



VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION



THANK YOU for volunteering with the Community Center of St. Bernard. While assisting here at the Center, you will be providing food, clothing and a variety of other valuable resources to families and individuals in need. Through the course of your visit, you will meet community members still recovering from hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as the recent oil spill. Each one has a story of struggle and resilience be aware that it is very cathartic for them to share their story and by spending a little time here, you will become a part of that story. On behalf of the Community Center of St. Bernard and our clients, we thank you for volunteering.

This packet will provide a brief orientation of the Community Center's history, mission and day-to-day operations. It will allow you to understand what we do here at the Community Center and your role as a volunteer. Please visit our website at www.ccstb.org for more information. We hope you enjoy volunteering at the Community Center of St. Bernard!

Thank You,

Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteers@CCSTB.org 504-281-2512



An Introduction



WELCOME to the Community Center of St. Bernard!

We are located in Arabi, LA, a few blocks from New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward and just 15 minutes from the French Quarter.

On April 17th 2006, the Community Center was formed as a response to the unprecedented hardship created by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The effects of the hurricanes on our once-thriving parish have been devastating and long-lasting. In many cases homes and businesses were flooded up to their rooftops; 93% of homes in the parish were severely damaged or destroyed. In fact, St. Bernard Parish is the only county in American history to experience total, catastrophic flooding.

People returning to what was left of their homes in St. Bernard Parish were in desperate need of vital services such as clothing, food, and even telephone use. The Community Center of St. Bernard stepped in to provide these and other necessities, quickly becoming one of the primary community organizations in the area.



Five years later, the Community Center still serves over 5,000 unique families and individuals annually, distributing nearly 270,000 pounds of food to community members in need. In the next year, our goal is to continue providing essential services to St. Bernard, maintaining our exceptional level of past service, while addressing the more recent needs of oil spill victims. We can only accomplish this with your efforts as a volunteer.



The Volunteer Experience

- **“What should I bring?”**

We do not currently operate a kitchen so volunteers will need to pack a lunch. We have refrigerator and freezer space available, as well as a microwave and a water cooler. Be sure to drink plenty of water, especially in the spring and summer months.

Wear comfortable clothing that you don't mind getting a little dirty. Additionally, sturdy but comfortable shoes are highly recommended. Please do not wear open-toed shoes or sandals since they are not appropriate for working in our food pantry warehouse.

The Community Center of St. Bernard is a safe and welcoming space, but we have hundreds of people walking through our space every day. Because of this, we ask that volunteers be smart with their possessions. We have plenty of secure space for storing purses and other items, but please do not leave valuables, such as backpacks and cameras, in public areas.

- **“What skills do I need?”**

Here at the Community Center most tasks will involve light lifting and prolonged standing. However, we can accommodate volunteers of every level of physical ability. Don't worry, we will find something that you can do!

PLEASE let us know ahead of time if you possess any special skills. We are always in need of people with experience in information technology, graphic design, carpentry, electronics, and other professional fields.

- **“What will I be doing?”**

While occasionally we will have large one-time projects for volunteers, day to day tasks involve running our food bank, community garden and clothing pantry programs. Volunteers should expect their work to include the following:

- Set up and stock food pantry shelves
- Set up and organize clothing bank racks
- Enter new donations into electronic inventory system
- Assist clients as they collect groceries and clothing
- Assist clients with “check-out” procedure
- Help carry groceries to vehicles
- Clean up and tear down of food pantry shelves
- Weeding or harvesting produce in the garden
- Break down cardboard boxes to be recycled

** A specific schedule of tasks is outlined on the following page.*



Volunteer schedule

Subject to minor changes, this schedule outlines a typical volunteer day at the Community Center of St. Bernard.

9am - Arrive at the Community Center

Unless otherwise instructed, please arrive at the Community Center at 9am to begin your day. Upon arrival, volunteers will be given an orientation of the Community Center, which will include a brief tour, as well as an informational video. Following the tour, volunteers will focus their attention on setting up the clothing bank and food pantry before the Center is open to our clients.

9:35am – 11am Begin set up of food pantry and clothing bank, weed or harvest the garden if needed

Stock and arrange food pantry shelves and clothing bank racks, instructions will be included in orientation. There is always someone here to help, so don't worry! We need to make sure that the clothing bank is set up before it opens at 10 am, and the food pantry is ready before 11 am.

11am-12:30pm Assist clients with grocery “Check-out”, restock shelves, and help clients to their transportation.

The Community Center's food pantry has two “Check-out” stations where we scan items in order to remove them from our electronic inventory records. The amount of groceries clients are entitled to depends on the number of people in their household, so “Check-out” allows us to make sure our clients have taken all the items they want and are entitled to. Volunteers will assist with “Check-out” and make sure food pantry and clothing bank shelves are fully stocked. Because we serve many elderly and disabled clients who may require assistance to their vehicle, one or two volunteers will be kept available to help them carry their items.

*A lunch break is scheduled for **12:30**. It may be necessary to take your lunch break in a staggered manner so as to continue coverage for ongoing programs such as the food distribution. Please remember that volunteers will need to bring their lunch with them to the Community Center.*

1pm-3pm Continue to operate food bank and clothing pantry, and finish garden tasks

After lunch, volunteers will continue to operate the food pantry until it closes at 3pm. Volunteers often switch tasks after lunch to make sure everyone gets a chance to try something new.

3pm-4pm Clean-up

Volunteers will clean up and break down food pantry and clothing bank, making sure all perishable items are returned to the fridge or freezer. Put away any tools or supplies used during the day. This will conclude your much appreciated day of service at the Community Center of St. Bernard.



How to get here



Community Center of St. Bernard
1111 Lebeau Street
Arabi, LA 70032

The Community Center of St Bernard is conveniently close to most New Orleans hotels. Volunteers typically rent vehicles, as public transportation in the city is very limited.

Car Rental Companies:

- Dollar Rental (1-800-800-3665)
- Thrifty (1-800-847-4389)
- Enterprise (504-468-3018)
- Budget (1-800-527-0700)
- Alamo (1-800-462-5266)
- National (1-800-227-7368)

Driving:

From New Orleans International Airport, take I-10 East for 13.4 miles. Exit right at **236B – Claiborne Ave**. Follow Claiborne for 4.1 miles, over the canal bridge, into the Lower Ninth Ward and St. Bernard Parish. From Judge Perez Highway, Make a right onto Alexander Avenue followed by the second right onto Lebeau Street. The Center will be after the train tracks on the left side of the street at 1111 Lebeau Street.

Bus:

E2 - Airport Route provides service from Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport to New Orleans. The bus stop is outside on the second level of the airport, near the Delta counter. The bus will travel from Kenner, down Airline Highway. Passengers will be able to exit and connect to the New Orleans Regional Transit System (RTA) at the Tulane/Carrollton bus stop (uptown) or the Tulane/Loyola bus stop (downtown). From the downtown bus station at Tulane and Loyola, you can walk a few blocks to N. Rampart and Canal Street where the **St. Claude bus line (#88)** is located.

The #88 bus will take you through New Orleans and into St. Bernard Parish. You will want to exit the bus at the last stop on Mehle Ave (near the Waffle House). From there, cross St. Bernard Highway and walk a few blocks in the same direction the bus was driving until you arrive at Lebeau Street (there will be a Dollar General on the corner). The Community Center is located just steps from St. Bernard Highway at 1111 Lebeau Street. Prior to leaving the airport, it may be a good idea to ask the bus driver whether downtown service to the Tulane/Loyola bus stop is available.



After you leave . . .

We hope you have enjoyed your volunteer experience at the Community Center of St. Bernard. With the efforts of volunteers like you, our Center is able to continue its mission of serving those in need. Although your time at the Center has come to an end, there are many ways you can contribute to our efforts once you have arrived home. Below are a few ways you can continue to help:

- **Share Our Story:** While there has been progress made in New Orleans and St. Bernard Parish following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, there is still much work to be done. Be sure to share the stories you've heard during your time here with people back home, and let them know that we are still here and in need of assistance. The Center's webpage www.ccstb.org contains a "Multimedia" section with many appropriate videos, including the CCSTB OVERVIEW. The "News" section includes virtually every article written about the Center.
- **Fundraise:** There are many ways you and your friends can fundraise from your hometown. For instance, how about having a yard sale with some of your neighbors? Or an exciting Gumbo Party as a fund-raiser, to celebrate the City of New Orleans? Or just simply sharing our Overview Video with friends. Proceeds to help continue our efforts may be mailed or sent via donation on our website. For more ideas, check out "Free Ways You Can Help" on the sidebar of our website at www.ccstb.org
- **Stay Connected:** You can stay connected through our many social media sites:
 - **Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/CCSTB>
 - **Myspace:** <http://www.myspace.com/ccstb>
 - **Twitter:** Follow – CCSTB
 - Or, sign-up for our **monthly newsletter!** Registering is easy, just go to our website at www.ccstb.org and type your email address under "Get the CCSTB Newsletter" on the right sidebar. You can access all our social media sites there as well.

Invite you friends to follow us, and feel free to "re-tweet" or share any important messages we might post!

Wish list

Volunteers frequently ask us to provide them with a "Wish list," a list of items we are in great need of here at the Center.

- *Receipt printer (with usb connection)*
- *Nonperishable food items*
- *Toiletries*
- *Cleaning products*

- *Clothing (good quality)*
- *New Toys (for our annual holiday giveaway)*
- *Baby products*
- *Copier Paper*
- *Flat panel monitors*
- *Office Supplies*

- *HP Laserjet toner 92298A*
- *Computers (three years old or newer)*
- *USB mice*
- *Tools*
- *Brooms*
- *Utensils*





COMMUNITY CENTER OF ST BERNARD

1111 LeBeau Street

Phone: (504) 281- 2512

Arabi, LA 70032

Fax: (916) 675 – 7827

www.CCSTB.org

Volunteer Information and Waiver Form

Thank you for volunteering at the Community Center of St Bernard. Please fill out this form completely before beginning work. If you have volunteered with us before, please enter your name and the date, and the start and end times, then check the “REPEAT” box and sign.

PLEASE PRINT:

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

START TIME: _____ END TIME: _____ REPEAT:

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

WAIVER OF LIABILITY

I understand that my or my dependent’s work as a volunteer on or about the Community Center of St Bernard could expose me or my dependent to various risks of injury or illness. I understand and assume these risks and agree not to hold the Community Center of St Bernard, its agents, employees, volunteers, or independent contractors liable for such injury or illness. I further understand that it is the policy of the Community Center of St Bernard that all volunteers or visitors must abide by the verbal safety instructions, requirements, and posted regulations of the Community Center of St Bernard.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Parent or Guardian Signature if Under 18 years of age: _____

