



# Habitat for Humanity® of Marion County

## VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Habitat is a volunteer-driven organization. We depend heavily on a strong volunteer base to help with the construction of our homes. Simply put, Habitat would not exist without the help of volunteers.

Thank you so much for joining us!

## CONSTRUCTION SITE GUIDELINES

**SKILL REQUIREMENTS:** Habitat encourages a willingness to learn new skills and tasks. No specific skills are needed, and Site Supervisors are available on-site for instruction and on-the-job training.

**VOLUNTEER SCHEDULING:** If you are volunteering as an individual/group, please contact Habitat's Volunteer Manager at 352-351-4663. Or you can go online to [www.habitatocala.org](http://www.habitatocala.org) for more information.

**CLOTHING & ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE:** Clothes should be comfortable! Long sleeves and pants will protect your skin and body from minor scratches or cuts. Only close-toed shoes are allowed on a construction site. Sandals are not permitted, and all midriff areas must be covered. Water will be provided, and we encourage you to bring a snack or brown bag lunch in case you get hungry. Sunglasses, hats/caps, sunscreen, and bug spray are all encouraged for your comfort. Habitat will provide tools, equipment, hard hats, goggles, dust masks, and gloves should you need them.

**MINORS:** No one under the age of 16 can participate in the construction site of a Habitat home. Under 16 can participate during paint and landscaping days. Youths ages 16 and 17 may be on-site when power tools are in use. However, they are not allowed to operate power tools or engage in any hazardous activity. They can use hammers, screwdrivers, handsaws, caulk guns & staplers. Youth volunteers and a parent/legal guardian must sign Habitat's Release & Waiver of Liability form before volunteering. Only volunteers age 18 and older are permitted to operate motor vehicles and power tools, to climb ladders and scaffolding, to work on a roof or to engage in any other hazardous activities.

**WORK TIMES:** Workday begins at 8:00 am and usually continues until 12:30 pm

**ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE OF CONSTRUCTION SITE:** When you arrive, please introduce yourself and print your name on the daily Volunteer sign-in sheet. If this is your first visit, please make sure that you have completed and signed the Release & Waiver of Liability form. These waiver forms

must be signed once per year. When you leave, please tell the Site Supervisor when you will be volunteering again. If you are not sure, contact Habitat's Volunteer Manager at 352-351-4663.

## **CONSTRUCTION SAFETY TIPS**

**Safety is everyone's concern:** Try to be conscious of the safety of others as well as yourself. If you see a dangerous situation, speak up. If you are not sure how to proceed with a project, ask questions. Many of our volunteers have little construction experience, and we need to help each other. Never put yourself or others at risk. A first aid kit is in the tool trailer. In an emergency, call 911. Drink lots of water!

**Ask for whatever protective items you need:** a hard hat, safety goggles, dust mask, ear plugs, or gloves. When people are working above you, you must wear a hard hat.

**A word of caution from Habitat for Humanity International to senior volunteers:** Older volunteers should not work from heights, work alone, carry heavy loads, or perform other tasks that require a lot of upper body strength.

**Inspect hand tools:** Make sure they are free from dirt and oil, and sharp enough for the job. Check for loose handles. Find out the best way to use them. Carry sharp tools pointed downward.

**Use power tools carefully:** Find out how to use them safely with your construction supervisor. Check the tool, its cord, the extension cord, and the plug for any dirt or defects. **You must be 18 or older to use power tools on our job sites.**

**Be especially careful with power saws:** Power saws can bind and result in a severe kickback which can cause injury. Support what you are working on properly – never attempt to cut something that could tilt or fall and cause the saw to slip. A spring-actuated blade guard often can become bent and won't slide quickly, or the spring can become stretched, so the return is slow. Alert the site supervisor to any needed repairs. Never tie the blade guard back out of the way. Keep your fingers away from the blade! You must wear safety goggles or tempered eyeglasses when using the power saw or when assisting someone who is.

**Be careful with ladders:** Check for defective rungs and test the ladder to make sure it is secure at the top and bottom. In sandy soil use scrap lumber to stabilize the ladder. Put your tools in a tool belt to keep both hands free for climbing, and never leave your tools unattended on top of the ladder. Never lean both shoulders away from the ladder. Keep metal ladders away from electrical lines!

**Roofs are dangerous:** No one in poor health should go up on the roof. Move about very carefully. Don't let your hammer slide off the roof. Scrape sand off your shoes before you start up the ladder. Do not work on a wet roof.

**Clutter leads to accidents:** Help maintain a clean work area. Pick up nails and other sharp items. Please put tools away when you are not using them so that no one steps on them or trips over them. Always watch your step. Clean the job site when done for the day.

**Heavy lifting can injure your back:** Don't do it! Ask the site supervisor for help.

## **ABOUT HABITAT OCALA**

**MISSION STATEMENT:** Habitat for Humanity of Marion County Florida, Inc. is a Christian ministry dedicated to building simple, affordable housing for people living in sub-standard and over-crowded conditions beyond their control. Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities, and hope.

**OUR STRUCTURE & HISTORY:** We are a locally run non-profit organization that began in 1989. We are one of nearly 1,800 affiliates of Habitat for Humanity International. Our local affiliate built its first home in 1990. Since then we have built or renovated numerous homes in Marion County!

**OUR PARTNERING PHILOSOPHY:** To eliminate poverty housing we partner with low-income families, donors, and volunteers from all religions, races, and ethnic backgrounds. Each year we rely upon over 600 volunteers to build houses, to work in our ReStore thrift stores, to assist in our office, and to work on various supportive projects/events.

**OUR FUNDING:** We rely mostly on donations from individuals, businesses, churches, and community groups. We also receive a small amount of government funding, and funding from our various events. Because our administrative costs are paid from thrift store profits, every dollar donated to Habitat for Humanity of Marion County is used to build or renovate houses.

**OUR HOUSES:** Habitat houses are sold to low-income families, who will have an affordable mortgage. House costs are kept low by using locally contributed material and volunteer labor. Mortgages are for 20-30 years, and payments are used to finance future builds.

**OUR FAMILIES:** To qualify to become Habitat homeowners, visit [www.habitatocala.org](http://www.habitatocala.org) for more information.

**RELEASE AND WAIVER FORM:** All volunteers must sign a Release and Waiver of Liability form before any hours of volunteering.

**DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT:** HFH of Marion County is firmly committed to providing a work environment free from discrimination and harassment. Any actions or comments based on an individual's sex, sexual preference, race, ethnic background, age, religion, physical condition, or other legally protected characteristics are prohibited.

**SMOKING POLICY:** Smoking is prohibited at our admin. office and thrift stores except in designated smoking areas. At our construction sites, smoking is also prohibited.

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY:** Volunteers and staff must be free from the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances that diminish or impair their ability to perform the job.

## **VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

**When working at Habitat for Humanity, volunteers must agree to the following:**

1. Before signing in for work, you must inform the Site Supervisor of any physical limitations.
2. To receive credit for time worked, you must sign in when you arrive and sign out when you leave for the day.
3. No harassment, fighting, or inappropriate language is to be used.
4. The Site Supervisor will assign tasks and you are to report to the Supervisor when you have completed the task.
5. Only volunteers, family partners, or others who have been pre-approved can work on the work site or at any Habitat property or event.
6. **Smoking is not allowed at construction sites.**
7. Appropriate dress is required for everyone; all volunteers must wear the designated Habitat shirts. During Business Team Building days, the group can wear their work shirts. Habitat Shirts or Business Shirts (for groups only) must be worn at all times, closed-toed shoes are required, no tank tops, no halter tops, no bare midriffs, and no short shorts.
8. For safety and courtesy, please refrain from the use of cell phones, headphones, or handheld games while volunteering on a construction site.

**Habitat will not be responsible for children at any work site or any children unsupervised by an adult parent or guardian. Children under 16 years of age are not permitted on job site. Under 16 years of age, with permission can assist during the paint and landscaping days.**

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA, INC.**  
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