



home sweet home

*furnishing hope*

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

An in-depth look at the procedures, tasks, and  
roles that support a successful mission

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## WELCOME!

Welcome to Home Sweet Home! Whether you can commit to one day a week, once a month, or remote engagement, we want to hear from you! We are looking for those interested in sorting, organizing, shopping, designing, painting, carpentry, and more.

**We could not exist without our dedicated volunteers! Thank you for all the time, care, and energy you put into this mission.**

*Betsy*



## MISSION, VISION, VALUES

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**Mission:** The mission of Home Sweet Home is to give underserved families a sense of pride and to improve the quality of their lives by providing basic household furnishings.

**Vision:** Home Sweet Home uplifts our community and inspires hope by providing every person a bed to sleep in; turning houses into homes.

**Values:**

- Mission first.
- Everyone is respected and treated with dignity.
- We thrive on collaboration within the community.
- We are caring, compassionate, and kind.
- We are a leader among other furniture banks nationwide.



## **ABOUT US**

**Home Sweet Home operates in response to community need. Our partner agencies often work with unhoused citizens and continue to identify a need for home stability in St. Louis. Much of this begins with establishing a home stocked with necessary furnishings. We believe a brighter future begins with a comfortable home.**

**Therefore, Home Sweet Home collects donations of beds, couches, dressers, etc. as well as smaller items, such as kitchen and bath ware. We welcome clients into our warehouse to choose their own furnishings—providing dignity and pride in a retail-like experience. Then, our team of movers deliver these furnishings to the client's home the next business day.**

# A HOME SWEET HOME TIMELINE

**2015 APRIL:** After a decade working in non-profit organizations assisting women, children, and veterans, Betsy Reznicek realizes that many clients can find stable housing, but their homes remain empty. So, she creates a business plan that would launch Home Sweet Home and begin addressing this issue. By **August**, Betsy founds HSH by pulling together a committed group of volunteers and board of directors to serve multiple agencies throughout the St. Louis region.

**2015 OCTOBER:** HSH moves into a 3,300 square foot building on Locust Street after Betsy secures a \$5,000 start-up donation. It takes several months for Betsy to collect furniture and acquire a truck, but that doesn't stop her from helping individual clients.

**2015 NOVEMBER:** HSH works with the Kidney Foundation to outfit HSH's first client.

**2016 JULY:** HSH serves 71 families (200+ individuals served).

**2017 SEPTEMBER:** HSH almost doubles the number of veterans served over last year and more than doubles the number of beds provided. The organization almost triples the number of items distributed.

**2018 SEPTEMBER:** HSH relocates to a 10,000 square foot Brentwood warehouse which enables them to serve more families than ever before and increase their number of partner agencies.

**2019 MARCH:** HSH serves 1,000 families and distributes nearly 20,000 household items.

**2019 AUGUST:** HSH acquires its second truck and doubles its service capacity.

**2019 OCTOBER:** HSH continues to grow and provide services to more clients. Within the year, the donated furniture value increased 475%. 402 volunteers and 15 volunteer groups have given over 6,733 hours of their time.

**2020:** Corporations, individual donors, and foundation grants increase the budget from \$8,000 in 2015 to more than \$600,000 in 2020. However, the organization has to temporarily suspend services for 3 months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. HSH resumes services in June via an online shopping process for clients. HSH provides dignity to 1,262 individuals by the end of the year.

**2021 MAY:** HSH safely opens back up to clients and served over 900 families in 2021.

# ACCOUNTABILITY

**Our goal is to provide a welcoming experience for our clients, filled with choice and dignity. For this reason, we aim to create an inclusive and judgment-free space.**

**At Home Sweet Home, we commit to holding each other accountable in the face of racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, and all other forms of oppression. We ask our staff and volunteers to welcome courageous conversations as we work to unlearn our implicit biases.**

**Therefore, in moments of observed insensitivity, we will privately and kindly discuss the matter with the individual(s) who have expressed insensitivity, in hopes to facilitate growth from our mistakes. Additionally, we reserve to the right to cease one's volunteer engagement, depending on the severity of the event.**

**We appreciate your understanding as we strive to ensure a respectful environment at Home Sweet Home!**

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION

**Home Sweet Home is committed to creating and maintaining an environment characterized by constructive, productive, and supportive relationships.**

**In the event of a conflict between volunteers, or between volunteer and staff, we ask that each party communicate openly and respectfully with one another to reach a resolution. The presence of conflict, if dealt with effectively, offers an opportunity for individual and organizational growth. Therefore, Home Sweet Home holds the right to privately address interpersonal conflict with the select parties involved. We hope that a peaceful understanding can be found in all instances.**

**If a resolution cannot be reached in-person, or if the event(s) in question are considered too severe to continue in a way that feels supportive and comfortable for all, Home Sweet Home reserves the right to terminate the volunteer's engagement.**





# GUIDELINES


**We believe that Home Sweet Home offers a diverse host of opportunities for seeking involvement. We strive to be flexible with our volunteers' needs while also maintaining clear guidelines.**

## General Guidelines

- 1** **Treat fellow volunteers, staff, and clients with respect and kindness.**
- 2** **No matter the task, use our work to create an experience of dignity and empowerment with our clients.**
- 3** **Remain flexible and understanding.**
- 4** **Be prepared to help in whatever ways are most needed.**



# GUIDELINES WITH FAMILIES

- 1** Home Sweet Home operates without any religious affiliation, therefore that we kindly ask that volunteers do not initiate religious dialogue with our clients
  - 2** We work hard to be mindful of our unconscious biases and the ways that our thoughts can influence our behavior.
  - 3** While it may be difficult at times, please never share your personal information (such as phone number, address, etc.) with a client. Additionally, please never accept that information from our clients.
  - 4** Please never offer or offsite assistance to our clients. We are so glad to offer our services, but please know they begin and end in the warehouse.
- 

# Youth Volunteer Policy

Home Sweet Home is very grateful to people of various ages who generously give of their time and talents to volunteer which makes our mission possible.

For volunteers who are minors (under the age of 18) we have some additional requirements along with the policies laid out in our Volunteer Handbook.

Youth under 18 years of age interested in volunteering at Home Sweet Home must register online through our volunteer software.

They will be prompted to select a box at the bottom of the registration indicating that they are under the age of 18.

This will generate a permission form sent to their parents or indicated guardian. The parent or guardian must agree to the terms in the permission form before the youth is allowed to sign in as a volunteer for their shift.

Youth unaccompanied by a parent or guardian must provide a consent to treat form. This gives either the chaperone or staff at Home Sweet Home permission to seek medical treatment in case of an emergency.

Youth under the age of 16 cannot come to the warehouse unaccompanied. They must have either a parent, guardian, or chaperone present. If it is a group of youth volunteering, we require at least two chaperones.

Youth between the ages of 16 and 18 may come on their own to volunteer at the warehouse once they have registered in the system, their parent or guardian approved the waiver, and they have provided a consent to treat form.

# Information Privacy Policy

The personal information you provide related to the Home Sweet Homewill not be shared outside of Home Sweet Home without your permission.

We are committed to protecting the security of your personal information. Our platforms use a variety of security technologies and procedures to help protect personal information from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure.

We do not disclose your private, online communications.

**Email, Phone Calls, Mail, and SMS marketing:**

From time to time, we may contact you by email, phone, mail or SMS with information about events, products, and services we believe you may be interested in.

We will only send marketing messages to you in accordance with the marketing preferences you set. You can then let us know at any time that you do not wish to receive marketing messages by sending an email to [volunteer@homesweethomestl.org](mailto:volunteer@homesweethomestl.org) [You can also unsubscribe from our marketing by clicking on the unsubscribe link in the marketing messages we send to you.]

For a more in-depth review of our Privacy Policy, go to:  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1K67b6G9-B9mR\\_cdmg\\_-Fcg0v3k1YDKl1z-8mulLzwSw/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1K67b6G9-B9mR_cdmg_-Fcg0v3k1YDKl1z-8mulLzwSw/edit?usp=sharing).

# Volunteer Roles

## Shopper Assistant

While many people work to bring our mission to life, the Shopper Assistants are the ones that interact the most with families. They are heart of our mission providing a warm 'shopping' experience. They lead families through the process of selecting items for their home.

Shopper Assistants also fill out a sheet to track all the items that were selected. They finish the task when they pack up smaller items to be staged and delivered.

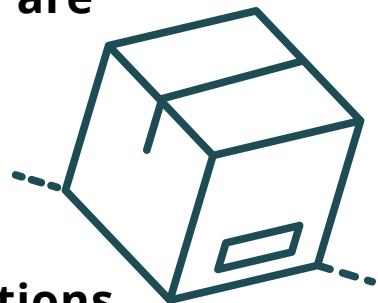
Each Shopper Assistant has experience volunteering at Home Sweet Home. There is a 2 hour training that includes recognizing our biases. After completing the training, they shadow a certified Shopper Assistant 3 times. They then do a practice run as the lead Shopper Assistant and are shadowed by the Volunteer Coordinator or an experienced Shopper Assistant.



# Volunteer Roles Continued

## Warehouse Volunteer

It is a simple idea; accept donations and then redistribute donations. The logistics, however, are overwhelming. Our incredibly dedicated and ingenious volunteers make this possible.



Warehouse Volunteers process incoming donations. They clean them when necessary. They know how to create kits, sort linens, and restock according to the systems in place. We are always open to new ideas and suggestions.

The position is in the warehouse and does require some physical activity. There is a Warehouse Coordinator, movers, and other staff to assist with larger and heavier items. There is not a requirement to lift over 30 pounds.

## Administrative Volunteer

Administrative Volunteers help us cover office tasks, especially mailers. They address and stuff envelopes. They help with sorting and organizing. They make our outreach programs possible.



# EXPECTATIONS



## TIME EXPECTATIONS

- **AM shifts** run from **9am-Noon**. If you are a shopper assistant, please arrive a few minutes before 9am, to ensure you are ready for the 1st shopper of the day.
- **PM shifts** run from **Noon-3pm**. Our first client of the afternoon will usually arrive at 12:30pm.

## CANCELLATIONS

- If you are unable to make a shift, please email the volunteer coordinator at [volunteer@homesweethomestl.org](mailto:volunteer@homesweethomestl.org) or call 314.448.9838 ext. 106.

## INJURIES

- If you are injured while at Home Sweet Home (be it a minor or major injury) please let a staff member know immediately.

## DRESS CODE

- Wear **closed-toed shoes** to protect your feet.
- You will be provided a **name tag**. Please wear it while on shift.
- Wear **comfortable clothes**, as the warehouse is not climate controlled and will be hot in the summer and cold in the winter.
- It is suggested that you wear a Home Sweet Home shirt, which can be purchased in our front office.
- Bring water to remain hydrated.



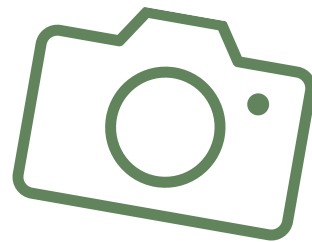
# POLICIES

## MEDIA RELATIONS

- No volunteer is permitted to speak on behalf of Home Sweet Home for any news outlet or greater media representation. For any public statements and/or commentary, please refer to the executive director or development and marketing director.

## PHOTOGRAPH RELEASE

- Any volunteer, 18 years or older, grants HSH all right, title, and interest in all photographs, images, video, or audio recordings of the Volunteer or the Volunteer's voice made by HSH, in connection with providing volunteer services to HSH.



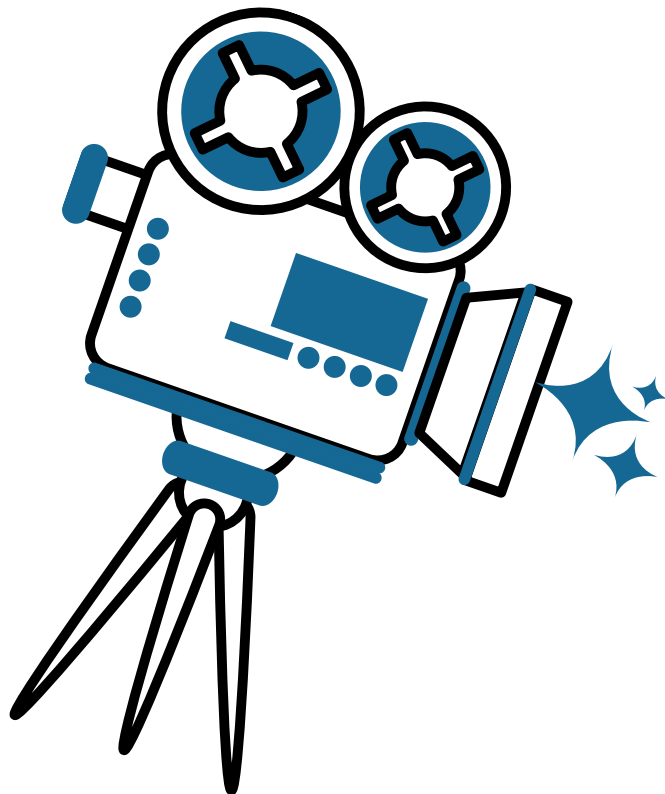


# POLICIES CONTINUED

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Our clients and other parties with whom we do business entrust the company with important information relating to their businesses. It is our policy that all information considered confidential will not be disclosed to external parties or to employees without a “need to know.” If an employee questions whether certain information is considered confidential, he/she should first check with his/her immediate supervisor.

This policy is intended to alert employees to the need for discretion at all times and is not intended to inhibit normal business communications.

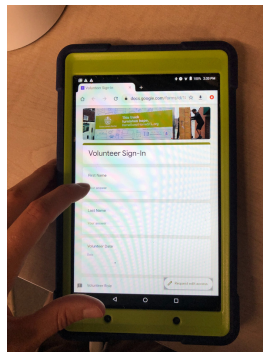
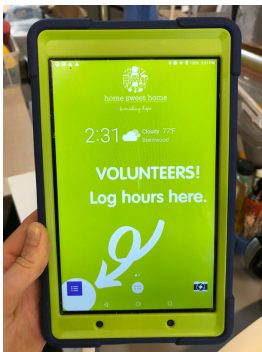


# PROCEDURES

## Arrival:

- Sign in on the tablet (located near the electronics testing station), at the Volunteer Station laptop (located in the front office), or anywhere using the permanent Google Form link provided by the Volunteer Coordinator.
- Grab your nametag, if you are not already wearing it.
- Place any personal items you'd like in our blue and green lockers, located to the right of the sign-in laptop.
- Check to see if you are scheduled to be a Shopper Assistant during your shift. All information should be posted on the whiteboard located in the warehouse, next to the door leading to the front office.
- If you are unsure about which tasks to prioritize, ask the Volunteer Coordinator how you may help. There's always something to be done!

## Sign-in options:



# PROCEDURES CONTINUED

## Shift huddle:

- The Volunteer Coordinator will host a brief, daily meeting to discuss any news for the AM or PM shifts.

We may:

- Outline any priorities for the day
- Identify any changes in warehouse or shopping processes
- Share tips or news about HSH or the community

## Check to see if the following tasks can be done:

- Restock all items around and away from clients as they shop
- Organize any small items on the warehouse floor that are out of place
- Place any incoming donations from the last shift onto the sorting table/begin sorting donations

**If all tasks are complete, feel free to choose a warehouse task to complete (see Table of Contents).**



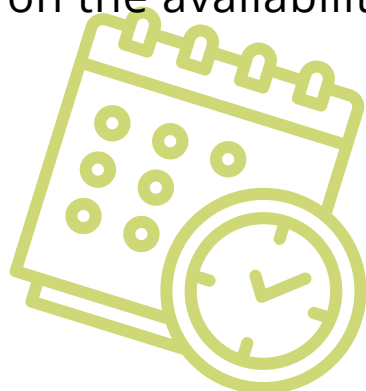
# PROCEDURES CONTINUED

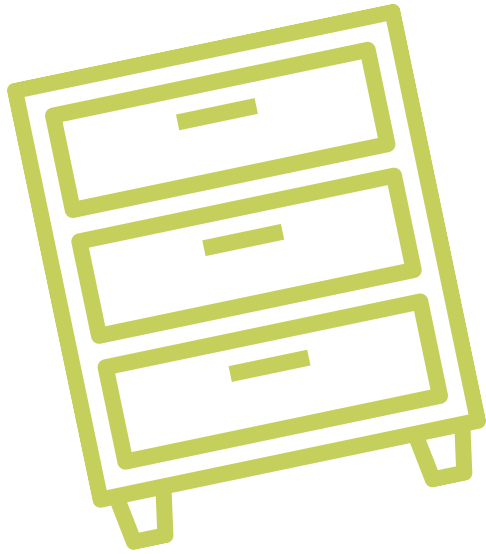
## Sign Out:

- After a shift is complete, please be sure to tidy up the work stations you used.
- If you must leave midway through a project, please leave any necessary notes for the volunteer after you, or inform the Volunteer Coordinator of the status of your project.
- Don't forget to grab your belongings before you leave!

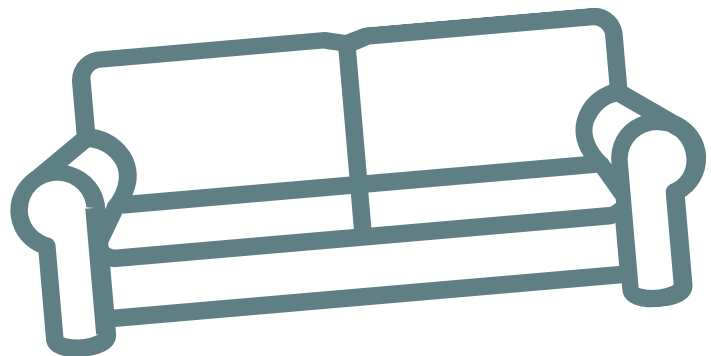
## Scheduling:

- Currently, the Volunteer Coordinator schedules all volunteers.
- Monthly Warehouse Calendars are emailed out in the last week of each month. These are easily accessed using Google Docs and also posted on BAND, the social media platform used by all volunteers.
- Prior to scheduling, the Volunteer Coordinator will send out a Volunteer Preference online form via Google Forms. The next month's schedule will be compiled based on the availability of all volunteers.





# WAREHOUSE TASK INSTRUCTIONS



# PROCESSING DONATIONS



**Most donation drop-offs are not scheduled. Generally, a warehouse attendant will be present to accept or decline drop-offs at our loading docks. However, if you facilitate the drop-off interaction, please consult a staff member for approval of any furniture items. If it is clear we cannot take an item, let the donor know **WE DO NOT TAKE IT**, and please refer them to **St. Vincent DePaul or Habitat for Humanity as an option**.**

- For small items, please help donor unload vehicle.
- Thank the donor and ask for their information (name, address, email, etc.) while filling out our Donor Info sheet. Then, offer them a tax letter (between Dock D and E).
- Once donations are processed, items should be placed on the showroom floor (but not to disturb a client's shopping process). If the floor is stocked, please place in appropriate warehouse back stock area.
- As donations are unpacked, put sturdy packing boxes (do not break them down) in the packing station area. Put any bubble wrap in the labeled area under the packing station tables. **RECYCLE TORN NEWSPAPERS AND TORN PACKING PAPER** in Paper Recycling bin under sorting station. Break down any unusable boxes and put in Cardboard Recycling bin. Someone will take them to recycling.

# PROCESSING DONATIONS: A QUICK GUIDE

**Our goal is to provide a shopping experience for our clients filled with choice and dignity. If your items don't meet the standard for you to use in your home, then the item is not good enough for our clients.**

Items need to be free of **stains, tears, rips, holes**, and **must be functional**. If an item meets our requirement, **be sure that it is cleaned properly** before being placed on the warehouse floor or in back stock.

**SORTING:** Our clients come first. If something is valuable or really nice, this does not mean we need to reserve that to be sold to a third party. If it is useful and practical for clients, we want to keep the item for them. Any items that are not accepted or do not meet our standards will be boxed-up and forwarded to other organizations, such as **St. Vincent DePaul** or **Salvation Army**

**\*FABRIC BIN:** HSH recycles fabric with **Remains**. All forwarded fabric must only include:

- Drapery without hooks
- Ripped or stained linens and towels
- Any fabric/material a square yard or larger
- Please note, NO small fabric carpets, cushions, pillows or rugs

**\*METAL RECYCLING:** Mr. Jones stops by to pick up scrap metal. Put all scrap metal in the appropriate bin. Put larger metal items on the wall by Dock A.

**\*MIRIAM SWITCHING POST:** We have a friendly neighbor relationship. We forward appropriate items to them and they donate to us occasionally. If you are unfamiliar with what they sell or their mission, please browse through their store. Generally, they accept higher-end items.



# RECYCLING



## **CARDBOARD:**

Our moving crew takes cardboard recycling to the Kirkwood Recycling Center weekly. Please place any cardboard scraps in the black bin, located near the electronics testing station. Please recycle any alcohol-related boxes, as we do not use those within the warehouse.

## **PAPER:**

As an organization, Home Sweet Home does not recycle paper. However, we do collect paper recycling for any volunteers interested in taking it home periodically to be recycled. That bin is located underneath the donation sorting table.

**PLASTIC:** Additionally, Home Sweet Home does not regularly recycle plastic. However, we maintain a collection bin underneath the donation sorting table. Volunteers are welcome to take the contents home for recycling. Currently, the city of Brentwood recycles #1 and #2 plastics. Plastic bags can be taken to the local Schnucks.

## **ELECTRONICS:**

Home Sweet Home does not currently recycle electronics as an organization. However, we keep an electronics recycling bin, stored underneath the electronics testing station. MRC hosts regular Saturday recycling events, which many volunteers choose to attend. More information on those can be found at:

<https://mrcrecycling.net/electronics-recycling-events>

## **METAL:**

Mr. Jones arrives at Home Sweet Home daily to take our scrap metal. Please place any scrap metal in the designated bin located near our Forwarding Donations bins.

## **STERLING SILVER:**

We may be able to sell sterling silver to a local jewelry store, so if spotted, please bring to the Volunteer Coordinator to keep until we take it there. To identify what is sterling and what is not, look for the following markers: "Ster", "925", "Sterling Silver", or a lion symbol.



# APPLIANCES & ELECTRONICS

**All appliances are to be tested and cleaned (inside and out) before placing out on the shelves or in the back stock area.**

## TESTING:

**All lamps**—place on electronics table, screw in new lightbulb (found underneath tabletop). If working, wrap electrical cord close to base, bind with a **rubber band**, and set beside lamp. Then, place a small piece of **blue painters tape** on the cord to signify that it is working. Finally, place in lamp shelves in lamp back stock area.

**Note:** If no lampshade, check our back stock for a good match.

**All electronics-** follow the same basic steps of testing all electronics.



## REMINDERS:

- Label all unique electronics, so that clients can easily choose what they would like. (i.e. clock radio, Wi-Fi extender, etc.)
- Place any broken electronics into electronic recycling bin.
- Save any metal for Mr. Jones in the metal bin, located near the forwarding donations bin, on the west side of the volunteer racks.

# HOME DECOR & RUGS

We can be somewhat selective regarding décor items, as we often receive these donations and understand that some pieces are too niche to include on the warehouse floor. Therefore, please be comfortable with forwarding on items to other organizations!



## REMINDERS:

- We do not accept any items that feature alcohol-related imagery or text.
- Use your discretion to determine what is appropriate for our clients. **If chosen to keep**, place items on the back stock décor shelves, or place on the warehouse floor.
- **PLEASE KEEP FROM OVERCLUTTERING DECOR AREA.** Our goal is to display a variety of items, **representative of multiple cultures**, while **not displaying everything we have**.
- For rugs, vacuum large or small rugs as needed.
- Place all small rugs in the boxed shelving and all larger area rugs to the right of them.
- Roll up rug (**with pattern facing outside**) and tape dimension sheet to rug.

# KITCHEN SUPPLIES

Kitchen supplies seem to always be in demand, therefore it is important that we try to save and use what we can.



## UTENSIL KITS:

We offer premade "Utensil Kits" in blue bins, with a checklist of the contents. When preparing a Utensil Kit, it is important to remember the following:

- Grab a new checklist and stick it to the white, laminated piece on the bin.
- Fill the kit from the warehouse floor, NOT from the back stock.
- Please do not "cross-off" any items that were not originally available for the Utensil Kit-- simply leave them blank, so that they can be added if we receive more of that particular item.
- When stocking, fill the Utensil Kits first, and then the individual baskets below.
- When a Utensil Kit is selected by the shopper and then packed, **BE SURE TO RETURN THE BIN BACK TO THE KITCHEN STATION.**

# KITCHEN SUPPLIES CONTINUED

## SILVERWARE:

- Silverware is located towards the back wall of the back stock area, near the home décor back stock.
- Before placing loose silverware in the bin, please put any existing incoming sets in a Ziploc bag to be sorted and organized into full silverware sets.

Each silverware set should include **4** or **6** of the following:

- Knives
- Forks
- Salad Forks
- Teaspoons & Tablespoons
- Serving Spoons

If you have extra sets of 2,3,4, 5, or 6, wrap with masking tape and label with number of items.

## DISH CLOTHS:

- As we accumulate dish cloths in the back stock area, pair two dish towels and two pot holders together, wrap them in a bundle with a rubber band, and place in labeled bin on the warehouse floor, if there is space. Otherwise, place in back stock area.

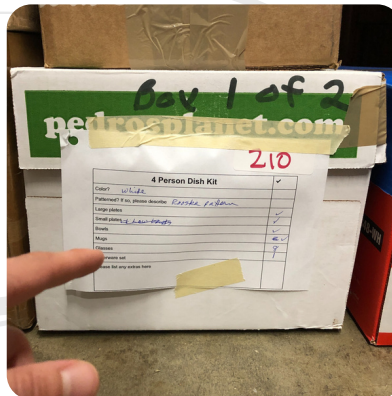


## REMINDERS:

- Be sure to clean any kitchen supplies that need it before they hit the back stock area or the warehouse floor.
- Please let the Volunteer Coordinator know if you notice a shortage of certain utensils, as we can arrange Social Media callouts for specific donations in that area!

# DISH KITS

- A complete Dish Kit includes large plates, small plates, bowls, mugs, drinking glasses, juice glasses, and silverware.
- Select a set of dishes to pack. We pack sets of **four** and **six**. We prefer that everything matches but sometimes there is a piece missing. Check the overstock for something that is similar in shape/size/color to complete the set. If there is nothing close, put the dishes in Forwarding Donations.
- If you find a set that has **five or six plates** but **four of everything else**, make a **set of four and include the extra plates**. We do not need random plates, bowls, etc. if they can be included in a set. Do not list the extra plates in the "extras" box at the bottom.
- If you find **servicing bowls, platters, etc.** that are included in the set you are working with, put them in the kitchen area or on the appropriately labeled shelves in the kitchen donation area.
- Place a numbered label on the bottom of one dinner plate. In the upper right corner, write the number of place settings (4 or 6). Put the plate in one of the black crates on the floor of the overstock area, NOT on the shelf under the glasses.



# DISH KITS CONTINUED

To complete the inventory form:

- place a label with the number that you put on the dinner plate in the upper right hand corner of the inventory form.
- note overall color of set. If there is a pattern briefly describe it and note where the pattern is, i.e. blue floral edging
- place a check mark in the right hand column to show that you have include everything
- juice glasses are the only items that it is acceptable to leave out, but even a mismatched set is better than none
- If everything fits in one box, tape the inventory form to one end of the box. Do not mark the box "Box 1 of 1." Throw away the extra number.
- If you use multiple boxes, tape the inventory form to the end of the first box and label the box with a marker "box 1 of 2" and the other "box 2 of 2". Remember to put a numbered label on the second box.
- Place boxed sets on the floor in the overstock area.



# Deeper Dive Into Dishkits!

A lot goes into making the Dish Kits. If you ever have any questions:

- 1** Find someone that knows the area well. Its best to have someone show you the ropes at least once before diving in.
- 2** There are lots of materials around the dishkit area to read and review.
- 3** You can check out this video of Cary going through the whole process.

## Video of Cary Making A Set!



# LINENS

**As you sort through fabric, please place any stained or ripped fabric in the fabric recycling bin, located next to the pillow pin in the northeast corner of the warehouse. Please see the guidelines taped to the fabric recycling bin. (For example, fabric must be at least a yard (36") in size, with no zippers attached).**

## **BEDDING:**

- Any **sheets**, no matter what size, are to be bagged for pickup by Ronna and Suzanne, who take them home to organize into complete bundles. Either place in preexisting bag that says "Ronna", or create one. (Shoutout to those two!)
- For **comforters**, please see size chart (which hangs above linen station) to determine as a twin, full, queen, etc. If clean, please roll and wrap with appropriate colored yarn (size/color guide also hanging at linen station) **OR** place in reused plastic, zippered bag and label with appropriate size.
- When placing **comforters and blankets** on the warehouse floor, please place at the **highest** point of the shelf, to differentiate/organize away from the blankets and linens.
- Please follow the same steps for **blankets**. If the item is a throw blanket, please roll and wrap with **purple yarn** and place on appropriate shelves in the warehouse.





# LINENS CONTINUED

## TOWELS:

- Check every towel to make sure that there is no mold, mildew, stains, etc. If not up to our standard, but in usable condition, please forward to Humane Society (there's a bin located beneath the folding table at the linens station). If clean, please fold and place on shelves at north side of the linen station.



## TABLECLOTHS & PLACEMATS:

- If clean, please measure length and width of any tablecloths, fold, and tape with appropriate size marking (ex: 52" x 70"). Please hang on display past the kitchen table on the warehouse floor. Please tape placemat sets together. Forward-on any that aren't in sets.

## DRAPERY & CURTAINS:

- Much like tablecloths, please measure length and width of any clean curtains, and fold with appropriate size marking.

## BED PILLOWS:

- **WE ONLY ACCEPT BRAND-NEW BED PILLOWS.** All other bed pillows that are in good condition should be bagged and forwarded to **Gateway 180** (these bags are then stored in the office closet next to Asher's office).
- Please place any clean décor pillows in the black bin, located next to fabric recycling.
- If we receive décor pillow inserts, Sharee has covers for them, so place in décor pillow insert pen, underneath linen station by towels.

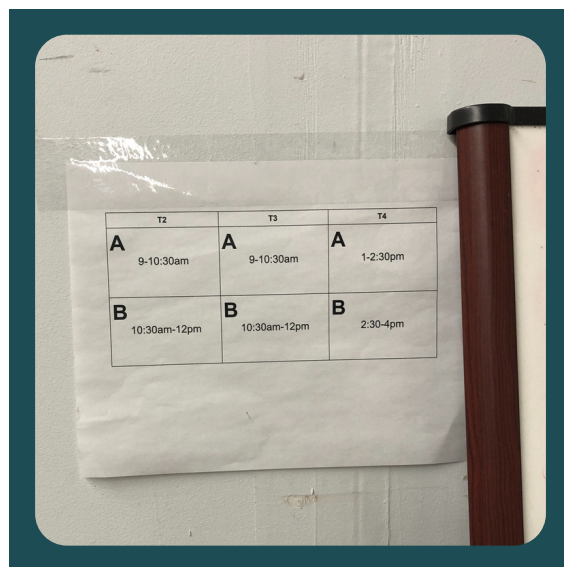
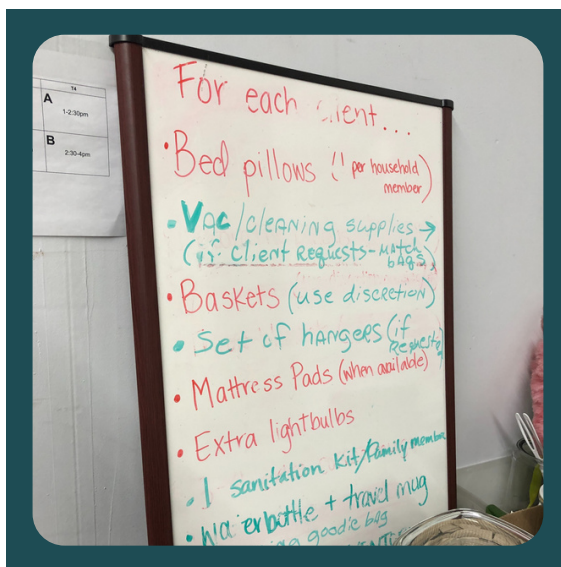
**NOTE: Always measure any usable linens, as they may not always match the twin, full, queen, etc. containers or labels that they came in.**

**TIP: If 100% cotton fabric is donated, but does not quite meet our standards, feel free to place in Potholder Fabric bin, located underneath the folding table at linens station. Many volunteers like to create potholders out of these!**

# PACKING STATION

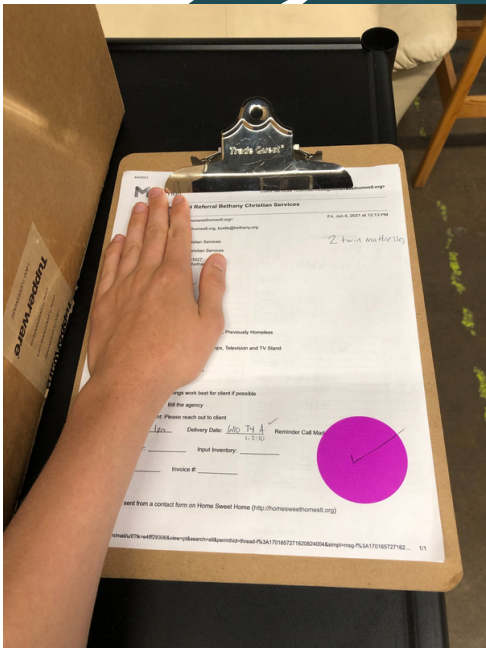
**NOTE: The movers prefer fewer, heavier, boxes over lots of lighter boxes, but please don't make them too heavy. Additionally, please refer to the packing station whiteboard when packing.**

- Prioritize packing. When a client shops, their furniture will be delivered to them the next business day, in the same timeframe that they shopped (AM or PM). Therefore, **packing may be time-sensitive**. Always check the referral sheet, attached to the clipboard for the delivery timeframe, if you are unsure. Also, see the delivery schedule on the packing station wall.
- As one packs, our main goal is to **ensure all items are accounted for**. This means that:
  1. All items on the cart are boxed/bagged for delivery.
  2. All "add-in" items, such as bed pillows, are included (see whiteboard).
  3. Any items that may have been left on the floor during shopping are brought to the packing station and packed (i.e. lamps, appliances).



# PACKING STATION CONTINUED

- Try to protect fragile items, such as lamp shades and light bulbs (which should go in a box, if possible).
- If you can, please try to be conscious of the amount of tape and extra packing materials you're using. Unfortunately, we don't always have a continuous flow of packing resources. Therefore, it helps to get creative!
- Be sure to pack 1 bed pillow per family member, even if those family members are infants -- they'll grow into the pillows!
- When finalizing the packing process, put a "checkmark" over the sticker on the referral sheet. This will signify that packing is complete. Then, bring the cart to the staged furniture with the corresponding sticker.



# SHOPPER ASSISTANT

The Shopper Assistant role requires delicacy and practice. We want to ensure that the shopping experience is all about the client and their choices.

## HOW-TO:

- The Shopper Assistant helps guide the client through our warehouse while following behind with a **cart, stickers, Shopper Limit Guide**, and the **referral sheet** (which acts as a notepad and holds information regarding the client's home and household size).
- Sticker each large item that is chosen and load up the smaller items onto the cart.
- Write down any items that are being left on the warehouse floor (and cannot be placed on the cart). Additionally, write down any notes (for ex: the client would like an additional dresser if possible- the green, small one). This way we can take time to determine if we can fulfill their wishes or not.
- Remember, we try to **under-promise and over-deliver!**
- Make sure to **follow the flow** of the warehouse, so you won't accidentally forget to offer certain items.
- Keep shopping appointments at 40 minutes maximum.
- After the appointment is over, please walk the client out to the front door and express our gratitude for their visit!



## PREPARATION:

- Only volunteers who have completed **8 shifts** (24 hours total) of warehouse volunteer time will be eligible to register for a **Shopper Assistant Training**.
- All volunteers interested in the SA role must complete a 2-hour Shopper Assistant Training, typically available twice a month.
- Once completed, the volunteer is **required to shadow 3 shopping appointments** and be **shadowed for 1 appointment**.
- Then, the Volunteer Coordinator will discuss readiness with the trainee.

# GENERAL NOTES



**Home Sweet Home truly could not exist without the continued love, dedication, and support of our volunteers. Thank you for your interest in becoming a part of our mission to furnish hope!**

- If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator in-person, at [volunteer@homesweethomestl.org](mailto:volunteer@homesweethomestl.org), or at (314) 448-9838 Ext. 106.
- We love hosting volunteer drives and events! If you or someone you know may be interested in volunteering with Home Sweet Home, please pass along the information above, or speak to the Volunteer Coordinator about your ideas.



# COPY OF WAIVER & LIABILITY FORM

This Release and Waiver of Liability (the "Release") releases Home Sweet Home, ("Nonprofit"), a nonprofit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Missouri and each of its directors, officers, employees, other volunteers, affiliates and agents. The Volunteer desires to provide volunteer services for Nonprofit and engage in activities related to serving as a volunteer.

Volunteer understands that the scope of Volunteer's relationship with Nonprofit is limited to a volunteer position and that no compensation is expected in return for services provided by Volunteer; the Nonprofit will not provide any benefits traditionally associated with employment to Volunteer; and that Volunteer is responsible for his/her own insurance coverage in the event of personal injury or illness as a result of Volunteer's services to Nonprofit.

- 1. Acknowledgement of Risk or Possibility of Injury:** As a Volunteer with Nonprofit, I recognize the risk and acknowledge that there are certain risks of physical injury - including death, damages, property damage or loss - which I may sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with Nonprofit, or the use of Nonprofit's facilities or equipment.
- 2. Waiver and Release:** I, the Volunteer, release and forever discharge and hold harmless Nonprofit and its successors and assigns from any and all liability, claims and demands of whatever kind of nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise from the services I provide to Nonprofit. I understand and acknowledge that this Release discharges Nonprofit from any liability or claim that I may have against Nonprofit with respect to bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from the services I provide to Nonprofit or occurring while I am providing volunteer services.
- 3. Medical Treatment:** I hereby Release and forever discharge Nonprofit from any claim whatsoever which arises or may hereafter arise on account of any first-aid treatment or other medical services rendered in connection with an emergency during my tenure as a volunteer with Nonprofit.
- 4. Assumption of Risk:** I understand that the services I provide to Nonprofit may include activities that may be hazardous to me including, but not limited to, death, damages, property damage or loss involving inherently dangerous activities. As a volunteer, I hereby expressly assume risk of injury or harm from these activities and Release Nonprofit from all liability.
- 5. Photographic Release:** I grant and convey to Nonprofit all right, title and interests in any and all photographs, images, video or audio recordings of me or my likeness or voice made by Nonprofit in connection with my providing volunteer services to Nonprofit.
- 6. Other:** As a volunteer, I expressly agree that this Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Missouri and that this Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Missouri. I agree that in the event that any clause or provision of this Release is deemed invalid, the enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Release shall not be affected.

I acknowledge (a) that I have read (or have had read to me) provisions in this waiver and release of liability agreement, (b) that I understand each of the provisions in this agreement, (c) that I agree to abide by them and (d) and voluntarily sign my name evidencing my acceptance of the above provisions.

# COPY OF HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

**I have been made aware of the Volunteer Handbook and where to access and review it.**

I understand the volunteer handbook describes important information about Home Sweet Home, and I understand that I should consult the Volunteer Coordinator regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my volunteer relationship with Home Sweet Home voluntarily. Accordingly, either I or Home Sweet Home can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is not a violation of applicable federal or state law.

I understand that the volunteer handbook can be found at any time on the website ([HomeSweetHomeSTL.org/volunteer](http://HomeSweetHomeSTL.org/volunteer)), printed at the volunteer clock-in station, or with the volunteer coordinator. Additionally, if I request a copy, one will be provided to me.

I understand that any and all policies and practices may be changed at any time by Home Sweet Home. All such changes will be communicated, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract nor a legal document.

The handbook has been made readily available to me, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained therein and any revisions made to it.



## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act, known as the ADAAA, are federal laws that prohibit employers with 15 or more employees from discriminating against applicants and individuals with disabilities and that when needed provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who are qualified for a job, with or without reasonable accommodations, so that they may perform the essential job duties of the position.

It is the policy of Home Sweet Home to comply with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities and to act in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Furthermore, it is our company policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

The company will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation and/or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to Home Sweet Home. Contact the Executive Director with any questions or requests for accommodation.





## Smoke Free Workplace

It is the policy of Home Sweet Home to prohibit smoking on all company premises in order to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. The law defines smoking as the "act of lighting, smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette or pipe of any kind."

The smoke-free workplace policy applies to:

- All areas of company buildings
- All company-sponsored off-site conferences and meetings.
- All vehicles owned or leased by the company
- All visitors (customers and vendors) to the company premises.
- All contractors and consultants and/or their employees working on the company premises.
- All employees, temporary employees and student interns.

Smoking is permitted in the back parking lot or spots AWAY FROM THE TRUCK. Staff and volunteers are not permitted to smoke while parked at a donor or client's home.

Employees and volunteers who violate the smoking policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge.



## **Diversity and Volunteer Opportunity Statement**

Home Sweet Home provides equal volunteer opportunities to all people and volunteer applicants without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.

Home Sweet Home complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in every location in which the company has facilities. Home Sweet Home expressly prohibits any form of harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, genetic information, disability or veteran status. Improper interference with the ability of Home Sweet Home volunteers to perform their expected job duties is absolutely not tolerated.

### **Drug-Free Workplace**

Home Sweet Home has a longstanding commitment to provide a safe and productive work environment. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of volunteers and employees and to the security of our equipment and facilities. For these reasons, Home Sweet Home is committed to the elimination of drug and/or alcohol use and abuse in the workplace.

This policy outlines the practice and procedure designed to correct instances of identified alcohol and/or drug use in the workplace. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and all applicants for employment of Home Sweet Home. The Human Resource department is responsible for policy administration.



## **Drug-Free Workplace Continued**

Volunteers should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit volunteers from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Volunteers must, however, consult with their doctors about the medications' effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely and promptly disclose any work restrictions to the Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers should not, however, disclose underlying medical conditions unless directed to do so.

Information and records relating to positive test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and legitimate medical explanations provided to the medical review officer (MRO) shall be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from normal personnel files.

Home Sweet Home reserves the right to inspect all portions of its premises for drugs, alcohol, or other contraband. All volunteers and visitors may be asked to cooperate in inspections of their persons, work areas, and property that might conceal a drug, alcohol, or other contraband.

Home Sweet Home prohibits all volunteers from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, or using an illegal drug in or on company premises or while conducting company business. Volunteers are also prohibited from misusing legally prescribed or over-the-counter (OTC) drugs. Law enforcement personnel shall be notified, as appropriate, when criminal activity is suspected.



## Home Sweet Home Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.



## Home Sweet Home Anit-Sexual Harassment Policy Continued

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law or that of his/her relatives, friends or associates, and that a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities. Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on company time or using company equipment via e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, tweets, blogs, social networking sites or other means.

**Individuals and Conduct Covered** These policies apply to all applicants and employees, whether related to conduct engaged in by fellow employees or someone not directly connected to Home Sweet Home (e.g., a board member, consultant or partner agency). Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings and business-related social events.