

# to Neighbor Neighbor



## **Volunteer Policies and Procedures Manual**



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## **Thank you for volunteering with Neighbor to Neighbor!**

Our food bank and clothing room could not operate without a group of committed, long-term community volunteers. Volunteers contribute over 1,200 hours of service every month and play a key role in helping us fulfill our mission. As we grow and our operations evolve, it is crucial that we continue to promote a favorable and lasting impression of Neighbor to Neighbor 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 in creating 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 and welcome you to the Neighborhood!

### **About the Handbook:**

This handbook is designed to introduce you to Neighbor to Neighbor's Food Pantry and Clothing Room programs and to provide a basic overview of the policies and procedures that provide all of us guidance and direction at Neighbor. As a volunteer staff member, you are

provided with a safe work environment, necessary job training, supervision, respect and recognition.

In return, we expect you to honor your commitment to Neighbor to Neighbor, respect other volunteers and 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 clarification of the information contained in this handbook, please contact the Operations Coordinator.

Neighbor to Neighbor  
248 East Putnam Avenue  
Greenwich, CT 06830  
Phone: 203-622-9208  
Fax: 203-618-0062  
Web Site: [www.NtNGreenwich.org](http://www.NtNGreenwich.org)

# **Neighbor to Neighbor: Overview**

## **Mission**

**Neighbor to Neighbor is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving residents in need throughout the Greenwich area. We improve lives by providing for the exchange of food, clothing and basic living essentials in an atmosphere of kindness and respect.**

## **History**

In 1975, Neighbor to Neighbor opened its doors in the basement of Christ Church, Greenwich where a group of concerned individuals created a clearinghouse for the distribution of free clothing and food to people with emergency needs in Greenwich, Stamford and Port Chester.

In 1984, the Greenwich Department of Social Services asked Neighbor to initiate a weekly food program for Greenwich families in great need of assistance in the face of increasing cost of living expenses. Volunteers packed bags with a variety of available food items to supply families with three meals, for three days, for each member of the family.

In 2001, Neighbor computerized its operations and entered client information into a database thus allowing for the implementation of an appointment system in the Clothing Room. Clients are given appointments for

their Clothing Room visits and this has eliminated the waiting time and crowded shopping experiences.

In September 2005, Neighbor opened a “Client Choice” Food Pantry, one of only a few operating in the state of Connecticut. Clients now have the opportunity to choose their own nutritious food with the aid of a shopping list provided with quantity guidelines and based on the number of people in their family. In July of 2011, Neighbor to Neighbor was honored to be named a community partner of the Greenwich United Way.

## **Funding**

Neighbor to Neighbor receives funding from businesses, corporate and private foundations, civic organizations, religious groups, participating agencies, and individuals.

Neighbor to Neighbor is a smart investment with healthy returns. For every dollar donated, 91 cents (including the value of all donated food) go directly to our programs.

## **Accreditation**

Neighbor to Neighbor is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization registered as tax-exempt with the Internal Revenue Service.

## **Staff**

We have five full-timers and one part-timer on staff. Your front-line contact person for volunteer questions or concerns will be the Operations Coordinator.

To contact staff members, call 203-622-9208 and the following extensions:

Executive Director:	11
Client Coordinator:	16
Food Pantry Coordinator:	13
Operations Coordinator:	12
Administrative Coordinator:	10
Thursday/Saturday Supervisor:	10

Neighbor to Neighbor is run by a Board of Directors. Any questions, concerns or complaints you may have should be addressed first to the Operations Coordinator. If your concern is not adequately addressed by the Operations Coordinator, please contact the Executive Director. In the event your concern remains, you may contact the President of the Board of Directors. Staff may be contacted via email by combining the first initial and last name followed [@NtNGreenwich.org](mailto:jdoe@NtNGreenwich.org). (ex: [jdoe@NtNGreenwich.org](mailto:jdoe@NtNGreenwich.org).)

# **Volunteer Policies and Procedures**

## **Hours of Operation**

Neighbor to Neighbor is open Monday – Saturday from 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM and Thursday from 9:30 – 5:30 PM. Neighbor also has opportunities for volunteers outside of regular business hours, including weekend food drives, community events and office clerical help. Each volunteer decides how much time to give in volunteering and each volunteer works out his/her volunteer schedule and activities with the Operations Coordinator.

## **Volunteer Qualifications**

- Volunteers should be able to lift crates and bags of food.
- Volunteers are required to be at least 14 years of age unless accompanied by a parent or an adult; then the minimum age is 12.
- Selected dates may be set aside for families with younger children at the Director's discretion
- Volunteers should be willing to pitch in as needed.
- Volunteers must have a sincere desire to help our neighbors in need.

## **Scheduling and Sign In**

Volunteers are scheduled by the Operations Coordinator. For scheduling, call Neighbor to Neighbor at 203-622-9208, ext. 12. Volunteer opportunities are

generally Monday – Saturday from 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM and Thursday from 3:30 – 5:30 PM. Please sign in on the volunteer sign in sheet, located in both the food pantry and clothing room, noting the date, and how many hours you volunteered.

### **Training**

Volunteer training typically includes a tour of the facility and an introduction to the staff with whom you will be working. The Operations Coordinator will meet with you at the beginning of your volunteer shift to explain rules, regulations and procedures. A Neighbor to Neighbor staff person will be available to answer questions at all times. Each volunteer receives the volunteer handbook for his/her review.

### **Equal Opportunity**

Neighbor to Neighbor is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, citizenship status, and physical or mental disability.

### **Harassment Policy**

Neighbor to Neighbor wishes to provide its volunteers with a professional and congenial work environment and it expects its volunteers to treat one another with courtesy, consideration, and professionalism.

Neighbor to Neighbor strictly prohibits discrimination or harassment and will not tolerate conduct by any volunteer which harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work or creates an offensive or hostile work environment.

With regard to sexual harassment, Neighbor to Neighbor prohibits supervisors, employees, and non-employees from the behaviors considered sexual harassment under Title 29, Part 1604, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

### **Confidentiality**

**It is the policy of Neighbor to Neighbor to ensure that the operations, activities, and affairs of Neighbor and our clients are kept confidential to the greatest possible extent. Each director, staff member and volunteer is to hold all information about our clients and/or their families in complete confidence. Volunteers will be asked to sign a statement of confidentiality at the time of volunteer start date, and periodically throughout their term of service, to acknowledge their awareness of and reaffirm their commitment to this policy.**

### **Grievance Procedure**

If you have a problem or complaint, you should feel free to submit a complaint, preferably in writing, to the Operations Coordinator. You are encouraged to bring

your concerns up for discussion. If your concerns cannot be settled at this level, you have the option of filing a complaint, preferably in writing, to the Executive Director. Neighbor to Neighbor takes complaints very seriously.

### **Drug-Free Environment**

Neighbor to Neighbor strictly prohibits the use, sale, dispensing, possession, or manufacture of illegal drugs in the workplace or while engaged in Neighbor activities.

### **Smoking**

Neighbor to Neighbor is a non-smoking facility.

### **Absenteeism and Substitution**

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a scheduled basis. When a volunteer expects to be absent from a scheduled day, the volunteer should inform the Operations 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 Operations Coordinator. If you will be late or absent, call 203-622-9208 ext. 12.

## **Childcare**

Childcare is not provided for volunteers during volunteer service. Parents wishing for their school-aged children to work alongside them when volunteering must receive prior permission from the Operations Coordinator. Any student below the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult to work at Neighbor to Neighbor.

## **Inclement Weather**

In the event of inclement weather, including but not limited to, snow, ice, rain, or sleet, use your best judgment. If you do not feel safe traveling to Neighbor for your volunteer assignment, contact the Operations Coordinator and inform him/her of the situation. You are not required to report to Neighbor in the event of inclement weather. In some cases Neighbor may close due to inclement weather. Neighbor to Neighbor will follow the Greenwich Public Schools closing and delay policies. Closings will be posted on our telephone answering machine, our web site, N-to-N.org and on our Facebook page. If Neighbor to Neighbor is closed, do not report for your volunteer assignment.

## **Parking**

In order to allow spaces for donors and clients, if possible, please park in the parking lot next to Fellowship Hall and near Temple Shalom.

## **First Aid/Emergency Procedures**

First Aid Kits are located in both the food pantry and the clothing room. In the event of an accident or injury, notify a staff person immediately. 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 in the Annex parking lot.

Call 911 for an emergency.

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

Neighbor to Neighbor receives requests from individuals who are on probation and have been mandated by the court to engage in community service. Neighbor desires to help court-mandated volunteers fulfill their sentence, but must implement safeguards to ensure its safety and integrity. Therefore, all court-mandated volunteers must meet with the Operations Coordinator prior to beginning their service. It is the responsibility of the court-mandated volunteer to maintain his/her own records; and at the completion of the volunteer's service, Neighbor to Neighbor will produce a letter indicating the total number of hours worked by the volunteer if required and/or requested.

## Volunteer Job Descriptions: Food Pantry

**Food Pantry volunteers should greet Clients and Donors when they arrive:**

- **DONORS:** Help donors carry in donations, place on counter in back of food pantry or on table in the back sorting room. Offer donations slip to donor, keep white copy. Log large food donations (i.e., from food drives) in log book for special acknowledgment. Thank them!
- **CLIENTS: Please, always treat with kindness and respect.** Greet clients, and if new, assist with point system and show the clients how to shop. If a regular, answer questions as needed.

**Volunteers assist with check out procedures:**

- Check the white board on the office door for updates and to determine which week of the month it is – this affects food distribution amounts.
- Become familiar with the point system of determining quantities. Check shopping list to make sure they have stayed within the limits.
- **DO NOT MAKE ANY SUBSTITUTIONS,** unless they are vegetarians: Example- if they don't get beans and ask for soup instead, the answer is always no...we have to do this to have enough inventory and to be fair to everyone. Vegetarian Substitute list is on the bulletin board.
- If they appear to need help carrying and we have enough volunteers, feel free to offer that service.

- Put the shopping list back and file their form in the file.

**Volunteers help to stock the shelves with food:**

- Use stock on bottom shelf first and then crates in the hall.
- Check with staff to see what is needed.

**Volunteers sort and date-check food donations:**

- Sorting takes place at the back sorting table. Incoming donations are placed in a bin by the table.
- When sorting, check for expiration dates and put away where appropriate.
- Items past their expiration date but still dated within the past three months are marked and put on the past-due shelf in the pantry for clients to take as “extras.”

**Volunteers assist in preparing Greenwich Department of Social Services orders:**

- The GDSS places food orders for clients who are homebound and cannot come to Neighbor to Neighbor.
- Please bag the Social Services orders if you have time. They know you may not have time to fill the order and that they may have to do it when they arrive.
- Social Workers usually come at the end of the morning to pick up the orders.

## **Volunteer Job Description: Clothing Room**

**Clothing Room volunteers should greet Clients and Donors when they arrive:**

- Volunteers greet donors in a friendly manner.
- Please ask donors to fill out a donation slip. They keep the yellow copy and return the white top copy to us. Donation slips (new and completed) are located at the donor room “desk.”
- Itemization/identification of items donated is to be completed BY THE DONOR. The valuation is for their tax purposes only; we do not estimate values of donations. A valuation chart is available for their reference if requested.
- Please log large donations or significant donations of new items in the Donation Log located in the donor room “desk.” These are items that warrant special acknowledgement.

**Volunteers sort and categorize clothes:**

- Items should not be torn, badly stained, or otherwise un-wearable.
- Check and empty pockets.
- Any items of “value”, such as jewelry, should be checked with management staff. There is a can for loose change in the main office.
- Do not put out any cutlery or other dangerous items.

- Clothing should be placed in the clothing room sorted by size. Racks should have labels for small, medium and large clothing. Sizes 0 – 4 are small, 6 – 8 is medium, and 10 + is large.

**Volunteers assist clients:**

- Volunteers should always be friendly, cordial and helpful to the clients.
- Clients may request one linen item at each visit (set of sheets, set of towels, or blanket/bedspread).
- Only clients with infants may take infant clothing.
- Time limits are identified on a client's nametag.
- Please spend the last 15-20 minutes of each shift tidying up the Clothing Room so that it is neat and organized for clients the following morning. Leave the room as you would like to see it when you arrive for your work shift.
- Return empty hangers to the donor room.

## **Other Volunteer Opportunities**

### **Pick-Ups**

Volunteers are needed to help pick up donated items from our local retailers. There are also weekly shopping excursions to the Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County, when assistance is needed to select and transport food.

### **Public Relations**

The Public Relations volunteer works with the Neighbor to Neighbor Executive Director on a project-by-project basis to create effective public relations campaigns and programs for Neighbor.

### **Food and Clothing Drives**

Many individuals, local organizations and religious congregations conduct food and clothing drives as one-time events as well as through on-going programs. There are volunteer opportunities to help organize, conduct and work during the numerous food and clothing drives.

### **Administrative**

Volunteers are needed to provide administrative help including data entry, filing and general office work.

### **Student Volunteer Program**

This program offers the opportunity for young volunteers to work with clients, staff and adult volunteers in the Clothing Room and the Food Pantry. Student time slots are on Thursday afternoons from 3:30 until 5:30 PM and Saturday mornings from 8:30 AM until noon. Students must be at least 12 years of age to volunteer and they must be accompanied by an adult if they are under the age of 14.

### **Special Events**

Periodically, special fund raising events are planned and executed by volunteers. For information on upcoming opportunities, contact Operations Coordinator.



## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Volunteer Policies and Procedures Manual ("Manual"). This Manual contains important information governing my volunteer relationship with Neighbor to Neighbor ("Neighbor"). I have read the Manual and agree to be bound by the rules and regulations contained in the Manual, as well as by the rules, regulations, and policies that may be established in the future. I understand that any questions concerning this Manual should be directed to the Operations Coordinator. I understand that Neighbor reserves the right to modify or change its policies, procedures, and working conditions without notice to me or other volunteers.

I understand and agree that nothing contained in the Manual or any other of Neighbor's rules, regulations, policies, or practices should be interpreted or construed as conferring any type of employment relationship whatsoever. I further understand and agree that my volunteer services are terminable at any time for any reason or no reason at all so that both Neighbor to Neighbor and I each have the right to discontinue the relationship at any time and for any reason.

I further understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with all information in this Manual. I acknowledge that this Manual supersedes all prior Manuals which I might have received and that any oral or written statements or promises to the contrary are disavowed by Neighbor.

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Name of Volunteer (please print)

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Signature

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Date

**NOTES:**

**NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR**  
**248 East Putnam Avenue**  
**Greenwich, CT 06830**  
**(203) 622-9208**  
**[www.NtNGreenwich.org](http://www.NtNGreenwich.org)**