



# MONTGOMERY

## United Methodist Church

Since 1838

## Volunteer Policy

### MUMC Food Pantry

### Effective Date

This MUMC Food Pantry volunteer Policy shall be effective May 10, 2026.

### Introduction

The MUMC Food Pantry is committed to providing food assistance to members of our community in need. Our success is heavily dependent on the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. This policy outlines the guidelines and expectations for volunteers to ensure a safe, respectful, and productive environment for everyone involved.

### Volunteer Recruitment and Application

#### Eligibility

Volunteers must be at least 13 years old to participate in pantry activities. Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. All potential volunteers must complete an application form and undergo an interview process. On a limited and exceptional basis, with the approval of a member of the Leadership Team, existing volunteers may bring their children and grandchildren under the age of 13 in order to introduce them to non-profit services. In such cases, the under-aged children must be closely supervised by their parents and/or grandparents.

Pantry clients and persons looking to fulfill community service requirements are not eligible to volunteer. Accepted third party organization adult volunteers are responsible for supervising their minors and assumed to be vetted by their organization.

#### Application Process

1. Fill out the volunteer application form available on our website or in person at the pantry.
2. Participate in an interview with the Volunteer Coordinator and/or a member of the Leadership Team.

3. Complete a criminal background check, if age 18 or older.
4. Attend an orientation session and sign liability waiver.

## Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

### Food Sorting and Packaging

Volunteers will sort donated food items, check for expiration dates, and package them for distribution. Attention to detail and adherence to food safety guidelines are crucial in this role.

### Distribution Assistance

Volunteers will assist clients by distributing food packages, answering questions, and providing support. Volunteers must be courteous, respectful, and maintain client confidentiality.

### Inventory Management

Volunteers will assist with inventory management, including stock-taking, organizing storage areas, and ensuring that shelves are well-stocked and orderly.

### Logistics Assistance

Volunteers will assist with staging for distribution, managing the parking lot, resupplying distribution lines, breaking down boxes, general cleanup, maintaining the pantry grounds, storing supplies overnight, and various other tasks as needed.

### Client Registration

Volunteers will assist in checking in existing clients, re-certifying existing clients, and registering new clients with oversight from experienced volunteers.

## Code of Conduct

Volunteers are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct while representing the MUMC Food Pantry. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Respectful and courteous behavior towards all clients, staff, and fellow volunteers.
- Adherence to food safety and pantry guidelines.
- Maintaining the confidentiality of clients' information.
- Refraining from any form of discrimination or harassment.
- Reporting any unsafe conditions or suspicious activities to the Volunteer Coordinator/Leadership Team.
- The food pantry is a "politics-free zone". Please refrain from discussing politics and other socially sensitive subjects.

## Volunteer Training

Volunteer training is largely on-the-job-training whereby a member of the Leadership Team or an experienced volunteer will guide new volunteers as to tasks and duties. Additional training sessions may be required for specific roles. Training sessions will cover:

- Overview of the pantry's mission and services.
- Relationship to the Montgomery County Food Bank and flow down of requirements.
- Food safety and handling procedures.
- Client interaction and confidentiality.
- Emergency procedures and safety protocols.
- Clients' civil rights

## Supervision and Support of the Leadership Team

Volunteers will be supervised by the Volunteer Coordinator, a member of the Leadership Team, or designated staff members. Regular check-ins and feedback sessions will be conducted to ensure that volunteers feel supported, and any issues are promptly addressed.

## Volunteer Attendance and Commitment

Although volunteer participation at the pantry is purely at the discretion of the volunteer, regular attendance allows for a more fulfilling experience and greater connection with other volunteers as well as our clients. Consistent, reliable attendance is crucial for the pantry's operations and reliability.

## Health and Safety

The health and safety of our volunteers and clients are paramount. Volunteers must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Wear appropriate attire. Conservative and weather appropriate.
- Stay hydrated.
- Leave valuables at home to the greatest extent possible.
- Practice good hygiene, including regular handwashing and sanitizing.
- Report any injuries or illnesses immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator/Leadership Team.
- Follow all pantry safety protocols and emergency procedures.

## Termination of Volunteer Service

Volunteers who fail to adhere to the policies and guidelines outlined in this document may be subject to termination of their volunteer service. Reasons for termination may include, but are not limited to:

- Breaching client confidentiality.
- Engaging in discriminatory or harassing behavior.
- Failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct above.
- Failure to embrace the Pantry’s spirit of nonjudgmental and gracious service.
- Violating food safety or pantry guidelines.
- Intentional and/or repeated failure to cooperate with the Leadership Team.

In the event a volunteer violates any of the above, two or more members of the Leadership Team will meet with the volunteer to address the issue. Such meeting shall serve as a warning against future violations. The Leadership Team nevertheless reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to terminate a volunteer with or without warning in order to maintain the safety and integrity of the food pantry program.

## Potential Periodic Suspension of Volunteer Applications

Maintaining an appropriate number of qualified and committed volunteers is critical to our food pantry’s mission and success. The volunteer roster is dynamic with unpredictable growth and attrition. As such, there may be times when acceptance of new volunteers may not be possible or beneficial. This is especially true for large groups seeking volunteer opportunities. During such times, at the discretion of the Leadership Team, acceptance of new applications may be suspended until such time as additional volunteers are required.

## Feedback and Improvement

The MUMC Food Pantry values the input of its volunteers and encourages feedback. Volunteers are welcome to and encouraged to share their suggestions and concerns with the Volunteer Coordinator/Leadership Team to help improve the pantry’s operations and volunteer experience.

## Modifications and Amendments

This MUMC Food Pantry Volunteer Policy may be modified and amended at any time upon approval of the pantry governing MUMC Oversight Committee.

## Conclusion

By volunteering at the MUMC Food Pantry, you are making a significant impact on the lives of those in need within our community. We thank you for your dedication, compassion, and hard work. Together, we can continue to provide essential services and support to those who need it most.

MUMC Food Pantry distributes food in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Texas Health and Human Services Commission nondiscrimination requirements. We are an equal opportunity provider.