



Volunteer Handbook

Updated October 2021

Welcome!

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to the Philadelphia Furniture Bank, a program of Pathways to Housing PA. We are delighted that you have chosen to volunteer your time with us.

We understand that time is valuable and we are honored that you are willing to spend it here. Volunteers like you are the key to enabling the Philadelphia Furniture Bank to serve hundreds of individuals and families each year. Your efforts will help people exiting homelessness to choose furniture that will turn their new house into a home.

With your help, we can continue to work to ensure that every individual who is, or was, chronically homeless has the on-going support they need to thrive. Through the Philadelphia furniture Bank, we will continue to work towards the goals of no one in Philadelphia having to sleep on a cold, hard floor.

Thank you for helping to make an impact on the lives of those most in need.

Sincerely,



Christine Simiriglia

President & CEO

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Mission

Pathways to Housing PA empowers people with disabilities to improve their housing stability, achieve better health, and reclaim their lives.

We believe that housing is a basic human right. We provide homes and comprehensive wrap around services for people who have experienced chronic homelessness and suffer from serious mental illness, substance use disorder, and multiple other disabilities. We provide housing without any preconditions, followed by supportive treatment services to ensure that each participant remains stably housed.

History

In 2008 we were asked to house and serve some of Philadelphia's neediest and hardest to place citizens. Today we are serving 500+ people with complex behavioral health and medical issues. We have grown and modified our programming to meet Philadelphia's changing needs and currently have a 85% housing retention rate with people previously thought to be non-compliant that were unsuccessful in traditional systems.

*In 2014, to meet a growing need for furniture for people moving out of homelessness, we launched the **Philadelphia Furniture Bank (PFB)** with the belief that that no child should sleep on the floor, no family should be without a dinner table, and everyone should have a place to store clothes and treasured belongings.*

COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES:

- All visitors to the Furniture Bank must bring and **wear masks** for the duration of their appointment, in accordance with state-issued protocols.
- Per The City of Philadelphia's guidelines for health providers, we also require that all volunteers are **fully vaccinated against Covid-19**.

Volunteer Expectations

What you can expect from Pathways to Housing PA:

- Respectfulness of your commitment to our mission and your time
- An inclusive welcoming culture
- To be given guidance and direction
- To be recognized and appreciated for your work
- The right to say no to projects and tasks that make you uncomfortable

What Pathways to Housing PA expects from you:

- Honor your commitment to volunteering to support our program
- Be respectful to our staff, member agencies, and participants
- Follow directions given by staff
- Keep all communications with or concerning member agencies and/or participants in our program confidential

Volunteer Responsibilities

- Cooperate with Staff
- Adhere to organization dress code policy (see “What to Wear” on page 10)
- Be alert and sober while volunteering
- Act professionally at all times with honesty, integrity, self-control and accountability
- Learn about and uphold our organization’s policies, programs, and people
- Be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value of the job to be done

Hours of Operation

Volunteer shifts are 4 hours in length and are held Monday through Thursday between the hours of 10:00am-3:00pm.

Please choose a 4 hour shift within the following time frames:

Monday- Thursday 10:00am-3:00pm

Friday- No Volunteer Hours

Sat- Sun-Closed

Holiday Schedule

Pathways to Housing PA and the Philadelphia Furniture Bank are closed for several holidays throughout the year; therefore, volunteer opportunities are not available on the following days:

New Year's Eve

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

President's Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving Day

Black Friday

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

Important Contact Information

How to Reach the Philadelphia Furniture Bank:

For immediate information, please contact the Furniture Bank directly:

Phone: 215-291-9830

Email: furniture@pathwaystohousingpa.org

For scheduling and volunteer questions contact:

Yesenia Cano

Development Associate and Volunteer Coordinator

Phone: 215-390-1500 ext. 1020

Email: volunteer@pathwaystohousingpa.org

For Questions about how to become an agency member contact:

Phone: 215-291-9830

Email: furniture@pathwaystohousingpa.org

Philadelphia Furniture Bank Staff

Tom Maroon

Director, Philadelphia Furniture Bank

Phone: 215-455-4115

Email: tmaroon@pathwaystohousingpa.org

Kathryn Lipman

Assistant Director, Philadelphia Furniture Bank

Phone: 215-240-3944

Email: klipman@pathwaystohousingpa.org

Evelyn Casillas

Office Manager,

Philadelphia Furniture Bank

Phone: 215-713-8318

Email: ecasillas@pathwaystohousingpa.org

Yesenia Cano

Development Associate and

Volunteer Coordinator

Phone: 215-390-1500 ext. 1020

Email: volunteer@pathwaystohousingpa.org

Valerie Johnson

Vice President of Advancement and Special Projects

Phone: 267-252-8136

Email: vjohnson@pathwaystohousingpa.org

Scheduling

The Philadelphia Furniture Bank is open for Volunteers **Monday through Thursday** from **10:00am-3:00pm**. **Volunteer shifts are four (4) hours long**. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.

To schedule a volunteer day with us please complete and submit an application at pathwaystohousingpa.org/volunteer.

- Please specify what type of volunteer opportunity you are interested in: groups or individual.
- Once your form has been submitted, a member of our team will contact you within 2-3 business days to schedule a date.
- All volunteer shifts, for individuals and for groups, must be scheduled in advance. No walk-in volunteer opportunities are available at the Philadelphia Furniture Bank.

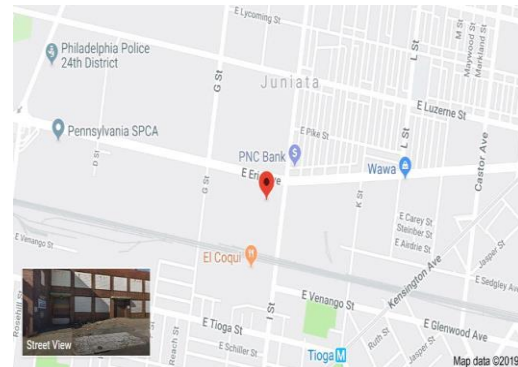
Volunteer Application

Your Information

First Name *	<input type="text"/>
Last Name *	<input type="text"/>
Street *	<input type="text"/>
City *	<input type="text"/>
State *	<input type="text"/>
Zip *	<input type="text"/>
Email *	<input type="text"/>
Email Type *	<input type="text" value="Please select..."/>
Phone *	<input type="text"/>
Phone Type *	<input type="text" value="Please select..."/>
What type of volunteer opportunity are you interested in? *	<input type="text" value="Please select..."/>

Location

The Philadelphia Furniture Bank is located at: **3650 I Street Philadelphia, PA 19134**



Getting Here

Transit

We are located near the Tioga Station on the Market Frankford line. From there, it is about a 10 minute walk. We are near the 56 SEPTA bus stop at Erie Avenue & I Street.

Driving

From I-76, take the exit for Roosevelt Boulevard North. Follow Roosevelt Boulevard to the 9th street exit and then turn LEFT onto Luzerne St. Take Luzerne all the way up then turn RIGHT onto I street. The destination will be on the right.

Please call us if you need assistance finding the warehouse: 215-291-9830

Parking and Entering

There is typically plenty of free street parking around the blocks surrounding the Philadelphia Furniture Bank, particularly on I Street and on Venango Street. The entry doors will have a white sign with our logo that reads “Philadelphia Furniture Bank”. A Pathways staff member will greet you in the lobby.

Volunteering: Your Day with Us

Please Note: Per The City of Philadelphia's guidelines for health providers, we require that all volunteers are fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

We need both individuals and groups of volunteers year round to help with a variety of tasks at the Philadelphia Furniture Bank. Listed below are several types of volunteer opportunities that may be available during your scheduled shift; opportunities vary according to need. All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.

Personal Shopper

The Philadelphia Furniture Bank relies heavily on personal shopping volunteers in order to help our clients choose furniture for their new homes. Personal Shoppers are asked to commit to at least one four-hour shift per month, and can visit PFB as often as once a week. Shifts are Monday through Friday between 10am and 3pm.

Tasks include:

- Conduct initial intake appointments with clients and their case managers to double check all information regarding the referral and record any additional information.
- Accompany clients and their case managers as they shop for furniture in our warehouse and record items chosen.
- Utilize Salesforce, a data system, via an iPad to track required information during each appointment to ensure that inventory and client data is appropriately recorded.
- Assist warehouse staff with identifying furniture chosen by each client.
- Providing a safe and welcoming space for clients and their case managers as they take the final step on their journey to a new home.

Office Assistant

The Philadelphia Furniture Bank relies on office volunteers to ensure our office systems run smoothly to ensure our clients have a great experience choosing furniture for their new homes. Office Assistants are asked to commit to at least one four-hour shift per month, and can visit PFB as often as once a week. Shifts are Monday through Friday between 10am and 3pm.

Tasks include:

- Answer the telephone and provide support to callers in answering questions, providing directions, and trouble shooting any issues with PFB staff.
- Enter data into Salesforce, a data system, to appropriately record client information, donations, and inventory.
- File documents in the appropriate locations and assist with other general office tasks.

Warehouse Assistant

The Philadelphia Furniture Bank relies on warehouse volunteers in order to ensure that we are able to efficiently pick up donations and deliver furniture to clients at their new homes.

Warehouse Assistants are asked to commit to at least one four-hour shift per month, and can visit PFB as often as once a week. Shifts are Monday through Friday between 10am and 3pm.

Tasks include:

- Load and unload furniture from our trucks
- Organize furniture within the warehouse
- Stage orders for delivery
- Repair, paint, and assemble furniture as needed
- Keep warehouse clean and organized

What to Wear

The Philadelphia Furniture Bank is housed inside of a warehouse that is difficult to heat in the winter and cool in the summer, so dress accordingly in comfortable clothing with the understanding that it may get dirty, stained, ripped, or distressed throughout the day due to manual labor. Wear closed toe shoes at all times for safety and bring safety work gloves if you have them!

Personal Belongings

Because of the layout of the warehouse and the limited space inside of the office, volunteers are cautioned to bring minimal valuables into the building. The Philadelphia Furniture Bank and Pathways to Housing PA are not responsible for loss of personal property.

*Restrooms are located on the premises as well as a break table, refrigerator, and microwave should you wish to bring lunch.

Events

Pathways to Housing PA Presents



Chair Affair

This unique event held in April each year showcases the teamwork and creativity of prominent local artists and designers, who re-purpose and re-imagine chairs from the Philadelphia Furniture Bank. The redesigned chairs are auctioned at the event, which also includes raffles for a chance at winning gift certificates and experiences. All funds raised through the Chair Affair directly benefit the Philadelphia Furniture Bank.

By supporting the Chair Affair, you are generously helping individuals and families in deep poverty who are moving out of homelessness to receive much needed furniture. Your support will enable us to furnish the homes of more than 1,000 families this year (a figure that has doubled in the last year), which creates the stability and dignity that everyone deserves.

Closing

The Philadelphia Furniture Bank opened in December 2014 with the belief that no child should sleep on the floor, no family should be without a dinner table, and everyone should have a place to store clothes and treasured belongings. With your help, the Furniture Bank solves these issues for individuals and families moving out of homelessness in Philadelphia.

We could not do what we do without the support of volunteers, both groups and individuals. The extra hands that ensure that our participants have a personal shopper with them as they choose furniture for their new home, ensure that furniture that has been painted or repaired or put together, and ensure that deliveries are made and inventory is organized – they're invaluable.

Despite ongoing support from our generous supporters, we are always in need of lamps, art work, and mirrors to help turn houses into homes. If you have any extra items that are easy to carry that you would like to donate, please feel free to bring them with you!

We truly thank you for being a part of the Pathways team!

To make a donation please visit:

pathwaystohousingpa.org/donate

Thank you for Choosing Us!