which can be scheduled prior to starting your first shift.

**Q. Can children volunteer?**

The Great Plains Food Bank does not currently observe a minimum age limit for volunteers. We do require that an adult accompany any volunteer under the age of 16. For groups of youth, we ask that there be one adult per every four children.

While volunteering is a great way to teach children about service, it is important to assess a child's maturity levels and their ability to listen and follow directions before signing up. Our projects take place in an industrial warehouse with dangerous operating equipment, and safety is a major concern, particularly for young children. Please be aware of the safety precautions prior to signing up your children to volunteer.

**Q. Can I complete court appointed community service hours?**

At this time, the Great Plains Food Bank is not accepting volunteers with court-appointed community service hours. We apologize for the inconvenience.

**Q. What should I bring to my volunteer shift?**

Feel free to bring any nonperishable food items to donate with you to your volunteer shift. Please leave bags and purses at home or in your car - these items are not allowed inside the warehouse. Also, please keep personal and valuable items to a minimum (i.e. electronics, jewelry, etc.), as the Food Bank is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

**Q. What should I wear?**

The dress code for repack volunteers at the Great Plains Food Bank is casual and comfortable. Due to safety concerns, all volunteers must wear close-toed shoes (no sandals or flip flops) and clothes appropriate to work in a warehouse environment. It is also recommended to bring a sweatshirt during the winter months in case you get chilled. Please do not wear or bring anything that may be considered offensive. Volunteers may be required to follow another dress code for special event or administrative volunteer positions.

**Q. Where are you located?**

All repack and most individual volunteer opportunities take place in our Fargo warehouse located at 1720 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave N, Fargo, ND 58102. If your volunteer opportunity is taking place at another location, you will be fully informed prior to starting work.

**Q. Where should I park?**

Volunteer parking is available anywhere in the Great Plains Food Bank parking lot. We have ample space for parking, but we encourage group volunteers to carpool in order to reduce congestion.

**Where do I go and who will be my contact when I arrive at the food bank?**

The Volunteer Entrance is located on the east side of the building with the door labeled "Welcome Volunteers." All volunteers should enter through this door. Upon arrival, please take a seat on the benches provided and a staff member will assist you at the time of your scheduled shift.

**Who do I contact with questions?**

Please feel free to reach out to us with any further questions at [volunteer@greatplainsfoodbank.org](mailto:volunteer@greatplainsfoodbank.org).