VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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Introduction

First and Foremost – Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!
Thank you for taking the time to review this Volunteer Handbook! This means you have done a wonderful thing – you have decided to help and support Women Giving Back (WGB).

The women and children we serve who are in need are grateful, your fellow volunteers are grateful, and the WGB staff, and board members are beyond grateful. We will all do everything in our power to make this a great experience for you.

Purpose of the “Volunteer Handbook”
How many times have you said to yourself: “I just wish I knew how to help.” This Handbook is designed to do just that: to assist you in helping the women. It covers the basics of what you need to know to be a volunteer for WGB.

- **Read the Handbook BEFORE you start** your volunteer activities so you will be familiar with the tasks and responsibilities when you arrive at the WGB store.
- **Reference the Handbook** as often as you need to while you are volunteering to refresh your memory about how to do certain activities, especially those tasks you don’t do very often.
- **If you are training other volunteers**, use the information in the Handbook to help you describe and show how tasks are performed.

The Primary Goals of a WGB Volunteer Are…
- **Make it all about the women!** – Stay focused on what’s best for the women, children and the program.
- **Share your great attitude** – Be excited and happy to be helping WGB - it’s contagious!
- **Be a willing helper** – Clients don’t know how this all works. As a willing, enthusiastic volunteer you can make this a great experience for them.

*It all makes a difference in the lives of women and children in crisis.*
About Women Giving Back

OUR MISSION
Women Giving Back’s mission is to support women and children in crisis, and build their confidence and self-esteem, by providing great quality clothing at no cost, assisted by caring and committed volunteers who offer personalized service and interaction.

OUR VALUES

Compassion – To provide a cheerful, friendly atmosphere where those we serve feel comfortable and welcome.

Respect – To be respectful and considerate of those we serve and not question or judge the circumstances that bring them to us.

Self-Esteem – To build women’s self-esteem by providing them with clothing that makes them feel good about themselves.

Service - To work hard and give our best to help those we serve.

OUR BACKGROUND
In June of 2007 a core group of sales and marketing professional women from the homebuilder industry formed Women Giving Back. Beginning as a program under HomeAid Northern Virginia and operating out of a humble closet at the Northern Virginia’s Builder Association, Women Giving Back has grown considerably. Now with their own nonprofit 501(c)(3) status and a newly renovated 8,619 square feet warehouse/store with an additional 4,425 square feet of office space in Sterling, Virginia we continue to expand services and serve thousands of women and children a year.

WHY WE DO THIS
WGB’s mission is more than clothes – their committed volunteers provide personal service and uplifting interaction in a unique boutique-like atmosphere, focused on helping women arrive at a level of self-confidence that enables them to improve their lives and achieve independence. The increased self-esteem that comes from securing and maintaining employment not only helps individual women, but contributes to stable families, which, in turn, improves to the viability and safety of our communities.
Volunteer Expectations and Roles

Expectations of Volunteers

• Commitment to the mission, goals, and policies of WGB
• Dependability, punctuality, and responsibility
• Confidentiality and respect for those you help
• Flexibility and creativity in response to change
• Cooperation, courtesy, respect and trust without discrimination
• Dedication to job performance standards
• Role modeling. Dress comfortably, but remember you are also a role model for our clients

What Volunteers Can Expect From WGB
We will do everything we can to ensure that you have the knowledge and resources to fulfill your volunteer role effectively. This handbook is one way we will provide this information however our staff and board members are also available to answer questions and/or provide additional information as needed.

Volunteer and Staff Screening
Full-time staff must have background checks conducted before hire. The Program & Volunteer Coordinator oversees volunteer applications, screening and training. After volunteers register to volunteer on WGB.VOLUNTEERHUB.COM, they will receive a tour and orientation upon arrival from a staff member, board member, or a lead volunteer.

Volunteer Roles
The first step to being a volunteer is identifying what volunteer role or roles you would like to fill (many volunteers fulfill more than one role during their volunteer time). There are a wide variety of volunteer roles and tasks that you can choose from to help support WGB. They include “in-store” volunteers and “off-site” volunteers.

Store & Warehouse Volunteers: Store and Warehouse volunteers have the opportunity to work directly with clients and/or work behind the scenes at the WGB Store/Warehouse. Activities may include:
• Sorting and hanging clothes
• Personal Shopper
• Bag-To-Go Shopper
• Cleaning the store
• Group Sort Leader

• Restocking displays
• Restocking store
• Receiving Donations
• Child Care

More detailed descriptions of these activities start on page 8.

**Off-Site Volunteers:** Off-site volunteers help clients through tasks and activities outside of the store. These can be ongoing or deadline oriented and may include:

- Donation Drive Leads
- Outreach
- Event Table Attendant
- Special Events
- Grant Writing/Research
- Marketing/PR/Fundraising
- Data Entry/Computer Work
- Driver (Pick Up/Drop off Donations)

More detailed descriptions of these activities coming soon.

**In-Store Volunteers**

**Your First Day**
You will report to the Sort Leader when you arrive to the store for your first scheduled volunteer shift. They are the individuals you can rely on to help in any way. In addition, we have many Lead Volunteers who have been regularly working with us for some time and they are also a good resource for questions and/or additional information.

**New Volunteer Training**
New volunteers should receive a brief orientation and tour of the WGB store and warehouse on their first day. The remaining training takes place “on the job” after you decide the area of the store that you would like to work in. Adult volunteers are welcome to work in any area of the store that they wish, provided they have received training in that area from a staff member or experienced volunteer.

**Record Your Hours**
The first and last thing you should do when you come to the store to volunteer is log in when you arrive and log out when you leave. This helps us better keep track our volunteer hours for grant reporting. Note that there are three types of volunteers at WGB:

**Lead Volunteers**
These volunteers have been trained and typically serve at WGB at least one time per month. These individuals can be identified by their name tag “Volunteer Extraordinaire”.

**Volunteers**
Volunteers who expect to serve less than one time per month at WGB. If you start serving more often, please let us know so that we can add you to our Lead volunteer group.

**Groups**
Volunteers who are in a group coming to volunteer (corporate, faith-based organization, community school group, etc.)

**Where You Can Work**
Volunteer tasks will vary depending on if you work in the **STORE FRONT** or **WAREHOUSE**. This manual will describe the duties and tasks in each area. Please note that male volunteers are not allowed in the Store Front when there are clients shopping.

**Greeters**

*Outdoor Greeters*
1. Welcome the clients with a smile and greet them.
2. Ask them to have their ID’s ready for check in.
3. Ask them if they have been to WGB before. If it is their first-time shopping with us give them a shopping list to let them know how many items they can take.

*Indoor Greeters*
1. When families arrive at the shop, a staff member will check them in, matching their name on the registration list with the name on their ID.
2. After check-in, greet the clients by introducing yourself to the clients and their children.
3. Offer them a shopping bag or two if they have multiple children.
4. You can ask if they would like their children to stay in our child care play area while they shop. If so, ask one of the childcare escorts to take the children to the play area.
**Personal Shopper – The Host with the Most**

The Personal Shopper serves as the host for the client during their shopping experience and helps make that experience as pleasant and supportive as possible. Personal Shoppers should be prepared to offer a high level of customer service by being friendly, professional and going above and beyond to make sure each woman leaves with a full wardrobe.

1. Show the clients where they can find clothing for themselves and their children and tell them how the store is arranged by size. Make sure they know there are dressing rooms and they are welcome to try clothes on. Put selected clothing in the clients shopping bag. Do not bring individual items to check out.
2. Show clients where they can find extras:
   - Pajamas, socks, bras, camisoles and the other items are near the purses.
   - Shelves of adult books are in the front by the sofa. These items are also unlimited.
   - Toiletries are in front of check out in the drawers below the scarves.
3. At this point, some clients will want to shop on their own, while others will continue to want your help. Some clients often like to shop on their own, so you can ask another client if they would like assistance.
4. Simply suggest that if they have any questions, you will be available to assist. Tell them to where to go for check out when they are done.
5. NEVER take shoppers in the warehouse and avoid being alone with a child anywhere in the store.
6. Once clients have selected their remaining wardrobe items, help them take their bag(s) to the checkout counter.
7. Ask if they need help carrying their bags out of the store.

**Check-Out**

Importance: The Check-Out volunteer ensures that shoppers go home with a complete wardrobe but it is also a great time to ask how their experience was and compliment them on the items they choose.
1. As shoppers bring up their shopping bag for checkout double check to make sure that each woman has received a full wardrobe by cross checking the shopping list for the day. (pictured right). The shopping list can change due to inventory.

2. Make sure they have selected the correct number of each item and place these items in the appropriate white to go bags. Please do not bag items as families are shopping unless they indicate that they are finished shopping.

3. If they came in the same vehicle/bus with others, please put a label with their name written on it on each bag.

**PLEASE CHOOSE**

- 50 Clothing
- 4 Shoes
- 1 Coat
- 1 Purse
- 2 Jewelry
- 1 Bra

**Re-stocker**

Importance: Re-stockers make sure that there is plenty of merchandise in each type and size on the shop floor in each department (Clothing, Coats, Shoes, Purses, Jewelry, etc). This helps to ensure that shoppers will find clothing that fits and is the style they want. All restocking is done when there are no shoppers in the store.

1. Take note of gaps in the inventory in the store. Take inventory from racks which have already been sized, sorted and hung and are ready for the store to fill in gaps.

2. Find items in the warehouse to fill in gaps. Several of the storage areas in the back change seasonally, so please don’t hesitate to ask for help finding items. Be sure that all items are hung in the same direction.

3. Hang or place the re-stocking items in the appropriate place on the store floor. Please ensure that the item’s size matches the correct size marker on the rack. Hangers all need to be facing the same direction. should always face like a question mark (?). See Appendix for a complete description of the WGB Appearance Standards.

4. When restocking, do not overload the racks – there should be space for shoppers to see items without having to completely remove them from the racks. There are back stock areas for every item that WGB carries, so please ask if you do not know where to put excess inventory.

5. If there are no items, or not enough items, in the warehouse to fully restock, please tell a staff member.
WAREHOUSE VOLUNTEERS

General Information

Behind the scenes work at WGB, which includes sorting, bagging, hanging and storing items, is essential to the organization. A clean and organized warehouse makes everyone’s experience at WGB better! With this in mind, here are some general things to keep in mind:

- **Leave it better than you found it.** A cluttered warehouse is unsafe and difficult to work in. Please allow for at least 20 minutes at the end of your shift to collect and discard trash/recycling, straighten the sorting counters, sanitize surfaces and clear walkways.
- **Finish what you start.** If you are sorting a bag of donations and don’t finish, put the bag back in the incoming donation pile.
- **Keep it consistent.** Do not rip signage off bins or take bins with printed signs that are temporarily empty. Never write on typed signage or change size ranges on storage bins.
- **Use established systems.** The storage systems in the warehouse should basically be the same from week to week. Only staff, board or specially trained volunteers should complete major changes (e.g. signage changes).
- **Recycle.** We recycle wire and plastic tubular hangers and plastic bags. Please take the time to put them in their designated bins.

Sorting – Picking Out the Good Stuff

Importance: Clothing is donated generously, but not always in an organized way. Sorters make sure that donated clothing meet the standards of WGB, and that re-stocking can be done easily and quickly on a daily basis.

**THE SORTING PROCESS**

1. Unsorted items are located to by the back-loading bay door in the warehouse.
2. When sorting donations, we have 4 categories “Adult & Children Summer” (lighter fabrics, pastel colors), “Adult & Children Winter” (heavier fabrics, sweaters). “Red Bag Items” are items that are not appropriate for our boutique. See red bag guidelines on the next page. Note. Layering pieces (shells, tees, cardigans) are ALWAYS in season.
3. Sorters are responsible for carefully examining each piece of clothing and making sure each item is clean, undamaged, in style and ready for the shop. The guide on the next page will help you decide what to do with different types of items. When in doubt, please ask staff or a fellow volunteer.
4. Clothing will be examined thoroughly and if they are in good condition and it will be folded into the appropriate bin.
5. Clothing and uncollectable donations (i.e. bedding, bags, household items etc.) that we choose not to keep for any reason (out of style, dirty, damaged, etc.) should go in the large red bags.
6. Remove all price tags or dry cleaning tags (extra buttons can remain).
7. Check pockets for holes and items.

**Red Bag Items:**

- Used underwear bottoms
- Outdated. If it is a visibly dated style. (ex. large shoulder-pads)
- Bathing suits (keep only if brand new w/ tag)
- Clothing that is stained, torn, ragged or otherwise not wearable (check if it has all the buttons and that zippers work).
- Clothing that smells bad (cigarette, animal odor & fur)
- Shirts from events or school (K-12) sports, teams, camps or clubs. Shirts with company logos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stains</th>
<th>Animal Hair</th>
<th>Tears/Holes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outdated Clothing**

| ![Image](image4.png) | ![Image](image5.png) | ![Image](image6.png) |

**Shoes:** Women’s shoes should be taken to the shoe area for sorting.
If you are sorting shoes please first inspect them for missing heels, scrapes, scuffs and wear. These shoes should be placed in red bags. Then shoes should be rubber band together and placed in the appropriate size bins. There are also bins for out of season shoes such as sandals in the winter and boots in the summer.

The Store shoe racks should be filled as needed from the sized shoe bins.

![Image of shoes with red circles indicating wear]

**Jewelry:** Place in bin marked jewelry near back door- to be sorted later. (Note: Do not stock the store from this bin as it needs to be sorted first.)

**Purses:** Check for holes, tears, stains and remove any items inside and then place in appropriate bin marked near back door.

**Scarves, Belts, Hats & Gloves:** Check for holes, tears, stains, or snags and fold neatly into marked bin near back door.

**Hosiery, Shapewear, Undergarments:** We only accept hosiery and underwear that are NEW, in packaging. Place neatly into marked bin near back door. Gently used bras are accepted and can be placed in the store as they are received because they are in high demand.

**THE SIZING & HANGING PROCESS**

1. After the clothes are separated by season in the sorting area, next the clothes need to be separated by size into the appropriate bins.
2. Determine the size of an item by first looking at the manufactures tag. However, keep in mind that different clothing makers market the same clothing under different sizes, so don’t only rely on the tag. Also, a lot of clothing comes in with the tag missing. Many times figuring out the size will be a judgment call based on comparing the clothing against other items already hung in the different size categories. Use the size chart posted in the sorting area as a guideline, and then use your best judgment.

Note: Please use the size conversion chart posted in the backroom to transition number to letter sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size Numbers</th>
<th>Size Letter</th>
<th>Size Marker Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>XS</td>
<td>Gold/Tan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>XL</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+</td>
<td>XXL</td>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. When hanging the clothes, the size marker letter and color should correspond with the clothing’s size. There are two racks per size, one for bottoms and one for tops. Please hang the item with the correct hanger. **Suits go with tops and are hung with pant-hangers.** Anything with shoulders we consider tops and should be hung with tops (i.e. Suits). **Silky blouses are hung with velvet hangers. Tops are hung with a top hanger.** Pants/skirts are hung stretched out (not folded) with a pants hanger (please do not use pant-suit hangers for pants). **Coats are hung with a wooden hanger.**

**RECEIVING DONATIONS**

1. Listen for the donation doorbell. Greet donors with a smile & “May I help you with your donations?”
2. Let donor hand you the donations from the car so we do not accidentally take anything they do not want donated.
3. Ask them if they are mixed donations or shoes (shoes go on shoe table).
4. Offer them a receipt for tax purposes. They can take the receipt with them.
5. Offer them a tour of the store. They are always impressed!
6. Thank them for their donation!
Importance: Keeping the store spic and span makes it more welcoming and enjoyable for clients, more comfortable and hospitable for volunteers, and improves safety and hygiene. If you are assigned cleaning duties, be ready to put the white glove touch on the store where ever you can. Some of the items on the WGB checklist include:

- Pick up clothing off the floor and re-hang or re-shelve them.
- Removing empty hangers and hanging them on the hanger racks for reuse.
- Wipe down shelves, racks, tables, counters, etc.
- Sweep the store, child care area or warehouse.
- Clean out the dressing rooms, mirrors and other surfaces.
- Empty all trash containers and replacing with new trash bags.
- At the end of a shopping shift, the children’s area needs to be cleaned, and toys and surfaces wiped down with sanitizer wipes.

**APPENDIX: Appearance Standards**

Please take the time to find the right hanger for the item you are hanging:
- Shirts that might slip off the hanger (i.e. with a large neckline, or made of silky material) should be hung on a hanger with slip stop (foam or rubber coating).
- Use adult size hangers for all adult clothing. Smaller hangers should be hung on hanger rack in children’s warehouse.
- For tank tops and dresses with straps, use a hanger with a notch that will hold the strap in place.
- Place wire and tubular hangers in their designated recycle bins.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Garment Description</th>
<th>Hanger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tops, blouses, sweaters, blazers, robes, sleepwear, dresses, light weight jackets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment Description</td>
<td>Hanger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottoms, Tube tops, strapless and halters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackets, coats, heavy weight robes and heavy weight coats, outerwear.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Silk Blouses, dresses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2pc suits, 2pc sleepwear</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples:

When hanging any item, please make sure the hanger is in the shape of a question mark (?) as you look at the front of the item. This helps ensure every item is hanging the same direction.

Pants in all departments should be hung open with the fly zipped and buttoned. Always hang pants with a clip hanger. Pants should hang neatly and evenly, without sagging and with an even amount of fabric on each side of the clips. This makes it easier to see for the women shopping.
Coats/jackets should be hung buttoned/zipped to the top on a hanger durable enough for the weight of the coat/jacket.

Tops should be buttoned to the top and hung evenly on the hanger.

When clothing is placed on boutique floor it should be put in with the proper size. Within each size section like clothing should be together i.e.: dresses, suits & blazers, sweaters, blouses, sleeveless clothing. All hangers are to be facing the same direction.
Hangers Rack

Safety First
Please do not climb on shelving. Only use a step stool or ladder to reach top shelves.