



GREATER BATON ROUGE

**FOOD BANK**

## Volunteer Handbook

# **We Appreciate You!**

## *Together We're Fighting Hunger*

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank realizes that volunteers play a vital role in our mission to feed the hungry. We know that without the help of our incredible volunteers, we could not fulfill that mission. Therefore, it is our pleasure to have you as a volunteer and we look forward to this continued partnership now and in the future. Everyone here at the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank appreciates your valuable support and we are happy that you are here.

The Volunteer Handbook is intended to provide you with needed information to learn more about our organization. In it, you will become familiar with the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank's Volunteer Program, Opportunities, Guidelines, and Procedures as well as Important Policies.

We always encourage our volunteers to please visit our website at [Resources - Greater Baton Rouge FoodBank \(brfoodbank.org\)](https://www.brfoodbank.org) and explore each section to become familiar with our organization.

Again, thank you for continued support of our mission and we look forward to working with you.

# Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank

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# Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank

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### ABOUT US

#### Mission

Our mission is to feed the hungry in Baton Rouge and surrounding parishes by providing food and educational outreach through faith based and other community partners.

#### Who We Are

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank is a nonprofit organization that provides services across 11 different parishes. We solicit, inventory, and distribute donated products to over 100 member agencies that directly serve people experiencing food insecurities. In 2022, the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank distributed over 10.4 million meals to those in need.

#### Our Response

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank leads the fight against hunger in Greater Baton Rouge, Louisiana by providing food access, advocacy, education, and disaster response.

Through our food distribution programs including Senior Grocery, BackPack and Mobile Pantry, nutrition education, and public benefits assistance, we are helping to create pathways out of poverty. Our work helps ensure that these meals make it to the dinner tables of thousands of families struggling with hunger in our 11-parish service area.

## Volunteer Program

### Volunteer Opportunities & Hours of Operation

#### Warehouse Activities

- Sort & Repack: Work in the repack room to separate food into basic categories.
- Bulk Packaging: Volunteers use the bulk packing machine to repack dry bulk products like beans, rice, pasta, and cereal.

These shifts are available at our warehouse, 10600 S. Choctaw Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70815 on the following days and times:

Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Tuesday – Friday: 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Saturday: 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM

First Saturday of the month: 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

#### Senior Grocery

Volunteers assist with our drive-through style distribution and load food directly into clients' cars.

Volunteer shifts are available the first Saturday of each month at the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank, 10600 S. Choctaw Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70815 from 7:00 AM to 10:00 AM

#### Mobile Distributions

Volunteer shifts are available at several distribution sites throughout our 11-parish area. These distributions may be the walk-up or drive-through model for clients to receive their distributions. Volunteers assist with directing traffic, collecting information from clients, passing out water, and loading cars with boxes in an assembly line. Volunteer shift times vary and can be found on our Opportunity Calendar at [volunteer.brfoodbank.org/calendar](http://volunteer.brfoodbank.org/calendar). All Mobile Distribution volunteers must be at least 18 years old.

#### Community Garden

Volunteers assist with planting, weeding, and harvesting in the garden. Volunteer shifts are available at Capitol City Produce Vince Ferachi Community Garden, 16550 Commercial Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70816 on the following days and times: Wednesdays and Saturdays –8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

#### Administrative Support

Volunteers who fulfill administrative activities are scheduled on an as-needed basis. The type of activities can include letter folding, answering phones, data entry, scanning, filing, and/or other administrative needs. Volunteer shifts are available at our warehouse, 10600 S. Choctaw Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70815 on the following days and times: Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM

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### General Guidelines & Procedures

#### Scheduling

All volunteers must schedule their volunteer opportunity and complete their volunteer waiver in advance by utilizing our online scheduling program. ALL volunteers must have signed the electronic waiver form prior to volunteering. Children under 18 must have a waiver signed electronically by a parent or guardian.

1. Create a volunteer profile and sign the electronic waiver:  
<https://volunteer.brfoodbank.org/volunteer-sign-up>
2. Review the calendar for volunteer opportunities: [Calendar \(brfoodbank.org\)](https://brfoodbank.org)
3. Schedule yourself for a shift that works for your interests and schedule.
4. If looking for group opportunities, send a request to: [volunteers@brfoodbank.org](mailto:volunteers@brfoodbank.org)

#### Please note:

- Weekend volunteer slots are limited and fill up quickly (sometimes two to three months in advance especially around school holidays).

#### Check-In

Upon arriving, volunteers are required to check-in on the laptop or sign-in sheet for their shift. Please create a name tag at this time. Volunteers must check-in to receive credit for hours. If you will be more than 30 minutes late for your shift, please reschedule for a shift that you can fully attend. Volunteers are expected to sign up for shifts, arrive on time and stay for the entirety of the shift in order to maintain the warehouse workflow.

#### Parking and Entrance

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank is located in the old Fraenkel Furniture and Mattress Warehouse at 10600 S. Choctaw Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70815. You will enter the building Monday through Friday through our front entrance on the W. Dual side of the building. The red Volunteer door in the back near the loading dock is for Saturdays only. You may double park. Please give the receptionist your vehicle description when you enter. Please refrain from parking in any of the Merck building parking lots.

#### Volunteers Needing Documentation of Volunteer Hours

Volunteers who need documentation of hours are responsible for maintaining a record of their volunteer hours and must sign-in to receive credit. We offer generic service hours letters, please give the Volunteer Coordinator notice of your documentation letter prior to beginning your shift.

#### Dress Code

Volunteers should dress casually and wear comfortable, closed-toe, closed-heel shoes (no sandals, flip-flops, crocs). Volunteer work sometimes gets messy! Aprons are provided in the warehouse. Volunteers are reminded that the warehouse is not climate-controlled and should dress appropriately for the weather conditions. Volunteering at the Food Bank is a family-friendly experience, so please avoid language and attire with curse words or suggestive language and/or pictures. We ask that you leave personal belongings at home or locked in your car. Necklaces and long earrings pose a safety concern; please remove if necessary. A limited number of lockers are available. The locker must be emptied at the end of the volunteer shift and the key returned. The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank will not be responsible for any missing personal belongings. There is a lost and found box located at the Volunteer Coordinator's desk.

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### Large Group Accommodations

Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank welcomes group volunteers. We believe volunteering provides an opportunity for team building. Corporate groups might consider using our board room for a staff meeting or training. All that we ask in return is a minimum of two hours of volunteer service as part of the day's activities. To create a volunteer team as a quick and easy way to sign up, please email us at [volunteers@brfoodbank.org](mailto:volunteers@brfoodbank.org). Groups are limited to reserving one weekend shift per month to ensure availability for all volunteers.

### Accommodations

We require all Sort and Repack volunteers to be able to lift 40 pounds, stand for extended periods of time, and independently follow directions without assistance. If you require special accommodations for yourself and/or your group or do not meet our requirements, please contact the volunteer coordinator at [volunteers@brfoodbank.org](mailto:volunteers@brfoodbank.org) or (225)359-9940.

### Court-Appointed Community Service Volunteers (CACS)

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank will accept adult volunteers (18 years old or older) performing court-ordered or lawyer-recommended community service. Volunteers who are performing this type of community service must disclose the nature of their conviction to the Volunteer Coordinator. The Food Bank will not accept volunteers who have been convicted of drug offenses, theft, violent crimes, crimes of a sexual nature or cruelty to juveniles or animals. Registered sex offenders are not allowed to volunteer at the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank.

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank reserves the right to decline any volunteer or to limit which days or hours a volunteer can work. All court-ordered and pre-trial/diversion volunteers must be approved for community service by the Volunteer Coordinator prior to their first shift. Contact information is found at the end of the handbook. Court-ordered and pre-trial/diversion individuals are required to use the Volunteer Sign-In computer to capture all hours.

### Hydration

Hydration is important especially in the summer months; therefore, water will be provided for you. We do encourage and welcome volunteers to bring a water bottle with them when they come to volunteer. Food and drink are not permitted in the warehouse area, but it is permitted in the volunteer break room.

### Smoke and Tobacco Free Workplace

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for Team Members and visitors. Smoking and use of tobacco products or vaping is allowed only on approved breaks and in the designated areas outside of the building. There are three designated smoking areas: outside of the door in receiving, at the end of the ramp near the red door, and at the corner of the building near the glass doors

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### Volunteer Recognition

We value our volunteers and as an expression of our appreciation, volunteers are awarded Food Bank-logged items when they reach certain milestones over the course of their time with us. This recognition begins on January 1, 2021.

First Time to Volunteer	Car Decal
25 hours of service	Lanyard
100 hours of service	T-shirt
250 hours of service	Cap
500 hours of service	Thermal lunch bag
1000+ hours of service	Recognition on a permanent plaque
2500 hours of service	Chopping board
5000 hours of service	Ceramic knife

### Important Policies

#### Volunteer Policies

Volunteers are expected to:

- Sign up for upcoming shifts on the Opportunity Calendar prior to arrival and arrive on time for shifts
- Reschedule if a volunteer will be more than 30 minutes late for the start of their shift
- Enter the building through the front entrance Monday through Friday
- Sign in on the volunteer kiosk upon arrival for the shift Monday through Friday and on the log sheet on Saturdays
- Leave the facility by 4 PM. If a volunteer does not drive, their transportation must be here by 4 PM.
- Enter and exit the Sort and Repack room through the Volunteer Break Room only. Do not use any double brown doors
- Notify the Volunteer Coordinator of volunteers needing a tour. Tours may only be given by a Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank employee

#### Volunteer Safety Rules

The following rules are enforced for all staff and volunteers in the warehouse. Failure to follow these rules may result in dismissal.

- No person is permitted to volunteer while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Horseplay is not permitted
- No open-toe shoes are permitted
- Proper personal hygiene is expected. Clothing must be neat, clean and without loose sleeves or dangling accessories
- No eating, drinking, or using tobacco products in the warehouse. Water will be provided in designated areas only
- Personal items and food must be stored in designated areas
- No glass or ceramics are permitted in the warehouse
- Follow all posted signs/instructions
- Use proper clothing and safety gear or personal protective equipment provided for various jobs (gloves, safety goggles, vest, etc.)



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- Use correct lifting techniques: bend with your knees when lifting
- Only trained Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank staff are permitted to operate forklifts and powered pallet jacks
- Riding on carts, pallet jacks (manual or powered), or forklifts is not permitted
- All spills must be cleaned up immediately
- Dock areas and warehouse floors are to be maintained free of debris and spills
- Report damage or malfunctioning equipment to Food Bank staff immediately
- Report all accidents and injuries immediately to Food Bank staff
- Should you see an unsafe act or have any questions, immediately contact the warehouse staff or the Volunteer Coordinator
- Certain portions of the warehouse are restricted to authorized personnel only. Please remain in assigned areas only
- Food safety is a top priority of Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank. When in doubt, throw it out. Food quality and safety is always more important than quantity

### Youth Policy

- The minimum age for volunteers in the Repack Room is 10 years old. Volunteers 10-13 years old may volunteer if accompanied by an adult age 18 or older
- Children aged 4 and older are allowed to volunteer in the warehouse on Family Night. With special permission and appropriate chaperones, children younger than 10 are permitted to tour the warehouse or assist with certain off-site special events/projects
- The minimum age for volunteers in the Vince Ferachi Community Garden is 15 years old
- The minimum age for volunteers for mobile pantry or mobile distributions is 18 years old
- All court-ordered and pre-trial/diversion community service volunteers must be 18 years old

### Organized Youth Groups Chaperone Requirements

Groups with youth must have chaperones over the age of 18. Chaperones per youth requirements are:

1 chaperone per 5 youth between the ages of 10—13 (grades 4 – 8)

1 chaperone per 10 youth between the ages of 14—18 (grades 9 – 12)

The Volunteer Coordinator will ensure that all youth are accompanied by the appropriate number of adult chaperones.

### Absence Policy

Volunteers are expected to sign up for shifts in advance, arrive and check-in promptly, and stay until the conclusion of their shift unless an exception has been made. Volunteers who cannot attend a scheduled shift are expected to utilize their volunteer account to remove themselves from the shift or notify us of their absence. Failure to attend a shift without notification will result in the documentation of a “no-show.” After 3 no-shows, the volunteer may be removed from all future volunteer shifts until contact has been made with the Volunteer Coordinator.

We have limited capacity and require all volunteers to be signed up for shifts, so it is important that if you cannot attend to let us know so another volunteer can sign up for that slot.

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### Inclement Weather Policy

Should weather dictate the closing of the warehouse or other volunteer opportunity, the Volunteer Coordinator will contact volunteers by email notifying them of the closure. If weather looks threatening, please check for an email or call the Food Bank at 225.359.9940.

### Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank strictly prohibits discrimination of any kind based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth or another status such as disability, age, marital and family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, health status, place of residence, economic and social situation.

### Food Policy

All donated product (food, beverage, and otherwise) is to be used solely for the intended purpose of serving food recipients through appropriate Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank channels (partner agency distribution, programmatic distributions). Staff and volunteers are prohibited from using any and all donated product for personal consumption. Any violation of this policy will result in immediate termination or removal from volunteer duties.

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank is a non-profit, 501c3 organization that receives donated products in accordance with IRS Code 170 (e) (3), which defines the tax deduction that donors are eligible to receive if the donation is used according to the regulations, defines the organizations eligible to receive those donations, and defines allowable uses of those donations. All donated product (food, beverages, and otherwise) is to be used solely for the care of the ill, needy, or infants. All products donated to the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank are considered as having been donated under the provisions of Section 170(e) (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, unless the donor clearly provides verification to the contrary in writing.

The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank is committed to keeping high standards regarding use of donated product. We have a commitment and accountability to the people that we serve and to our donors, who make this work possible. Our community has bestowed a great amount of trust and good faith in our work and mission. Furthermore, personal consumption of food and beverages is not a benefit of employment or perk of volunteering.

### Volunteer Dismissal Policy

Volunteers are an invaluable resource to Greater Baton Rouge and our primary aim is to encourage and support their contribution to feeding South Louisiana. However, it is also recognized that there may be times when a volunteer needs to be counseled and perhaps dismissed.

Volunteers may voluntarily leave the organization at any time and may be asked to leave the organization at any time. Volunteers who do not adhere to the policies and procedures outlined below are subject to dismissal.

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Conduct that the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank finds unacceptable:

- Consistent failure to be on time or “no showing” for a shift
- Unable to commit to the time requirement that was set forth in the position description
- Inability to comply with any of the standards presented herein; including performance standards, policies, and guidelines found within the Volunteer Handbook
- Failure to comply with staff decisions
- Failure to be respectful to recipients, visitors, donors, volunteers and staff
- Distributing confidential information about recipients, volunteers or staff
- Use of Greater Baton Rouge name or trademarks, without prior permission from the Director of Communications

Steps taken by Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank to enforce outlined policies:

1. The first infraction of the above policies will result in the staff member involved verbally addressing the situation with the volunteer along with notifying the Volunteer Coordinator and Director of Development. The infraction will then be documented in the volunteer file.
2. In the event of a second infraction, the volunteer will meet with the program staff member involved, Volunteer Coordinator and the Chief Development Officer. At this meeting, the volunteer will be asked to sign a probationary letter that will explain the infraction and outline any action steps.
3. In the event that a third infraction takes place, the volunteer will be asked to immediately relinquish their position as a volunteer with Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank.

Unruly volunteers will be escorted out of the building by the Warehouse Manager. The Warehouse Manager must be notified immediately of an unruly volunteer. If the Warehouse Manager is unavailable, the Director of Operations will assist with removing the unruly volunteer.

Conduct that permits immediate release of Volunteer:

The following is a list of inappropriate conduct that will result in the immediate cancellation of volunteer status. Even if a staff member does not personally see the below infractions take place, if reasonable belief exists that the infraction occurred it will result in immediate release of the volunteer. Examples cannot be listed to cover every situation. Other offenses may be deemed serious that are not specifically mentioned here.

- Falsifying reports, records or expense
- Sexual Harassment
- Physical or Verbal Harassment
- Negligent or willful damage of property
- Theft
- Unlawful discrimination
- Illegal or unethical behavior
- Negligent or willful endangerment of the safety of others
- Working while impaired by intoxicants – alcohol or drugs
- Insubordination
- Breach of conflict of interest

### Volunteer Leaders

Volunteer Leaders are an invaluable resource to the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank and our primary aim is to encourage and support their contribution to feeding our 11-parish service area. As a part of the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank team, the Volunteer Leader, led by the direction of the Repack Captain, provides the volunteers with a positive experience so that they continue their journey of service while helping to carry out the mission of the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank. Volunteer Leaders are expected to support and assist in enforcing the policies and procedures of the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank.

**NOMINATION:** Volunteers who have served at least 100 hours over a six-month period may be nominated to become a Volunteer Leader by the Repack Captain and Volunteer Coordinator. Upon approval by the Director of Development, the volunteer will be invited to become a leader by Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank. There will be a maximum of 20 Volunteer Leaders

**TIME COMMITMENT:** Volunteer leaders are required to volunteer 150 hours a year unless extenuating circumstances have occurred.

**REQUIREMENTS :** Volunteer Leaders will be evaluated yearly every January based on the past year's hours and participation. There will be an annual mandatory training to go over any new requirements and go over existing policies.

Volunteer Leaders must demonstrate the following

- Uphold and adhere to all volunteer policies and procedures while setting and maintain a high standard of Food Bank regulations
- Signing up and checking in for each shift and encouraging all volunteers to do the same.
- Report all deficiencies that constitutes an immediate threat to anyone's health and safety
- Support food bank leadership by answering questions volunteers may have regarding sorting and packing and ensuring all volunteers are having a positive and safe experience
- Invite and encourage volunteers to participate in future projects such as Senior Grocery, Mobile Pantry Distribution and Community Garden
- Complete other tasks that are assigned by the Repack Captain or Volunteer Coordinator
- Encourage all volunteers to fill roles based on ability and interest. Accept and embrace all people without judgment. Respect individual's personal space and private lives by not asking personal questions. Respect the religious preference of all individuals and does not proselytize for any one faith or belief and does not allowing any other discriminatory actions of any sort. Respect others political and personal belief.
- Respect workplace etiquette when in front office area and ensure all volunteers follow this policy
- Report all warehouse issues directly to Warehouse Manager

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### Contact Us



10600 S. Choctaw Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70815

Office: (225)359 9940  
[www.brfoodbank.org](http://www.brfoodbank.org)

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