

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION: *MISSION, EXPECTATIONS, AND POLICIES*

Welcome to the Bargain Box of Wilmington team! We want to thank you for expressing an interest in volunteering your time, skills, and energy to support our outreach ministry.

As a volunteer joining the Bargain Box, you are joining a team much larger than can be seen on any given day of work. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the team approach to the success of the Bargain Box.

It is essential that all workers strive toward the overall success of the store. The entire ministry depends upon the everyday, routine details carried out by each individual.

Every task that needs to be done at the Bargain Box, no matter how small, is important. It is our detail-oriented service, our commitment to providing those “extra” services other stores do not provide, and our belief that a clean, well-maintained store creates a respectful and peaceful environment, that forms the foundation for our ministry.

MISSION:

The Bargain Box, as a project of the Church of the Servant (Episcopal), is a multi-faceted outreach ministry to the poor, homeless, and marginalized members of our community. The thrift store provides quality goods and clothing at significantly reduced prices, increasing the buying power and quality of life at all income levels. We seek to eliminate the negative image of second hand stores by providing a shop that is clean, well organized, pleasant, and inviting. We practice effective recycling, receiving gently used donations and giving them new life in an appropriate outreach project. Most of our donations are sold in the store, some are put in our “free bin, and the rest is given to other programs that help clothe and care for the poor. Proceeds from store sales are given away each year to established charities in our community. We believe in honoring the donor as well as the receiver, our workers as well as our customers. A positive attitude of respect permeates all of the activities at the Bargain Box.

EXPECTATIONS:

We rely very heavily on the work and generosity of time given to us by our volunteers. In return we ask that, when on site as a volunteer, you give the store your best work, most positive attitude, and strongest commitment to helping us maintain the mission of the store.

Training and Supervision for Volunteers

We use a division of labor to run our store, with our paid staff responsible for some tasks, and our volunteers responsible for others. On any given day there is a manager, assistant manager or a sorter/pricer at the store who is in charge of overseeing the operations of the store, directing the workers, and making important decisions. Please respect this person's role as your supervisor.

Volunteer Tasks

There are certain tasks that only a trained member of staff can perform, such as sorting donations, tagging clothing, pricing items, putting items onto racks, and running the cash register. The tasks we rely on volunteers to perform are equally important to the smooth operation of the store and positive image we want to put forth. Any task assigned to you, so matter how small it may seem, has been deemed essential to the quality of service we provide.

Standards of Service

When on site as a volunteer, we ask that you maintain the high standards of customer service we rely on to bring customers and donors back to the store. These include being helpful, polite, and friendly to any patron you are in contact with. If you are asked a question to which you do not know the answer, please find a staff member who can help. All of our patrons receive the same level of respect, whether they are spending a lot of money, or are looking for help and free clothing. It is important not to spend too much time helping one customer and perhaps overlooking other customers or the tasks you have been asked to perform.

Scheduling and Conduct

To ensure your successful volunteerism at the store, please keep in mind some basic business procedures. Please schedule your work days and times in advance. "Dropping in" often results in too many volunteers and not enough work to go around. We understand that sometimes you will not be able to make a scheduled shift. Let us know of your change in plans so we may adjust our schedule accordingly. Appropriate clothing should be worn when working. Although appropriate attire will depend on the type of work being done, please remember to dress in a manner suitable for the store. Our volunteers are representatives of our ministry and our sponsor church.

STORE POLICIES:

Our store policies were designed to help support the efforts our workers, and to ensure fairness and respect for all patrons. Please familiarize yourself with them and utilize them when on the site as a volunteer.

- **Prices are not subject to change.** To be fair to all customers, and for the ease of our staff, we do not change prices. We are careful not to show favoritism by offering better deals to long-term shoppers, people spending a lot of money or to people who “know someone”. We do this out of respect for customers who do not have much money or connections.
- **Items are appropriately priced.** A lot of thought goes into the pricing of our merchandise, especially for expensive or special items. Selling an expensive item for very little may benefit one person (the buyer), but selling that item at a higher, more appropriate price benefits many, since our proceeds going to charity. When donors see that we treat their valued items with such care, they are more likely to continue bringing us their best things. Additionally, our prices will never be as low as garage sale prices because we are a business, with overhead expenses. When confronted with a customer who believes a price is too high, gently remind him or her of these things.
- **All donations are received graciously.** All donations are given to us in a spirit of charity. Therefore, we must receive them all graciously, even when we can tell a donation is not of the best quality. We do not make comments about a donation within earshot of any donors or customers. We do not begin sorting a donation while the donator is present.

VOLUNTEER DISCOUNT POLICY

As a “thank you” for the hard work given to us by both our volunteers and staff, the Bargain Box gives its workers a discount on merchandise

Guidelines for Discounts

1. After an initial 8 hours of volunteer service at the store, you may choose to receive a 50% discount on all items under \$15. Items \$15 or more are full price.
2. In order to maintain your discount, you must continue to put in a minimum of 6 hours volunteer time a month.
3. This discount applies only to items purchased by you.
4. If you intend to purchase an item to resell it (i.e. on Ebay, at a flea market, or in your own store), you must pay full price.
5. You must wait until an item has been evaluated and priced for sale before stating your interest in purchasing it. It is very difficult to fairly price an item if it is known that someone desires to buy it.
6. The discount ends when your service to us ends.
7. Items from the Cody Bargain Box Store are excluded from this discount.

Anyone serving court ordered volunteer time is not eligible for the volunteer discount. The same guidelines apply to paid staff.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST

We want you to enjoy your work for the Bargain Box. If, for any reason, you are not satisfied with your volunteer experience, please let the manager or supervisor know. We want to make sure you find your work to be a fulfilling and positive experience. We try hard to match a person with an appropriate task, but if you feel your skills and interests are not being properly utilized, please talk with us so that we can get the most out of your gift of volunteerism.

Bargain Box of Wilmington: Volunteer Interest Form

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Bargain Box! Please help us get to know you, your talents, experience, and expectations by answering the following questions.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: H/ _____ W/ _____

Cell/ _____ (please circle the best number to reach you)

Email Address: _____

Days and Time Available: _____

Occupation and/or Hobbies: _____

Education and/or Special Training: _____

Do you have any special skills you would like to share with the Bargain Box?
(i.e. computer skills, retail experience, non-profit experience, fluent in Spanish).

Please check the activities you might be interested:

Preparing clothing for sale

Writing articles for newsletter

Polishing silver; preparing jewelry for sale

Outreach to groups, churches, university, etc./ Community building events
(please list any organizations you are affiliated with)

Work with Spanish-speaking customers

Gardening, grounds maintenance

Public relations/marketing/
advertising

Carpentry, painting, handiwork

Greeting/Assisting customers

Computer work, computer repair

Picking up donations (would need a truck or van)

Doing Laundry (1-2 loads at a time)

Taking clothing to other outreach programs

Repairing clothing, sewing