
THE MOUNT KISCO

INTERFAITH

FOOD PANTRY



Our Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry (the Pantry). We are grateful for your contribution of time and talent to help us fulfill our goal of building a stronger, healthier community by providing fresh, nutritious food to persons in need in the greater Mount Kisco area.

- Location: The United Methodist Church of Mount Kisco, 300 E. Main Street (at the corner of Smith Ave.), Mount Kisco
- Mailing Address: PO Box 834, Mount Kisco, NY 10549
- Phone: 914-610-5187
- Volunteer Coordinator:
volunteer@mountkiscofoodpantry.org

The Pantry is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit corporation sponsored by and working in affiliation with local faith-based congregations and has been serving the community since 1991. Our weekly food distributions are staffed primarily by volunteers from our affiliated congregations, but volunteers from the community are not only welcome, they also play a vital role in helping ensure we are fully staffed for each distribution. Congregational and community volunteers also provide valuable support by leading targeted food drives; picking up, unloading, sorting, and shelving donated food; packing bags with fresh produce; and assisting with home deliveries.

Your interest and involvement make you an important partner in the effort to alleviate hunger in our community. You are making a real difference in the lives of your neighbors, and we are delighted you have chosen to serve with us.

Thank you for volunteering!

Contents

Purpose of Handbook and How to Use It

Organizational Information

- Mission and Vision
- History and Background

Affiliated Congregations

Volunteer Information

- The Pantry's Commitment to our Volunteers
- Guidance and Oversight
- Time Reporting/Volunteer Sheets
- Standards of Conduct
- Age Requirements
- Dress Code
- Parking and Personal Property
- Volunteers Who Are Also Guests of the Pantry
- Weather Policy
- Confidentiality
- Safety
- Risk Management Procedure for Volunteers
- Dismissal
- Driver Policy

Volunteer Job Descriptions

- Packing Produce Bags
- Date-Checking, Weighing, Sorting, and Shelving Food Donations
- Home Deliveries
- Weekly Food Distributions

Policies and Practices

- Non-Discrimination
- Harassment Prohibition
- Sexual Harassment Prohibition
- Whistleblower Protection Policy

Purpose of Handbook and How to Use It

This Handbook has been developed to help you feel comfortable and confident as a Pantry volunteer. In it, we outline some of our history, mission, procedures, and policies, as well as explain your responsibilities as a volunteer. Our goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment for our volunteers, employees, and guests.

Please become familiar with the information in this Handbook. While we hope you will find the Handbook helpful, you may have additional questions about our program—please don't hesitate to ask! Our Director of Operations and Programs or a member of our Operations Committee is present at each distribution, along with at least one Board member, and they will be happy to assist you.

The content and materials in this Handbook may be modified from time to time in order to provide the most current information.



Organizational Information

Mission

Our pantry promotes the health and well-being of our northern Westchester community by providing weekly nutritious food and complementary education and services to those in need. Our congregational and community partners work together to honor the dignity of those we serve.

Vision

We empower our neighbors to thrive by providing nutritious food and complementary programming in a warm and welcoming way.

History and Background

The Pantry opened its doors to neighbors in need in 1991. The organization was founded by one church, one synagogue, and one unaffiliated member, and operated out of the old schoolhouse on Moore Avenue. At the first distribution, eight families were served. We are presently located in the United Methodist Church of Mount Kisco. Over the past three decades, the Pantry has grown dramatically, and currently serves several hundred families each week, 51 weeks of the year. Now an alliance of numerous faith-based institutions, the Pantry remains dedicated to providing a safety net for anyone who does not have enough nutritious food to feed themselves or their families. We provide assistance to any person in need who resides in a northern Westchester community not already served by a weekly pantry.

We are a “choice” pantry that consistently offers guests a selection of non-perishable staples such as rice, beans, pasta and cereal, as well as milk, juice, eggs, and frozen meat, poultry, or fish. Along with canned fruit and vegetables we are pleased to provide fresh produce weekly. Most Pantry food is purchased from Feeding Westchester (food bank), where we have enhanced purchasing power through discounts and government lines of credit. Additionally, we receive weekly donations of fresh bread, bagels, and pastries; and we are grateful for generous donations of seasonal produce from local farms.

In addition to weekly food distributions, we offer deliveries to the homebound; food preparation, nutrition, parenting, and other classes; assistance with registration for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program); screening for WIC (federal food aid for Women, Infants Children); and various health

screenings provided by Northern Westchester Hospital. We provide bilingual verbal and written communication whenever possible.

The Pantry operations are co-administered by the Board and a part-time Director of Operations and Programs, with the invaluable assistance of hundreds of regular volunteers. The Board is organized around working committees: Development, Finance, Governance, Grants, Management, and Operations. Our nearly all-volunteer model offers volunteers many ways to apply their skills to the Pantry's mission.

The Pantry is supported financially not only by generous individual donors, but also by corporate and private foundations, state and federal grants, family trusts, local businesses, and our affiliated congregations.

Affiliated Congregations

- Bedford Presbyterian Church www.bedfordpreschurch.org
- Bet Torah Synagogue www.bettorah.org
- Iglesia Apostolica Monte de Sion www.nymontedesion.com
- Lutheran Church of the Resurrection www.lcronline.org
- Presbyterian Church of Mount Kisco www.pcmk.org
- St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church www.sfamountkisco.org
- St. Mark's Episcopal Church www.stmarksmtkisco.org
- St. Matthew's Episcopal Church www.stmatthewsbedford.org
- St. Stephen's Episcopal Church www.ststephensarmonk.org
- Temple Shaaray Tefila www.shaaraytefila.org
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Westchester www.uufellowship.org
- United Methodist Church of Mount Kisco www.mountkiscochurch.org
- Westchester Family Church www.westchesterfamilychurch.org

Volunteer Information

The Pantry's Commitment to Our Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in helping the Pantry fulfill its mission. You can expect to be treated with respect and gratitude, and to be guided through a brief orientation at your first volunteer assignment. We are committed to equal opportunity volunteerism and welcome a diverse community of volunteers. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, disability, marital status, family, sexual orientation, or gender expression.

We are committed to working together towards creating a safe, supportive, and caring volunteer experience where we can learn from each other and grow in service to our community.

As a volunteer, it is understood that you will be providing services without monetary compensation. Your contribution may be in the form of assisting at a food distribution; making home deliveries; pre-packing produce bags; stocking shelves; picking up or unloading food deliveries; or sorting, date-checking, and weighing food donations.

You may also choose to organize a food drive in your own community. If this is your preference, you are encouraged to communicate with our Director of Operations and Programs, who can advise you on needed food items.

If requested, the Pantry may provide a document confirming volunteer hours as community service.

Guidance and Oversight

Each food distribution is staffed by one or more of the following: Director of Operations and Programs, a member of the Operations Committee, a member of the Pantry Board of Directors. They are there to provide guidance for volunteers and are available to address any questions or concerns you may have. Do not hesitate to ask them for assistance.

Time Reporting/Volunteer Sheets

It is important that we track and recognize the amount of time our volunteers donate. Please sign in and record the expected amount of time you will be volunteering on the clipboard on the desk in the distribution room.

Standards of Conduct

Please:

- Be prompt and reliable.
- Be courteous, friendly and helpful to guests, staff, and other volunteers.
- Respect the privacy of our guests.
- Carry out the role to which you have been assigned.
- Ask for support when you need it.
- Adhere to all Pantry policies and procedures as described in this handbook and at your orientation.
- Report to volunteer ready, willing, and able to perform your responsibilities, unimpaired by alcohol or (non-prescription/medicinal) drugs of any kind.
- Display appropriate conduct or behavior that reflects positively on the Pantry's mission.
- Follow standards of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all guests, staff, and volunteers.

Age Requirements

Dress Code Volunteers of all ages can participate at the Pantry, though we ask that volunteers interacting directly with guests at Tuesday and Wednesday distributions **and the food bag packing on Saturdays** be 16 years or older. Younger volunteers may assist with other pantry activities such as **every other Tuesday home delivery food bag packing**, sorting donations, and stocking shelves as needed. Volunteers under the age of 14 **MUST** have an accompanying adult. Unaccompanied youth ages 14–17 must provide a Pantry Volunteer Permission form signed by a parent or guardian.

Attire should be appropriate for the volunteer assignment, comfortable, and should reflect positively on the Pantry. **OPEN-TOED SHOES ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED FOR REASONS OF SAFETY.**

Parking and Personal Property

In response to pandemic safety protocols, effective 5/20 and until further notice, guests are not parking in the Church parking lot during distributions. Volunteers are welcome to park in the lot behind the United Methodist Church for all volunteer activities.

Please do not bring valuables to the Pantry, as we are unable to secure them for you. The Pantry does not

assume responsibility for loss or damage to a volunteer's personal property resulting from theft, fire, automobile accidents, or any other condition, nor do we assume responsibility for theft of or from, or damage to, any vehicle while the volunteer is at the Pantry or performing volunteer activities for the Pantry.

Volunteers Who Are Also Guests of the Pantry

Please follow these procedures for food distribution:

- Please pick up your food at the beginning of your volunteer shift and store it in your vehicle or out of the way.
- Volunteers may not take extra food or have food that is not part of that day's distribution.

Weather Policy

The Pantry follows the weather-related openings and closings of the Bedford Central School District. The Pantry is closed (1) if schools are closed; (2) on Tuesday if there is an early dismissal; or (3) on Wednesday if there is a delayed school opening. Please check our home page (www.mountkiscofoodpantry.org) for up-to-date information, or call the Pantry at 914-610-5187.

Privacy

Guest information is confidential. No guest information or proprietary information may be shared outside of the Pantry. Our guests are often our neighbors; please respect their privacy. Do not post any photos of Pantry guests on social media sites, including but not limited to Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram.

While it is central to the Pantry's mission to warmly welcome our guests, interact with them respectfully, and recognize their individual dignity, for reasons of privacy and safety we discourage the exchange of personal details, including address and contact information, between guests and volunteers. Appropriate boundaries contribute to the effectiveness and inherent fairness of our operations. *If a guest makes a special request, please refer it to our Director of Operations and Programs or to a member of the Board of Directors.*

Safety

For your safety, Halstead Hall is equipped with smoke detectors, and a fire extinguisher is located outside the Pantry door.

Please be aware that some volunteer jobs may include lifting and carrying heavy items; it is your responsibility to know your limitations, communicate them as needed, and refrain from activity beyond your abilities.

The Pantry strives to maintain a safe environment in compliance with federal, state, and local safety regulations. The Pantry does not undertake comprehensive background checks on volunteers, staff or guests. Volunteers should report any unsafe conditions to the Director of Operations and Programs, a member of the Operations Committee, or a Board member.

Smoking is not permitted in the Pantry or anywhere on church grounds.

Risk Management Procedure for Volunteers

In the unlikely event that you encounter a guest or other person who becomes disruptive, please notify the Director of Operations and Programs or another Board member immediately and leave the Pantry. Following any incident, volunteers are expected to respect the privacy and confidentiality of Pantry matters. Additionally, in the unlikely event of a visit from a law enforcement or Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer, volunteers should immediately refer the Officer(s) to the Director of Operations and Programs or another Board member.

Dismissal

Volunteers who are not in compliance with our Standards of Conduct or Confidentiality requirement, who engage in unsafe or unseemly behavior at the Pantry, or who violate our practices or policies as detailed in this Handbook, are subject to dismissal. The Pantry may request a volunteer to leave immediately if warranted by the circumstance.

Driver Policy

Volunteers performing driving duties (“Drivers”) on behalf of the Pantry must at all times meet these criteria. Drivers must have a current, valid driver’s license and maintain personal auto insurance as required by state law. Any volunteer driving on behalf of the Pantry must observe all safety, traffic and criminal laws of this state. Volunteers may not drive while under the influence of any substance that may cause impaired judgment. All persons driving on behalf of the Pantry must be a minimum of 21 years old. Any

volunteer who violates any part of this policy, or who becomes uninsurable as a driver, will be subject to reassignment and possible termination from the Pantry. **Drivers need to submit a Drivers Policy and Application Form. [\(Please click here\)](#)**

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Eff. 5/20 Our Volunteer Program, Operations and Distribution model have adapted to adhere to safety and health protocols in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Upon arrival, volunteers should check in with the Staff or Board member in charge, sign in at the check-in desk, and put on a Pantry (pre-washed) apron. Volunteers’ temperatures will be taken with a no-touch portable thermometer. A face mask must be worn at all times (provided if needed) and proper social distancing of 6 ft. must be respected. Use the hand sanitizer at the desk before putting on plastic gloves (provided), which must be worn at all times.

DO NOT REPORT TO VOLUNTEER IF YOU ARE ILL, OR HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WHO IS ILL.

Until further notice, Volunteer Opportunities at the Pantry include the following:

Packing Produce Bags

Prior to Tuesday evening distributions, assistance is needed packing bags of produce. Volunteers are needed on Tuesday morning from 10:00am–12:00pm for this activity.



Date-Checking, Weighing, Sorting, and Shelving Food Donations

The procedure for processing donated food items is: (1) date-check, (2) discard if expired, (3) weigh and (4) shelf. Record on the form provided the name and address of the donor organization or individual, as well as the weight and type of items donated.

Packing Bags of Groceries

On Saturdays from 9:00am–11:00am, assistance is needed packing bags with staple grocery items. **You must be 16 years of age or older.**

Packing “School’s Out Supplement” Bags

During the summer months, while school is not in session, volunteers help pack lunch items for our families. This takes place on Tuesdays from 1:00 – 3:00pm.

Home Deliveries

Deliveries of groceries to homebound seniors are scheduled for **every other** Thursday mornings. Volunteers, **13 years old or older**, pack bags on Tuesday afternoons from **3:00pm-4:00pm**. Volunteers help place home delivery food bags in the drivers’ vehicles from 8:00am–11:30am. Volunteer drivers make the home deliveries.



Weekly Food Distributions

The Pantry opens its doors to guests twice a week: Tuesday evenings from 4:00pm to 7:00pm and Wednesday mornings from 9:00am to 11:00am. Volunteers should arrive by 3:00pm Tuesday evenings and **8:30am** Wednesday mornings, and follow the check-in and safety protocol procedures described above. Before the distribution begins, volunteers will pack bags of produce, bread/bagels, eggs and frozen proteins, and station the bags on tables outside the entrance doors of Halstead Hall and at the Smith Street door. During distributions, volunteers hand (no-contact) bags to guests and restock the tables. Volunteers may assist the Stocking Assistant with restocking items as needed and breaking up empty cartons and boxes for proper disposal. Logistics are subject to change during cold weather months. **You must be 16 years of age or older.**



Policies and Practices

Non-Discrimination

The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all staff, volunteers, and guests.

The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry (referred to herein as the "Corporation") does not discriminate against any applicant, employee, or volunteer regarding any term, condition, or privilege of employment or volunteer engagement on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran, or disability status, or any other classification protected by federal, state or local law or ordinance.

The Corporation does not deny service to any guest (defined as a resident of Mount Kisco or one of its surrounding towns, or any northern Westchester town not served by their own weekly pantry) on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran, or disability status, or any other classification protected by federal, state or local law or ordinance.

Harassment Prohibition

All forms of harassment are prohibited at the Pantry.

The Pantry has a specific and detailed policy related to Sexual Harassment Prohibition. In addition, the Pantry recognizes that harassment can take other forms, such as any comment, conversation, joke, slur, or other similar verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct related to a person's age, race, religion, color, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, or veteran status that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an intimidating, offensive or hostile working environment.

Sexual Harassment Prohibition

The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry (the Corporation) strictly prohibits and does not tolerate harassment of any kind of an employee, volunteer, or guest by another employee, officer, director, volunteer, guest, or by a third party, to the extent controlled by the Corporation. The Corporation will take prompt and appropriate action and, where appropriate, punish behavior that constitutes such harassment.

DEFINITIONS

1. "Sexual harassment" includes: engaging in sexually suggestive physical contact, unwelcomed sexual advances, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
3. such conduct is severe or pervasive and has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or abusive environment.

B. Conduct which falls within the definition of sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Epithets or slurs, threats, derogatory comments, unwelcome jokes, gestures, or pranks regarding an employee's pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, change of sex or transgender status, marital status, partnership status, familial status, caregiver status, domestic or dating violence victim status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, New York, or local law.
2. Displaying, printing, or transmitting offensive sexually suggestive pictures or materials in the workplace.

C. This policy is not intended to create needless intrusions on the freedom of speech or expression of employees or volunteers nor to regulate their personal morality. It is intended to prevent any harassment in the workplace.

D. This policy shall be conspicuously posted for viewing. Each volunteer shall read this policy and prior to volunteering shall sign an acknowledgment of having received, reviewed and understood this policy.

E. It is not considered harassment for a supervisor or manager to require volunteers to meet conduct standards.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A. REPORTING. The Corporation encourages any employee or volunteer who believes he or she is being harassed or has witnessed harassing conduct involving another employee, volunteer, guest, or person at the Pantry, to immediately report such concerns or incident to the Director of Operations and Programs and/or any member of the Board.

B. NO RETALIATION. The Corporation will not retaliate in any way against an individual who makes a report of harassment or any individual who participates in a harassment investigation; nor will the Corporation permit any employee, Board member or volunteer to do so. Anyone who feels that they have been subjected to any acts of retaliation should immediately report such conduct to Director of Operations

and Programs or any member of the Board. Any person who retaliates against another individual for reporting any perceived acts of harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Whistleblower Protection Policy

The Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry (the "Corporation") requires directors, officers, employees and volunteers to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. All employees, volunteers and representatives of the Corporation must maintain its code of ethics which requires honesty, truthfulness, respect for others, accountability for the use of Corporation assets and for one's behavior in fulfilling Corporate responsibilities and complying with all Corporate policies and applicable laws and regulations.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A. REPORTING. This Whistle Blower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and volunteers to raise serious concerns internally so that the Corporation can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. The Corporation has an open-door policy to enable employees, Board members and volunteers to raise questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with the Director of Operations and Programs or members of the Board. It is the responsibility of all Board Members, officers, employees and volunteers to report concerns about violations of the Corporation's code of ethics or suspected violations of law or regulations that govern the Corporation's operations. Employees and volunteers may submit their complaints or concerns in writing directly to the Director of Operations and Programs or any member of the Board.

B. NO RETALIATION. It is contrary to the values of the Corporation for anyone to retaliate against any individual who in good faith reports an ethics violation, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or suspected violation of any regulation governing the operations of the Corporation. An employee or volunteer who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from volunteer service.

C. INVESTIGATION. The Director of Operations and Programs and members of the Board are required to promptly report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to the Corporation's President, who has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints or concerns. The Corporation will act on all information it receives if it believes an individual may be engaging in wrongful conduct or violating the law. The Corporation's investigation may include individual interviews with parties involved and, when necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge. The President will advise the Board of Directors of all complaints and concerns and their resolution.

D. VIOLATIONS. If the Corporation finds that there is a basis for the complaint, the Corporation, in its sole discretion, shall take the appropriate remedial action, including but not limited to (i) a verbal or written reprimand, (ii) referral to appropriate training or counseling, (iii) withholding of a promotion or bonus, (iv) reassignment, (v) temporary suspension without pay, (vi) termination and/or dismissal from volunteer service. The Corporation shall advise the complainant and the alleged offender of the decision. The Corporation shall also advise the complainant of the remedial action taken against the alleged offender. If an investigation results in a finding that an employee or volunteer knowingly falsely accused another person of inappropriate conduct, the employee or volunteer may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service.

ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING MATTERS. The Corporation's President shall immediately notify the Treasurer of any concerns or complaint regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing and work with the Treasurer until the matter is resolved.

Important: Please review the **Release and Waiver of Liability** ([Please Click This Button](#))