



# FOOD BANK VOLUNTEERING

Our mini guide to help your team get the best start on their volunteering journey



# WELCOME

'We are extremely thankful to colleagues from across our corporate partners who've volunteered at their local Trussell Trust Foodbank. In total, 230 volunteers have supported their local food bank through our volunteering programme since January 2022, working across 35 food banks, enabling them keep providing vital services to people facing hardship.'  
**Zoe Pate, Head of Corporate Partnerships, the Trussell Trust**

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## INTRO

### THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING WITH THE TRUSSELL TRUST!

We're so grateful you've chosen to give your time to support us, and we hope this volunteering day will be an inspiring and impactful experience for you and your team.

At the Trussell Trust, **we support a network of over 1,300 food banks across the UK.** Each of our food banks is an independent charity, but we are united in our vision to end the need for food banks in the UK, as we don't think it's right that anybody should be unable to afford life's essentials.



## YOUR SUPPORT

LIKE THIS HELPS LIFT PEOPLE OUT OF POVERTY. **THANK YOU.**

# HOW DOES FOOD BANK VOLUNTEERING WORK?



## WHAT DOES A TYPICAL VOLUNTEERING SESSION LOOK LIKE?

Volunteering at your local food bank will give you an in-depth insight into everything that goes into the day-to-day running of a food bank, and we aim to bring our work to life for your volunteers.

Some examples of what your volunteering day might involve include:

- Sorting food donations in the warehouse – placing donations in various categories ready for use.
- Weighing food donations.
- Checking that all items received are within their Best Before date and clearly marking the item with the valid date.
- Packing three-day emergency food parcels for people facing hardship.
- Recycling packaging.

There may be other tasks to do depending on the size and scale of the food bank you're volunteering with. Some food banks have community cafes or gardens, so may need support in these areas too. All tasks will be clearly communicated to your team, ahead of your volunteering day.

Please let us know if anyone in your team has any accessibility requirements, so we can make the relevant accommodations.

## WHERE CAN MY TEAM VOLUNTEER?

The Trussell Trust supports food banks across the UK, so there are volunteering opportunities in food banks across the four nations. However, food banks in cities tend to be larger than rural food banks and therefore more likely to have the capacity to host larger groups of volunteers. Although, there are food banks across the country that can host volunteers, in some cases you may have to travel a short distance for your volunteering day.

When you apply to volunteer, please specify your location, so we can best match you with your local food bank.



We also ask that you let us know how far your team would be willing to travel for a volunteering day (e.g. 30 mins or an hour), so if we cannot match you with your local food bank we can organise a volunteering day a bit further away.

## WHEN CAN MY TEAM VOLUNTEER?

When applying for a team volunteering day we ask that you give at least 6-8 weeks' notice, so we have adequate time to arrange your volunteering day. Most food banks work around eight weeks ahead for volunteer planning, which could mean that if you apply too late their calendars will be fully booked.

When applying to volunteer, please try to be as flexible with dates as possible as this makes it much easier to match you with a food bank in your local area. We recommend considering three or four dates that would be suitable for your team, rather than one specific date.

## HOW LONG WILL THE VOLUNTEERING SESSION BE?

Each food bank has its own opening hours. This is because each food bank is different and serves the needs of its local community. Some food banks are open from 9am-5pm every day, and some may only open a few days a week, depending on need and volunteer availability.

Therefore, when submitting a request to volunteer at a food bank, it's important that you are flexible with timings so that we can match you with a local food bank. If you have preferred timings for your volunteering session, please let us know so we can best match you with a food bank with these opening times.

## HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN VOLUNTEER IN ONE SESSION?

Each food bank in the Trussell Trust network is different. Some food banks (for example those in larger cities) have big warehouses and can accommodate more volunteers, whereas some in more rural areas may only be able to accommodate one or two volunteers at a time – or may not have space to take volunteers at all.



We ask that when you submit a request to volunteer with the Trussell Trust, you let us know your exact group size. We also suggest a maximum of eight volunteers per volunteering day. If you would like to volunteer in a larger group), please be aware that the group may have to split in two and volunteer on different days. We can sometimes host larger groups in the same day, by doing a morning and afternoon slot across the same day, but this can't be guaranteed.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I NEED TO CANCEL MY DAY?

We recommend ensuring your volunteering day is blocked out in your calendar as soon as we confirm the date, so your team are aware of the date, time and location.

Understandably, sometimes a member of the team is unable to attend due to illness or other circumstances. This does not mean we will cancel the volunteering day. Please just let your contact at the Trussell Trust know as soon as possible and we will notify the food bank.

If you need to cancel your volunteering day, please let us know at least two weeks in

advance. When food banks host volunteering days they stand down their regular volunteers, so if you leave it any later to cancel the food bank may be understaffed.

Cancellations do impact food banks negatively, with systems needing to be reorganised to ensure continued delivery of service. If you do need to cancel with less than two weeks' notice, we ask that you make a £250 donation to the food bank to compensate for any disruption caused. Your main contact will be in touch with guidance on how the donation can be made.

## SUMMARY

If your team would like to volunteer with the Trussell Trust, please let us know the following:

- Where your team are based and how far you are willing to travel for your volunteering day.
- How many people are in your team?
- What dates work for your team. The more flexible you can be the better.
- What times work for your team?
- Does anyone in your team have any accessibility requirements?



# SUPPORTING YOUR LOCAL FOOD BANK IN THE RUN UP...



We encourage you to do all you can to support your local food bank in the run-up to your volunteering day. Last year, food banks in the Trussell Trust network gave out over 2.1 million parcels to people and families facing hardship across the UK. So, food banks currently need your support more than ever.

There are so many ways you can support your local food bank:

## RUNNING A FOOD DRIVE IN THE OFFICE:

Running a food drive in your office is a wonderful way to support your local food bank ahead of your volunteering day. The food your team donates will go directly to people and families facing hardship in your local community and will also bring to life your volunteering experience.

Please see our guide, below, for tips on how to run a food drive:

[A guide to holding a food drive.pdf](#)

## RUNNING A FUNDRAISER IN THE OFFICE OR REMOTELY:

Running a fundraiser in the office is a fantastic way to get colleagues involved and raise awareness for the Trussell Trust. You can contact your local food bank and pay the donations to them directly, to directly support people facing hardship in your local community.

If your workplace is remote, running a cash fundraiser is a great alternative to running a food drive, as you can run virtual fundraisers, get colleagues to sponsor you, or just spread awareness using our email signatures and zoom backgrounds.

There are loads of creative and useful fundraising tips and ideas on our website for you to download and share with your colleagues.

- View [fundraising ideas](#)
- View [fundraising resources](#)

If you would like to run an office fundraiser, please see our [JustGiving Guide](#), for how to set up a JustGiving page and how to pay in donations.



# VOLUNTEERING DOS AND DONT'S



## DO

- Read your event plan, so you know where you're going and who to contact on the day.
- Arrive 10 minutes before your session, in good time for your health and safety briefing.
- Wear comfortable shoes and clothes. Depending on the time of year, please ensure you have warm clothes, as some of food banks warehouses can be quite cold.
- Ask food bank volunteers' permission if you'd like to take photos. We have [consent forms](#) on our website if you'd like to take photos for the purpose of sharing externally:
- Ask permission from your team if you'd like to take photos, and ensure your company consent forms have been filled out correctly.

## DON'T

- Wear open-toed shoes or uncomfortable clothes to your volunteering session.
- Take pictures of volunteers, or anybody else in the warehouse without their consent.
- Feel like you must complete every volunteering task assigned to you. Whilst all tasks should be suitable for everyone, sometimes a food bank manager may need help with a delivery, which could require heavy lifting. Don't feel like you need to do this if you don't feel able.
- Don't forget to enjoy your time at the food bank and ask lots of questions!



# HEALTH AND SAFETY



## MANUAL HANDLING:

Prior to your volunteering session, the food bank manager will give a full briefing on manual handling techniques. However, please familiarise yourself with the following measures:

- Be aware of your own limitations and do not lift very heavy or bulky loads.
- Where required, use equipment to help you lift bulky or heavy loads.
- When carrying a load, use both hands and carry in front of and close to your body, without twisting.
- Move smoothly. Do not jerk or snatch the load as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.

## SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

The food bank manager will have conducted an inspection prior to your volunteering event to ensure the risk of slips, trips and falls is minimised. However, please ensure:

- If any hazards are identified, they are communicated to the team verbally, or by placing a warning/notice next to the hazard.



- To minimise slips, trips and falls, all aisles are kept clear, floors are kept dry and hazards are reported to the food bank manager.
- Please ensure all participants are wearing appropriate footwear.

## WORKING AT HEIGHT

In some of our larger food bank warehouses, you may be required to use a ladder or step ladder. Please ensure you follow the following guidance:

- Check the ladder is not damaged, worn or faulty.
- Check that the locking mechanism on the ladder works properly.
- Only use a ladder on firm, even ground.
- Only carry light materials and ensure you don't overreach when performing a task.
- If you spot any defects with the ladder, please inform the food bank manager.



## FIRST AID

- The food bank will have a nominated first aider, please familiarise yourself with who this is when you arrive at the food bank.
- Emergency contact details will be held by the food bank manager.
- Please make the food bank manager aware of any significant medical conditions prior to the volunteering day.
- Only the first aider should administer first aid.

If you'd like a copy of our full risk assessment for food bank volunteering, please contact [cpvolunteering@trusselltrust.org](mailto:cpvolunteering@trusselltrust.org)

Two weeks ahead of your volunteering event, you will receive an event plan from our volunteering team. This will include all the details of your volunteering day, including the address of the food bank and your point of contact for the day.

The event plan will also contain information about how to travel to the food bank and other important health and safety information.

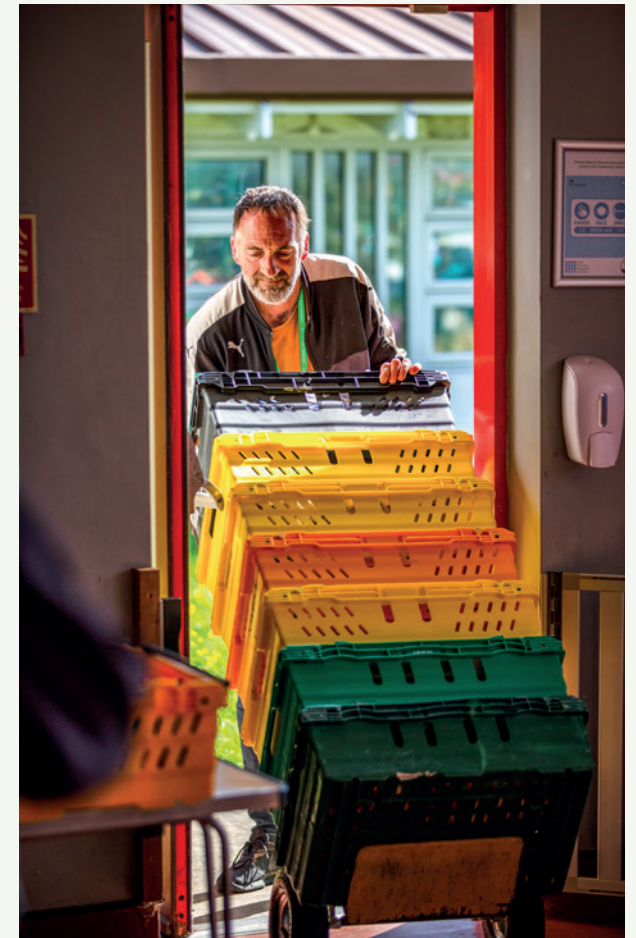
Please ensure **everyone in your volunteer group has received a copy of the event plan** ahead of your volunteering day.

## PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT FORM:

We love it when you take pictures of your volunteering day and share them with us!

However, if you plan to take pictures inside the food bank, please ensure you ask volunteers to fill out a consent form. You only need to get consent from staff and volunteers if they're captured in photos/videos you've taken, and you plan to use these photos/videos externally.

You can ask volunteers and staff to fill out our consent form online, available [here](#).





## FEEDBACK

We ask that you take two minutes to fill out our post-event survey. This will help us work with the food banks in our network to improve our volunteering offer to corporate partners in future.

[Corporate Food Bank Volunteering Survey](#)

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

Thank you for volunteering at a Trussell Trust Foodbank, we hope it will be an educational and rewarding experience. If you'd like to provide more detailed feedback following your visit or learn more about our volunteering offer to corporate partners, please email [cpvolunteering@trusselltrust.org](mailto:cpvolunteering@trusselltrust.org).

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