

Habitat for Humanity of Washington County Volunteer Crew Overview

Updated 8/09

What is a Habitat construction crew?

A Habitat for Humanity of Washington County (HFHWC) construction crew usually consists of 5-20 individuals from the same church, civic organization, business or school who agree to volunteer their collective services for the benefit of HFHWC. Groups that volunteer for HFHWC understand that there is no way the affiliate can predict the exact type of work they will be doing; therefore groups should volunteer with open hearts and willing minds.

What skills does a Habitat for Humanity of Washington County crew need?

No skills are necessary except the willingness to follow instruction and learn. HFHWC will provide skilled site leadership for your group and will work with individuals to train them on any given task. If however, there is an individual in your group that has special skills in the field of construction you are working on, please inform the site supervisor. HFHWC encourages volunteers to only participate in tasks that they are comfortable doing. If any of your group has fears of heights, being on ladders or other construction situations, please inform the site supervisor.

How can a crew get started?

- 1 Decide whether your group or organization it represents supports the vision and mission of HFHWC.
- 2 Determine a work day by coordinating with the Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director.
- 3 All dates on the construction schedule will be filled in a first-come, first-served basis.
- 4 Confirm your work date by phone with the Volunteer Coordinator or Executive Director. We will need to know how many are in the group and how lunch will be managed.
- 5 Your group will be added to the web site work schedule at www.blitzbuild.com. The registration and liability forms can also be downloaded from this site.
- 6 All groups are asked to meet at the job site at the beginning of the work day for orientation instruction.

What should we wear and what tools should we bring?

Each member of the crew is responsible to dress appropriately for construction work. Boots, full length pants, sleeved shirts, gloves and protective eyewear are required items for all volunteers. Bandanas and sunscreen are also recommended during spring and summer months. HFHWC works in the rain, however we leave all weather cancellation in the hands of our site supervisor. Sometimes this is decided in the morning of the build day. Each crew member is asked to bring his or her own personal tools: hammer, measuring tape, speed square, pencil, nail apron and utility knife. Please label all tools prior to arrival on the site. HFHWC is not responsible for lost or broken tools. Hard hats will be provided as overhead construction necessitates.

Volunteer Crew Overview (cont.)

Who is responsible if someone gets hurt while working at Habitat?

Each Habitat for Humanity of Washington County volunteer must sign a Release and Waiver of Liability form, agreeing to take personal responsibility for any accidents or injuries on the job. Your group and your own personal health insurance plans should cover the individual while engaged in volunteer work. However, each volunteer should verify that (s)he has this type of coverage prior to signing the Release and Waiver of Liability form. A first aid kit will be available on the job site.

Is there an age limitation?

Between the periods of ground breaking and house dedication, no one under the age of 14 will be allowed on the Habitat job site. No one under the age of 16 will be permitted on a building under construction while rough construction work is being done. No one under the age of 18 will be allowed to participate in ultra hazardous activity, defined as, but not limited to, working on ladders, working on the roof, working on scaffolding, using power tools or excavation work. Volunteers under the age of 18 and their parent(s) or legal guardian are required to complete and sign a special Release and Waiver of Liability for Minors form.

What can groups with children under the age of 16 do with Habitat?

Children under the age of 16 have many ways in which they can partner with Habitat on and off the job site. Although children under 16 are limited during rough construction periods, they are welcome to assist in the initial site preparation as well as finish work and landscaping. In addition, Habitat works with children at the newly opened ReStore, in fund raising activities, creative craft projects and public relations promotions. We welcome children in this ministry, but wish to keep them safe at all times.

Will we work with the homeowner?

Yes. Each partner family member over 18 is required to fulfill 250 hours of sweat equity work before owning their home. Not only will you work with the homeowner, but potentially other walk-up volunteers as well. We recommend that you incorporate the homeowner into your group. Some of the richest blessings of Habitat are the relationships made on the work site, and seeing individuals from diverse backgrounds come together to use the hammer as an instrument to manifest God's love.

What will the day be like?

At 9:00 AM, all groups will meet with a representative of HFHWC at the job site. Habitat for Humanity is an ecumenical Christian housing ministry, so we begin each workday with prayer. Because Habitat doesn't impose its beliefs on others, those not interested in participating in prayer may abstain. At 9:15 AM the Habitat representative will make introductions, give orientation and safety instruction, outline the day's work, make sure all paperwork is complete and lead the work crew to the work area. Lunchtime is determined by conversation between the site supervisor and the volunteer group. Each worker is encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch to the site. Bottled water will be available. The workday typically ends between 3-3:30 PM or when the site supervisor thinks it appropriate to end the day.

Questions or Concerns?

Please direct questions or concerns to the Volunteer Coordinator, Project Manager or Executive Director by calling the Habitat office at 262-338-0690 or by email at rwanta_hfh@att.net