



# Volunteer Handbook

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Welcome to the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank,

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank, we are thrilled to have you join our team. Volunteers are very important the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank and the people to whom we provide food. By volunteering just a few hours, you can help feed people who are going hungry in Northwest Arkansas. Whether you provide administrative support or sort food in our warehouse, your help is needed and always appreciated.

Please read through the enclosed material and fill out and sign the Volunteer Profile, Agreement, & Authorization to Release Information forms at the end of the manual. You will need to bring these forms with you the first time you volunteer.

We know you will find your place among our family of staff and volunteers, and we are grateful for your participation in our services, projects, and events. Northwest Arkansas Food Bank is able to provide quality services due to the support of volunteers. Thank you for “nourishing Northwest Arkansas communities by feeding hungry people.”

### **If you are an Individual Volunteer**

Please read and sign the last page of this handbook. You will need to sign the final page of this document and bring that page with you on your first day of service.

### **If you are a Group Leader**

Please read and sign the final page of the Handbook for your group. You are responsible for these documents and the distribution of this information to your group.

# Who We Are

The Northwest Arkansas Food Bank was founded in 1988 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to serve four Northwest Arkansas counties by providing an affordable and credible food source to our partner agencies serving the hungry.

## Our Mission & Vision

Our Mission is to nourish Northwest Arkansas communities by feeding hungry people.

Our Vision is to be the leader in hunger relief by building partnerships with other hunger relief organizations.

## Our History

- ❖ In 1988 June Self was approached by Green Thumb, a Federal program to place senior citizens into nonprofit organizations.
- ❖ From 1988-1989 June Self researched how to start, operate, and fund a food bank.
- ❖ In 1989 June Self opened the first Ozark Food Bank on Township Road in Rogers, AR.
- ❖ Within three years the Ozark Food Bank outgrew the Township location and moved to a two-story building on Second Street in Rogers, AR.
- ❖ In 1993 the 12,000-square-foot building in Bethel Heights, AR was constructed.
- ❖ The Board of Directors included representatives from Tyson, Walmart, JB Hunt, P&G, and other Vendors, Churches, and agencies.
- ❖ June Self and her husband picked up food donations from as far as Tulsa to serve NWA. June was the Food Bank Director for 14 years before retiring in 2003.
- ❖ In 2007 the Ozark Food Bank changed its name to the NWA Food Bank.
- ❖ In 2011 we built an expansion wing onto the original building bringing our total square footage to 22,000 square feet.
- ❖ In our first year of operation, the total pounds of food distributed was 89,000 pounds, or 74,000 meals. Presently, the NWA Food Bank distributes 9 million pounds of food and 6.9 million meals.

## Statement of Values

**Respect** We respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person and treat all with justice, equality and compassion. We honor the lives, concerns and stories of people in need and expect our staff and member agencies to do the same. We accept one another and encourage diversity of thoughts and ideas.

**Urgency** We operate with an acute sense of urgency that reflects the immediate needs of hungry people. We challenge our employees, volunteers and member agencies to embrace the same sense of urgency to accomplish our shared vision.

**Stewardship & Accountability** We keep faith with the public trust through the efficient and compassionate use of resources entrusted to us and are mindful that our mission is accomplished through the generosity of others. We maintain and communicate accurate and timely information on hunger research, education, advocacy and service. We evaluate and account regularly for how resources are used to implement and achieve our mission.

**Service** We believe service to others is fundamental in working towards our mission. We serve with excellence, compassion and responsiveness to meet the needs of those with whom we work, internally and externally. The better we serve; the more people we bring together in commitment to our vision.

**Collaboration** We believe in the power of community. We collaborate and build strong relationships, based on trust, with and among those who share our vision. We work together to accomplish the mission in our regions, valuing each other's roles and using an open process and honest communication. We seek out and are responsive to the input and counsel of our staff and member agencies.

**Integrity** We act with honesty, trust and openness and deliver on commitments. We act within the spirit of agreements, contracts and the law. Our intentions and actions will be transparent and above reproach.

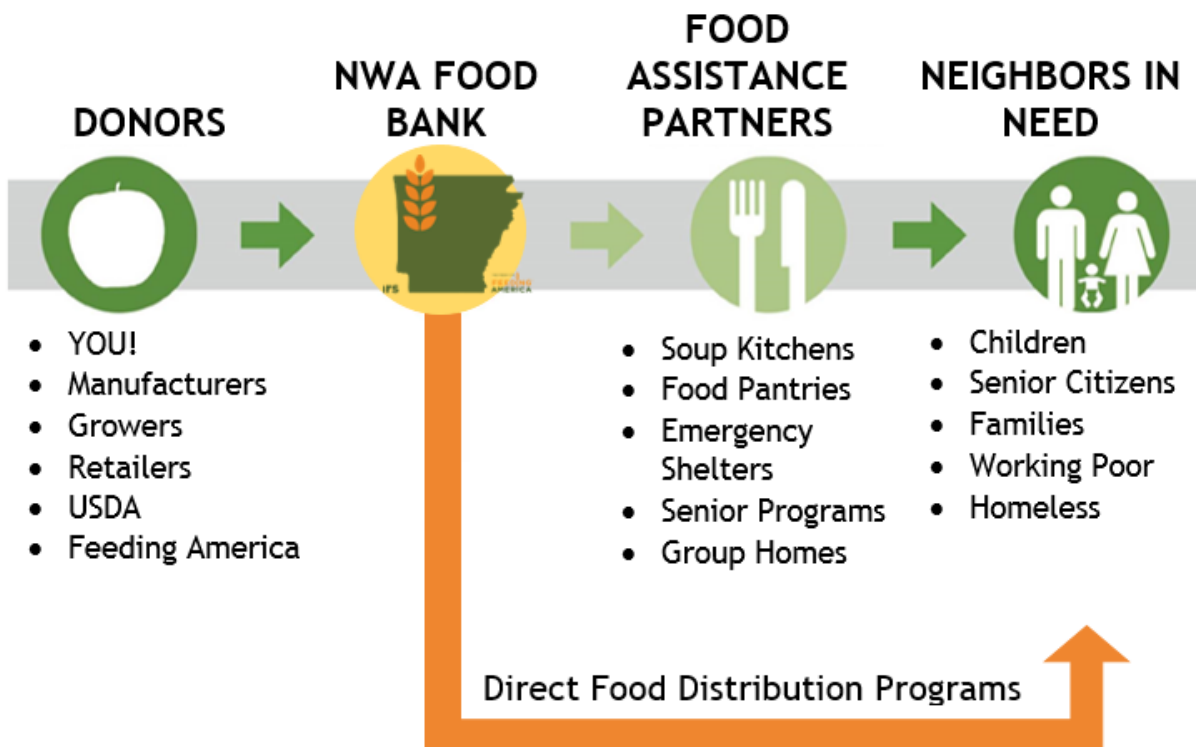
**Diversity** We believe that the ethnic, cultural and social diversity of our nation should be reflected in our staff, Board and network.

## How We Operate

The Northwest Arkansas Food Bank is one of six Feeding America Food Banks in Arkansas. It is our desire for healthy food to reach the kitchen tables of our neighbors as quickly as possible. We are encouraged by the numbers which reflect this effort.

The Food Bank currently has over 160 partner agencies ranging from food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and many more. In 2018 we distributed over 9 million pounds of food to these partners.

We work to distribute food to those who are food insecure in our community while forming strong relationships with business, non-profit organizations, and others in the community who share the passion to end hunger in Northwest Arkansas.



# Rules and Regulations

## Age Requirements

The minimum age for volunteers is 8 years old. Individuals younger than 16 years old must be accompanied by adult chaperones.

## Are Chaperones Required?

Chaperones are required for groups of children under the age of 18. Any individual who is under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

1 chaperone per 5 students between the ages of 8-13 (3rd through 8th grade).

1 chaperone per 10 students between the ages of 14-18 (9th through 12th grade).

**\*\*All age requirements are strictly enforced to ensure the safety and productivity of our volunteers\*\***

## Application Process:

All volunteers must complete a volunteer profile form prior to volunteering. (Volunteers under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian to sign their volunteer profile).

Please print all information clearly. This will assure that you are getting credit for the hours that you have volunteered.

## Late Arrivals/Cancellations

Groups must notify us within 48 hours in the event of a cancellation or significant group size change or a change in arrival time. Volunteer shifts begin at 9:00 am and 1:00 pm. Each shift includes orientation/training, time to work on the project, and then a wrap up, and a tour if requested. Please arrive at your designated start time. If you are going to be more than 10 minutes late please notify us so that we may get other volunteers started. When a volunteer is late he/she is unable to receive the entire volunteer experience. It is also difficult for the volunteer leader to start/stop volunteers at various times. If you are unable to work the allotted time, please call or e-mail the volunteer coordinator to sign up to volunteer at a time when you are available to complete the entire shift.

## Dress Code

All warehouse volunteers must wear closed-toed shoes. NO EXCEPTIONS! (NO sandals or flip-flops) and comfortable clothing that you don't mind getting dirty. The warehouse is not climate controlled so it is chilly in the winter and hot in the summer.

## Training

The Volunteer Coordinator will meet with you at the beginning of your volunteer shift to explain rules, regulations, and procedures. A NWA Food Bank staff person will be available to answer questions at all times.

**Equal Opportunity**

The NWA Food Bank Food Bank is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, citizenship status, physical or mental disability, or past, present, or future membership in a U.S. Uniformed Service.

**Harassment Policy**

The NWA Food Bank Food Bank wishes to provide its volunteers with a professional and congenial work environment. The NWA Food Bank expects its volunteers to treat one another with courtesy, consideration, and professionalism. The NWA Food Bank Food Bank prohibits discrimination, sexual harassment, or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability or veteran status.

The NWA Food Bank will not tolerate conduct by any volunteer which harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work or creates an offensive or hostile work environment.

**Grievance Procedure**

You are encouraged to bring your concerns up for discussion with the Volunteer Coordinator. If your concerns cannot be settled at this level, you have the option of filing a complaint, preferably in writing, to the Development Director, Mike Williams, who can be contacted through email at [mike.williams@nwafoodbank.org](mailto:mike.williams@nwafoodbank.org).

**Drug-Free Environment**

The NWA Food Bank strictly prohibits the use, sale, dispensing, possession, or manufacture of illegal drugs in the workplace or while engaged in volunteer activities.

**Smoking / Chewing**

The NWA Food Bank is a non-smoking facility. A smoking area is located outside the building for smoke breaks. Please ask a staff member about the smoke area location and they will give you the information.

**Break Room**

The Food Bank break room is located adjacent to the office restrooms and is available for use by all volunteers. Please wash any dishes you use and clean up after yourself. Feel free to help yourself to volunteer drinks or bring your own snacks, however keep all food and drink in the break room.

**Professional Practices and Ethics for The NWA Food Bank Volunteers**

Volunteer participation at The NWA Food Bank is a strong and vital tradition. The programs supported through the NWA Food Bank volunteers could not continue without the contributions and dedication of our volunteers. The staff is supportive of volunteers and welcomes their input and expertise. The staff willingly provides appropriate training and opportunity for all volunteers. NWA Food Bank volunteers are greatly appreciated and truly a part of the Food Bank family.

### **Hours of Work for Volunteers**

Most volunteer opportunities take place during The NWA Food Bank's normal business hours, Monday – Friday 8:00AM – 4:00 PM. We have volunteer shifts from 9:00AM to 11:00AM or 1:00PM to 3:00PM. Each volunteer decides how much time to give volunteering at Food Bank. Each volunteer (or group coordinator) works out his/her volunteer schedule and activities with the Volunteer Coordinator in advance. Please adhere to the volunteer shifts you are scheduled to volunteer for. We appreciate your eagerness to come in early and/or stay late but to give staff members time to prepare for your arrival, and the arrival of volunteers after you, they will need the time between shifts for preparation.

### **Volunteer Orientation**

The NWA Food Bank staff members who serve in a supervisory capacity to volunteers shall have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training of those volunteers assigned to them. Volunteers will be informed of hazardous aspects, materials, equipment, processes, or people that they may encounter while performing volunteer work.

### **Absenteeism and Substitution**

When a volunteer expects to be absent from a scheduled day, please inform the Volunteer Coordinator as far in advance as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made. Weekly volunteers who wish to modify their schedule are asked to notify the Volunteer Coordinator. If you will be more than 10 minutes late or absent, please email the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible.

### **Review, Evaluation, and Termination of Volunteer Service**

The NWA Food Bank strives to utilize volunteers efficiently and in a way that creates the most positive outcome for both the volunteer and the Food Bank. Volunteers are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Volunteer Coordinator any issues concerning volunteer matters. Volunteers have an opportunity to present their concerns and complaints through an open communication procedure. If a Volunteer is found to have broken a rule or regulation, they are subject to termination. The NWA Food Bank maintains the right to terminate a volunteer at any time without expressed reason.

### **Records**

Every volunteer is entered into The NWA Food Bank's record database. Each activity the volunteer is involved with and the number of hours are recorded in his/her file. Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator with change of address, phone, and e-mail as needed. If you would like a copy of your volunteer record, please place this request with the Volunteer Coordinator. If you have a special form that needs to be filled please let the Volunteer Coordinator know in advance.

### **Benefits**

The NWA Food Bank says thank you to volunteers in a variety of ways. Each year all volunteers are thanked and celebrated during National Volunteer Week in April. Throughout the year, Thank You's are given for different projects and volunteer involvement. The NWA Food Bank staff members search for creative and new ways to



thank and recognize volunteers, hoping to surprise volunteers who go above and beyond the call of duty. Suggestions are always welcome!

### **Media**

If any media outlet contacts you regarding information or an interview about the NWA Food Bank, please refer them to a staff member. If a media representative approaches you while on NWA Food Bank property or at a NWA Food Bank event, please refrain from answering any questions or sharing your opinions on a Food Bank matter. Refer all media to a staff member.

### **Childcare**

Childcare is not provided for volunteers during volunteer service. Parents wishing for their elementary school-aged children to work alongside them when volunteering must receive prior permission from the Volunteer Coordinator, volunteer activities require children to be over 8 years old. Any student below the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult to work in the NWA Food Bank warehouse.

### **Health Notification**

Due to food safety concerns volunteers who are sick on the day of a scheduled shift, should reschedule for another day. Volunteers will NOT be allowed to work if they have been recently exposed to, or being treated for: salmonella typhi, hepatitis A, norovirus, or if you are currently suffering from vomiting, diarrhea or jaundice.

### **Inclement Weather**

In some cases, the Food Bank may close due to inclement weather. We follow the Big Four school district schedule, if two of the Big Four School Districts (Bentonville, Springdale, Fayetteville, or Rogers) in the area are closed, we will be closed that day due to inclement weather.

If The NWA Food Bank is closed, do not report for your volunteer assignment. If you are scheduled to volunteer and inclement weather occurs please call the Volunteer Coordinator before coming to be ensure we aren't closed, and if needed, to reschedule another day to volunteer.

### **First Aid/Emergency Procedures**

First Aid Kits are located throughout the facility including in The Volunteer Area. In the event of an accident or injury, notify a staff person immediately. Call 911 for an emergency. If you are ever injured, report your injury to a staff person. You may be asked to fill out an accident report. In the event of a fire, you are instructed to take the nearest exit, proceed out of the building immediately, and congregate at the mail box by the first entry gate.

### **Court-Mandated Volunteers / Community Service Volunteers**

Please inform us ahead of time if your volunteer service is to fulfill a court mandated community service requirement. All court-mandated volunteers must be approved prior to beginning their service. Please bring documentation from the judge or lawyer stating the reason that you are being asked to do community service on your first visit to the NWA Food Bank. Your community service cannot begin until we have your paperwork.

# Volunteer Positions and Job Descriptions

## **Warehouse Food Operations Volunteers**

Warehouse Food Operations volunteers sort, box, and categorize food. Tasks can also include cleaning, sweeping, etc. The warehouse is a busy, working distribution center. In order to work in the warehouse, volunteers must be at least 8 years of age. Chaperones are required for people younger than 16.

### Rules and Regulations for Warehouse Volunteers

- All volunteers must wear close-toed shoes (no sandals).
- Please refrain from using cell phones or ear buds while working in the warehouse. If you need to make a call, please step back into the lobby or outside. Ear buds and/or headphones are considered a safety hazard.
- No throwing or tossing cans or other products.
- All volunteers are expected to remain in the area where assigned.
- Manual pallet jacks may be used to move lightweight pallets with instruction and permission from staff.
- No driving fork lifts.
- Do not operate the electrical/motorized pallet jacks.
- No riding or standing on pallet jacks, buggies or carts.
- No running or playing on pallets.
- No climbing on racks. Alert a staff member if products cannot be reached.
- No climbing in and out of tote boxes. Alert a staff member if products cannot be reached.
- No drinking alcoholic beverages while volunteering.
- No food or drinks are allowed in the warehouse at any time. Consumption of food or drinks is not allowed at any time in the warehouse. There is no chewing gum allowed in the warehouse. If you have gum that you are chewing please dispose of it before you enter the warehouse. The Food Bank break room is located adjacent to the office restrooms and is available for use by all volunteers. You are welcome to use the break area as needed.
- Volunteers are never allowed to take items from the warehouse or offices, even if it is being discarded.
- Volunteers are not allowed to consume food or drinks other than bottled water in the warehouse, even if the food is being discarded. No gum is allowed in the warehouse.
- Ask for assistance lifting heavy items.
- No backpacks, totes, purses, and etc. are allowed in the warehouse. Please leave these in the designated volunteer area.

## Mobile Pantry Volunteer

Mobile Pantry Volunteers assist in setting up and loading groceries for attendants of the Mobile Pantry. The Mobile Pantries vary in time and place from week to week and occur outside with no protection from the elements. Please be prepared to work in outdoor conditions comfortably. Volunteering at the Mobile Pantry requires lifting 20 pounds repeatedly. In order to work at the Mobile Pantry, volunteers must be at least 8 years of age. Chaperones are required for people younger than 16.

### Rules and Regulations for Mobile Pantry Volunteers

- All volunteers must wear close-toed shoes (no sandals).
- No throwing or tossing cans or other products.
- All volunteers are expected to remain in the area where assigned.
- No running or playing on pallets.
- No climbing in and out of tote boxes. Alert a staff member if products cannot be reached.
- No drinking alcoholic beverages while volunteering.
- Volunteers are never allowed to take items from the mobile pantry, even if it is being discarded.
- Ask for assistance when lifting heavy items.

### Current Mobile Pantry Opportunities

#### TUESDAY

##### **Berryville**

**First Tuesday – 10 am**  
Carroll County Senior Center  
202 W Madison Avenue  
Berryville, AR 727616

##### **Gravette**

**Fourth Tuesday – 10 am**  
Billy V Hall Senior Center  
1870 Limekiln Road  
Gravette, AR 72736

#### THURSDAY

##### **Fayetteville**

**First Thursday – 8 am**  
Wedington Place Apartments  
3130 Telluride Drive  
Fayetteville, AR 72704

##### **Prairie Grove**

**First Thursday – 12 pm**  
American Legion  
750 Heritage Court  
Siloam Springs, AR 72761

##### **Bentonville**

**Second Thursday – 8 am**  
Bentonville Senior Center  
3501 SE L Street  
Bentonville, AR 72712

##### **Pea Ridge**

**Second Thursday – 12 pm**  
Heritage Building  
1474 N Curtis Avenue  
Pea Ridge, AR 72751

##### **Elkins**

**Third Thursday – 8 am**  
Elkins Community Center  
162 Doolin Drive  
Elkins, AR 72727

##### **Huntsville**

**Third Thursday – 12 pm**  
Huntsville Senior Activity Center  
903 N College Street  
Huntsville, AR 72740

##### **Siloam Springs**

**Fourth Thursday – 8 am**  
Siloam Springs Senior Activity Center  
750 Heritage Court  
Siloam Springs, AR 72761

##### **Lowell**

**Fourth Thursday – 12 pm**  
Lowell Senior Activity Center  
704 E Monroe Avenue  
Lowell, AR 72745

#### FRIDAY

##### **Springdale**

**Second Friday – 8 am**  
Springdale Senior Center  
203 Park Street  
Springdale, AR 72764

**If you have any questions  
concerning the Mobile Pantry,  
please contact our Mobile Pantry  
Coordinator, Trina Wilson.**

**(479) 347-2621**

**Trina.Wilson@nwafoodbank.org**

## **The NWA Food Bank Volunteer Agreement**

I understand that it is prohibited for me to remove any NWA Food product or confidential information (files, forms, emails other written or electronic documentation, etc.) for any personal use. I give the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank permission to conduct a background check on me prior to or during my volunteer service. I understand that volunteer service is at will and can be terminated for any reason and/or for an undisclosed reason with or without advance notice at any time. The policies relating to volunteers are intended as guidelines for volunteers and are subject to change at the sole discretion of The Northwest Arkansas Food Bank.

### **Release for Volunteers & Model Release and Consent Agreement**

I, the undersigned, requests permission to enter the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank, a Feeding America Food Bank, including but not limited to the offices and warehouse and to participate in volunteer activities to be held on January 1, 2019 thru December 31, 2019. I know the risks of injury to my person and property that may be sustained in connection with the stated and associated activities, in and about the premises.

In consideration of the permission granted to me to enter the premises and participate in the stated activities, I, for myself, my heirs, administrators, and assigns, release and discharge the owners, operators, and sponsors of the premises, activities, and vehicles and equipment in the stated activities of and from the premises and my participation in the stated activities due to negligence or any other fault.

I represent and certify that my true age is 18 years or over, I certify that my attendance and participation of the stated activities is voluntary, and that I am not, in any way, the employee or agent of the owner, operators, or sponsors of the premises and the activities, vehicles and equipment, in the same.

I, the undersigned, hereby irrevocably consent to the unrestricted use by the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank and/or its clients, customers, successors and assigns and those acting under its authority, and those for whom it is acting, the absolute right, for as long and as often as they may elect to copyright and/or use and/or publish any media pictures of me and in which I may be included in whole or in part, whether such pictures may be retouched, otherwise changed in character or form, or included as part of a composite picture in conjunction with my character or form, or included as part of a composite picture in conjunction with my own or fictitious name or reproductions or versions thereof in color otherwise, made through any media on or about me for art, advertising, trade or any other lawful purpose whatsoever. I hereby waive any right to inspect or approve the finished photograph, advertising copy, or printed matter that may be used in conjunction there with, or to the eventual use that it may be applied. In conjunction with the foregoing, I hereby release and hold harmless. The Northwest Arkansas Food Bank and each of the above from all-liability. I hereby warrant that I am providing modeling services as a professional, freelance and/or independent contractor. The Northwest Arkansas Food Bank nor Northwest Arkansas Food Bank staff members are liable for any injuries that may occur while volunteering. This agreement constitutes the complete and exclusive agreement between me and The Northwest Arkansas Food Bank and I am not relying on any other representation whether oral or written.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact (Name & Phone Number)

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