

Gorham Food Pantry



Volunteer Information Handbook

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Thank you for volunteering with the Gorham Food Pantry

With only one part-time employee, our food pantry could not operate without a cadre of committed, long-term community volunteers. Volunteers contribute hundreds of hours of service every month and play a key role in helping us fulfill our mission. As we grow and evolve our operations, it is crucial that we continue to promote a favorable and lasting impression of the Gorham Food Pantry in the minds of everyone with whom we interact, including clients, donors, media, volunteers and the general community. Our volunteers are important to us, and we ask for your help to create a safe and meaningful volunteer experience. With that, all volunteers must review and acknowledge receipt of our organization policies and processes. We appreciate your service!

About the Handbook

This handbook is designed to introduce you to the Gorham Food Pantry and to provide a basic overview of the policies and procedures that provide all of us guidance and direction. As a volunteer staff member, you are provided with a safe work environment, necessary job training, supervision, evaluation and recognition.

In return, we expect you to honor your commitment to the Gorham Food Pantry, respect other staff members, and perform your assigned duties to the best of your abilities.

As our organization grows and changes, there will be a need to modify policies, practices and other information in this handbook. When such changes occur, you will be notified by an announcement or update. It is your responsibility to keep your handbook current and to be informed about policies and changes that affect you.

If you have any questions or need any clarification of the information contained in this handbook, please contact Fran Doucette, the Gorham Food Pantry's Executive Director.

Who we are

The Gorham Food Pantry offers food assistance at no cost to any Gorham resident in need. Our food pantry is wheelchair accessible and is open every Thursday from 9-11 a.m. and the second and fourth Wednesdays from 6-7 p.m.

We are a small facility with a big responsibility. Thanks to the donations of time, food, and money from community members, we provide food to hundreds of people each month.

Our Vision

The Gorham Food Pantry is a model for *community feeding community*. By nourishing Gorham residents and enabling access to additional resources, we strive to create a community free of hunger.

Our Mission

The mission of the Gorham Food Pantry is to offer healthy, nutritious food at no cost to Gorham residents in need, while always treating our clients with the highest level of dignity and respect.

Our Guiding Values

Compassion:

- Above all else, we will be respectful and responsive to our clients and serve them in a caring and sensitive manner.
- We value and protect our clients' privacy and ensure a safe environment for our clients and staff.
- We honor our clients' dignity by offering usable, nutritious food and distributing it in a convenient and equitable manner.

Resourcefulness:

- We bring our full resources to bear on the problem of hunger and collaborate with other agencies to best serve our clients.
- We are committed to providing quality, healthy food in the most cost-effective manner.
- We will be well managed, sustainable and a good steward of resources.
- We will ensure we have the expertise to be effective; we are committed to learning and growing.

Community-Centered:

- We believe in being culturally competent and understanding the needs of the diverse cultures and ethnicities we serve.
- We are "community owned" with neighbors working together to raise resources and awareness to meet our clients' needs.
- We honor and appreciate the contributions of our donors and volunteers.

Gorham Food Pantry Board of Directors

Our board serves the Gorham Food Pantry by focusing on operations, fundraising, community awareness, and management of the organization to best serve our clients.

Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Attendance and Absenteeism

You are a volunteer staff member, and we depend on you to complete your scheduled shifts. We do understand that, from time to time, certain situations may arise that prevent you from doing so. Please alert our Executive Director of any scheduled absences—such as vacation—as far in advance as possible so that an appropriate substitute may be found. In the event of an unscheduled absence—illness or emergency—please alert the Executive Director as soon as possible, preferably 24 hours before your scheduled shift begins.

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential responsibility of each volunteer at the Gorham Food Pantry. Tardiness or absence causes problems for fellow volunteers and clients. When a volunteer is absent, others must perform his or her work. The purpose of this policy is to promote the efficient operation of the Gorham Food Pantry and minimize unscheduled absences.

Any volunteer who fails to report to work without notification to his or her supervisor three shifts or more will be considered to have voluntarily terminated their position.

Volunteers must sign in at the beginning of their shift and sign out at the end of their shift. We ask you to take breaks when you need them, just let a staff person know.

Standard of Appearance

Dress appropriately for your duties. For example, physical work requires clothing that is comfortable and durable. Clothes cannot be torn, grayed, dirty, or reveal any part of the cleavage, midriff or buttock.

Volunteer Personnel Files

Your personnel file is confidential and consists of written documents retained by the Executive Director. The volunteer's personnel file can only be reviewed by the volunteer, the Executive Director, and members of the Gorham Food Pantry Board of Directors.

This file contains basic contact information and records about your volunteer service with the Gorham Food Pantry.

Ending Your Volunteer Service

You may resign from your volunteer service with the organization at any time. We request that you notify the Executive Director ideally two weeks prior to your departure and request that you complete the Exit Interview process.

Problem-Solving Procedure

When a group of people work and volunteer together, problems may arise. It is important to all of us that such problems are solved as quickly as possible. Occasionally, however, it may be necessary to investigate certain problems in greater detail. Our problem-solving procedure provides you with the

opportunity to have a review of any problem, dispute, or misunderstanding that arises during the course of your volunteering.

- In situations where differences arise between volunteers or volunteers and staff, it is advised to first try to resolve these differences amongst the parties involved.
- If a third party is needed, please inform and involve the Executive Director. Under no circumstances shall differences be made public or involve other members of the organization.
- If the grievance is in regard to the Executive Director, please contact the President of the Board of Directors.

Disciplinary Practices

The following guidelines may be used in some instances at the sole discretion of the Gorham Food Pantry:

Step 1: Oral warning with documentation in the personnel file

Step 2: Written warning to individual and copy to personnel file

Step 3: Termination/Dismissal

These guidelines are based on cumulative infractions, regardless of whether the infraction is of the same general nature as a previous warning. The use of these disciplinary practices in no way alters the fact that your volunteering with the Gorham Food Pantry is "at-will".

Dismissal

Dismissal of a volunteer is a serious consideration. Before a volunteer is dismissed, attempts to reconcile the situation will be made. Dismissal of a volunteer may take place if a volunteer is unreliable, irresponsible, disruptive, demonstrates inappropriate behavior, or fails to adhere to the policies and procedures of the Gorham Food Pantry.

Driver Safety Policy

The safety and well-being of our volunteers is of critical importance to the organization. We therefore each have a responsibility not only to protect ourselves when on the road, but also do our part to protect those around us. Volunteers who are required to drive on pantry business will be expected to consistently follow all the procedures below.

- Volunteers are expected to wear seat belts at all times while in a moving vehicle being used for Gorham Food Pantry business, whether they are the driver or a passenger.
- Use of handheld cell phones, whether personal or business-owned, while behind the wheel of a moving vehicle being used on Gorham Food Pantry business, is strictly prohibited.
- Texting while behind the wheel of a moving vehicle being used on Gorham Food Pantry business is strictly prohibited.

- Although use of cell phones under any circumstances is strongly discouraged while driving, the use of hands-free technology may be warranted in unusual or emergency circumstances.
- Engaging in other distracting activities including, but not limited to, eating, putting on makeup, reading or changing radio stations or music, is also strongly discouraged while driving, even when in slow-moving traffic.
- Use of alcohol, drugs or other substances, including certain over-the-counter cold or allergy medications that in any way impair driving ability, is prohibited.
- All volunteers are expected to follow all driving laws and safety rules such as adherence to posted speed limits and directional signs, use of turn signals and avoidance of confrontational or offensive behavior while driving.
- Volunteers should never allow anyone to ride in any part of the vehicle not specifically intended for passenger use and/or any seat that does not include a working seat belt.
- Volunteers must promptly report any accidents to local law enforcement as well as to the Executive Director.
- Volunteers are also expected to report any moving or parking violations received while driving on pantry business and/or in company vehicles.
- Failure to adhere to these procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Confidentiality Agreement

Client information is confidential. No client information or proprietary information will be shared outside of the Gorham Food Pantry. You will be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement. By signing this document you acknowledge that you agree to refrain from the unauthorized use or disclosure of any proprietary or client information.

Emergency Evacuation Program

In the event that the emergency fire alarm system is activated, all volunteers are to evacuate the building by following the procedures below.

- All volunteers should exit the building by way of the nearest exit. There are two exits, one at each end of the building.
- Once outside the building, walk to the back door at St. Anne's Church. The Executive Director will ensure that everyone exited the building and give further instructions.

Food Handling Safety

Safe steps in food handling and storage are essential to prevent food-borne illness. You can't see, smell, or taste harmful bacteria that may cause illness.

- Always wear gloves when in contact with food.
- Never cross-contaminate, for example, touching meat and then fruits and vegetables.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough. Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- Clean your hands often. When available, wash your hands with soap and warm water, then rub your hands vigorously together and scrub all skin surfaces. Wash for 15 to 20 seconds. It is the soap combined with the scrubbing action that helps dislodge and remove germs. When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used. If using a gel, rub the gel in your hands until they are dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in the gel kills germs that cause colds and the flu.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth. Germs can live for a long time (some can live for two hours or more) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks and tables.
- Stay home when you are sick and check with a health care provider when needed. When you are sick or have flu symptoms, get plenty of rest and check with a health care provider as needed. Remember: keeping your distance from others may protect them from getting sick. Common symptoms of the flu include:
 - Fever (usually high)
 - Headache
 - Extreme tiredness
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Runny or stuffy nose
 - Muscle aches
 - Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea

Policy Against Harassment

The Gorham Food Pantry is committed to maintaining a work environment free of unlawful harassment. The Gorham Food Pantry prohibits harassment based on sex (including sexual harassment, gender harassment and harassment due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions) and harassment based on race, religion, creed, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation or any other status protected under federal or state law or local ordinance or regulation. All such harassment is unlawful. The Gorham Food Pantry policy applies to all persons involved in the operation and prohibits unlawful harassment by any volunteer/employee of the Gorham Food Pantry including supervisors and co-workers.

Policy Against Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual attention of a persistent or offensive nature made by a person who knows, or reasonably should know, that such attention is unwanted. Sexual harassment includes sexually oriented conduct that is sufficiently pervasive or severe to unreasonably interfere with an employee's job performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. While sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of conduct, some examples of specifically prohibited conduct include:

- Threatening, directly or indirectly, to retaliate against a volunteer, if the volunteer refuses to comply with a sexually oriented request;
- Engaging in sexually suggestive physical contact or touching another volunteer in a way that is unwelcome;
- Displaying, storing, or transmitting pornographic or sexually oriented materials using the Gorham Food Pantry equipment or facilities;
- Engaging in indecent exposure; or
- Making sexual or romantic advances toward a volunteer and persisting despite the volunteer's rejection of the advances.

Sexual harassment can be physical and/or psychological in nature. An aggregation of a series of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered on its own would not be harassing.

Volunteers are prohibited from harassing other volunteers whether or not the incidents of harassment occur on Gorham Food Pantry premises and whether or not the incidents occur during working hours.

Sexual harassment can involve males or females being harassed by members of either sex. Although sexual harassment typically involves a person in a greater position of authority as the harasser, individuals in positions of lesser or equal authority also can be found responsible for engaging in prohibited harassment

Volunteer Responsibility:

If a volunteer believes he/she has been subject to sexual harassment or any unwanted sexual attention, he or she should:

- Make unease and/or disapproval directly and immediately known to the harasser;
- Make a written record of the date, time, and nature of the incident(s) and the names of any witnesses; and
- Report the incident to the Executive Director.
- All incidents of sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual conduct must be reported regardless of their seriousness.

Smoking

In response to state and local laws and building codes, smoking is not permitted on the premises.

Solicitation

Solicitation by non-staff or staff members for any reason on pantry property is not allowed.

Substance Abuse

The possession, use or sale of illegal drugs is never acceptable in our environment. The abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs and alcohol can compromise your job performance and conduct.

We recognize that substance abuse can be successfully treated. Seeking help or assistance is not considered grounds for discipline, but refusal to get help in certain circumstances may be. It is your responsibility to get professional help to improve your performance or conduct.

Volunteers who are also clients of the food pantry

Please follow these procedures for food distribution.

- Please pick up your food at the beginning of your volunteer shift and store it in the office or in your vehicle.
- Volunteers may not take extra food or have food that is not part of that day's distribution.

Volunteer's Code of Conduct

- All clients must be treated with patience and respect. If you are experiencing difficulty with a client, please call on the Executive Director or other staff person to intervene.
- Be courteous, friendly and cooperative.
- You must follow the food distribution plan for the day you are volunteering. This plan was developed to help us ensure we are able to continue to provide similar amounts of food on an ongoing basis. Because of this, we cannot provide extra food or substitute any items.
- Any injury, accident, or incident where you might have experienced harm while volunteering must be reported to the Gorham Food Pantry Executive Director.
- Please let us know if you have any restrictions that prevent you from lifting or if you are unable to stand for more than one hour.
- If you are asked to perform a task or have a volunteer situation that is uncomfortable for you, please talk with the Executive Director.

The following behaviors are not permitted. Individuals who exhibit any of these behaviors will be asked to leave and will not be allowed to volunteer in the future.

- Offensive or derogatory comments or jokes, including epithets or slurs
- Yelling, intimidation or threats
- Pushing, hitting or any physical contact with a client, staff or other volunteer

- Questioning a client's right to food distribution or preventing a client from receiving food

Gorham Food Pantry's commitment to our volunteers:

- We are committed to equal opportunity volunteerism. We coordinate a diverse community of volunteers of different ages from varied backgrounds and social identities.
- We are committed to working together towards creating a safe, supportive, and caring volunteer experience where we can learn from each other and grow in service to our communities.
- If needed, the Gorham Food Pantry will provide a document confirming volunteer hours as community service.

Volunteer Task Descriptions

- **Storage Assistant & Stocker**

In this position, you move and sort boxes of food, organize and stock food on shelves. This can be heavy work and you must be able to lift 50 pounds. As a storage assistant, you have less public interaction, and this job tends to be more physically demanding.

- **Distribution Assistant**

In this position, you guide clients as they "shop" at the pantry. At times, you will also help "bag" food (weighing and packing bulk food into smaller bags) and help prepare the pantry so that food is organized for distribution. You work directly with our clients so complete discretion is required, and a personable disposition is a great asset.

- **Receptionist**

We keep track of the number of people we serve. The system takes about 15 minutes to learn, but this position requires accuracy, speed, friendliness, and discretion. Ideally, we will have a pool of regular volunteers who can return often to fill this role. This is a key role, as the system helps with all of our reports. This role sets the tone and pace of service in the pantry.

- **Food Pick-Up Volunteer:**

In this position, you shop from our suppliers, pack the food into your vehicle, and unpack it at the pantry. This can be heavy work and you must be able to lift 50 pounds.

- **Maintenance and Cleaning Volunteers**

In this position, you clean the Gorham Food Pantry and help take care of routine building maintenance on a regular basis.

Gorham Food Pantry

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, _____ have received and read the Gorham
Print Name

Food Pantry Volunteer Handbook. I have had the opportunity to ask any
questions I have regarding the contents of the handbook.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Volunteer Confidentiality Statement

Confidentiality

I agree to hold in confidence all information I become privy to regarding clients of the Gorham Food Pantry. I will not remove from the office of the Gorham Food Pantry any electronic or written records, or copies thereof, without express permission of the Gorham Food Pantry's client. I accept full responsibility for maintaining the confidential nature of all records, client contacts and information marked confidential.

I understand that I am personally responsible and fully liable for any violation of this agreement.

Volunteer Signature

Date

Printed Name

Gorham Food Pantry Representative Signature

Date

GORHAM FOOD PANTRY DRIVER POLICY

Volunteers assigned to driving duties ("drivers") must at all times meet the following criteria:

- Drivers must have a current, valid driver's license for the state of Maine; and
- Drivers must maintain a clean driving record, i.e., must remain insurable under the Gorham Food Pantry's liability insurance policy.

Any volunteer driving on Gorham Food Pantry business must observe all safety, traffic, and criminal laws of this state. No driver may consume alcohol or illegal drugs while on Gorham Food Pantry business or prior to the volunteer's shift if such consumption would result in a detectable amount of alcohol or illegal drugs being present in the volunteer's system while on duty. In addition, no driver may consume or use any substance, regardless of legality or prescription status, if by so doing, the driver's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle and carry out other work-related duties would be impaired or diminished. No driver may pick up or transport other volunteers while in a Gorham Food Pantry vehicle or on Gorham Food Pantry business, unless there is a work-related need to do so. Any illegal, dangerous, or other conduct while driving that would tend to place the lives or property of others at risk is prohibited.

Anything a driver does in connection with the operation of motor vehicles can affect that driver's fitness for duty or insurability as a driver. Regardless of fault, circumstance, on- or off-duty status, time, or place, any driver who receives a traffic citation from or is arrested by a law enforcement officer, or who is involved in any kind of accident while driving, must inform the Executive Director about the incident immediately or as soon as possible thereafter. Any penalty, fine, imprisonment, fee, or other adverse action imposed by a court in connection with such an incident must be reported immediately to the Executive Director. In both of the above situations, the matter will be reported to the Gorham Food Pantry insurance carrier so that a prompt decision on continued coverage of the volunteer can be made. The driver involved in an accident or cited by a law enforcement official for violating a motor vehicle law must turn over any documentation relating to such incident as soon as possible to the Executive Director, and must cooperate fully with the Gorham Food Pantry in verifying the information with other parties involved and with law enforcement authorities. While parking tickets will not affect a driver's insurability, any parking ticket issued on a vehicle that is being used for Gorham Food Pantry business should be reported to the Executive Director at the earliest possible opportunity.

Any volunteer who violates any part of this policy, or who becomes uninsurable as a driver, will be subject to reassignment and/or disciplinary action, up to and possibly including termination from the Gorham Food Pantry. All volunteers with driving duties must sign this agreement:

I have read and understand the Gorham Food Pantry's Driver Policy, and I agree, in the event that I am ever found to be uninsurable, or that I lack a clean driving record or a valid and current driver's license, that if necessary, I will accept an alternative assignment.

Volunteer Signature Date

Printed Name