

Greer Community Ministries

Food Pantry and Sharon's Closet Volunteer Information

WELCOME!

Welcome and thank you for volunteering to work in our Food Pantry or Sharon's Closet. You are joining a dedicated group of individuals who are committed to providing food and clothing to neighbors in need in the Greater Greer community.

These programs would not be as effective without the help of faithful volunteers like you. Your warm sweet spirit and your desire to help others is of vital importance in making our clients feel welcome here at GCM.

Your help is essential in accomplishing our mission, and we are excited to have you as part of our team. We want your experience to be pleasant, rewarding and enriching. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Again, thank you for helping us help others.

*"...as ye have done it unto the least
of these my brethren..."*

You represent Greer Community Ministries to everyone we serve. Clients coming in may feel uncomfortable and unsure of what to do. For many people, coming to GCM for help means they have run out of resources. You should be mindful of this as you greet them. You may be the first friendly face they have encountered in a while. And you represent Greer Community Ministries to everyone who walks through our doors. Please be respectful, courteous, and helpful to every person who comes into GCM.

The following information is to provide guidelines, procedures and other resources to help you do your job more effectively. However, it is not all-inclusive. Please do not hesitate to ask GCM staff members any questions you may have.

- Dress is casual, preferably pants or jeans and appropriate shirt. Remember that you are in a role in which you meet a wide variety of people and in which you represent our ministry. Dress to reflect a positive image for yourself and GCM.
- Courteous, professional behavior is essential at all times.
- Please **be respectful of client confidentiality**: do not disclose any client information.

Schedule

The Food Pantry is open from 9:00 am until noon, Monday through Friday, and the Clothing Closet is open from 9:00 am until 11:30 am.

Volunteers in our Food Pantry sort food donations by product type and prepare the food to be stored on pantry shelves. You should check expiration dates on each item. Items that have reached or exceeded expiration date should be segregated. We check dates against USDA guidelines to determine whether the item must be discarded. Regardless, any item that looks old or is damaged will be discarded. Our motto is, "When in doubt, throw it out."

Another major task for food pantry volunteers is preparing food orders for distribution. Bags are doubled, tied together, and placed in a barrel for packing food. The food is placed in these bags according to the "Food Order Guidelines" posted in the pantry. The bags are then tied and placed in the appropriate bins in the pantry. They will be placed on the carts in the hall as needed for the front desk volunteer to use.

Clothing closet volunteers help sort through donated clothing. We do not keep clothing that is stained, torn, missing buttons or has a broken zipper. Clothing items that are in poor condition are bagged and placed in the recycling bin beside our building. Out of season clothing that we cannot store is packaged and placed in the hall for the Salvation Army to pick up. Items that are in good condition are placed neatly on appropriate shelves or racks in the clothing closet. Please be sure to place items in the proper designated area so that clients can shop with ease.

Keeping clothes neat and orderly requires daily maintenance. Volunteers fold, straighten and re-hang items as needed to keep everything in its place. When clients are shopping in the clothing closet, please assist them in finding what they need. We have placed signs out to help identify items on each rack, and other signs indicate the number of items clients may select. Twice per year, we replace the entire inventory for the change in seasons. The closet is closed to clients during the week that we change our stock to give volunteers time to complete this major project without interruptions and distractions.

Emergency situations

Safety concerns: if you have any safety concerns at any time, notify the Coordinator or Executive Director immediately. Do not engage with any visitor who behaves in a hostile or disruptive manner. Inform the Coordinator or Executive Director, and they will intervene.

Client emergency: If any client has an accident in our facility, notify the Food Pantry/Clothing Closet Coordinator and Executive Director immediately.

Greer Community Ministries' office is closed when Greenville County Schools are closed due to inclement weather. However, we are open when schools have delayed opening.

Thank you for helping us help neighbors in need.

Sincerely,

Maureen Bryan
Food Pantry & Sharon's Closet Coordinator