

# Canton Food Pantry

## Volunteer Handbook

960- R Washington Street, Canton, MA

cantonfoodpantry@gmail.com

(781)821-8062

### Our Mission

The Canton Food Pantry is a non-profit organization whose vision is to provide community members with nutritional food, personal hygiene and cleaning items to supplement their shopping needs. Nonperishable food is acquired through partner agencies such as Greater Boston Food Bank, Lovin Spoonful's, local grocery stores and farms as well as through generous food and/or financial donations from the community members, religious institutions and businesses of Canton and its surrounding areas. The Canton Food Pantry is staffed with volunteers who donate their time to support the mission of the food pantry and Canton Area Helpline.

### Our History

The Canton Area Helpline was established in 1983 through the efforts of Anita Farber (Pastor of the Unitarian Church). She worked with area clergy and the Canton Board of Health to create a committee of representative from the Fire Department, religious institutions and local businesses.

Once the Helpline was established, they found the food needs of the community rising and established the Canton Food Pantry in 1986. The town opted to locate the food pantry in the Elliot School building, which at the time held the offices of Public Works Department and the Board of Health. As the economy changed the Canton Food Pantry's need grew. The need for a volunteer director became necessary and was filled by Hank Polanzak. With the need for food donations increasing, the Food Pantry was able to get support from Project Bread.

In 2001 renovations began at the Elliot School building so the Canton Food Pantry moved to 960 Washington Street in a space donated by John Marini. When that building was being sold in 2008, the Canton School Committee unanimously voted to offer space in the lower level of the Marilyn G. Rodman Center for the food pantry. This location currently provides the Canton Food Pantry with space for storing donated food and having a shopping space for the food pantry clients.

In 2018 over 2,150 people were serviced and 29 new families were added for assistance through the Canton Food Pantry. Over 9,300 bags of food valued at more than \$280,000 was supplied to Canton residents, as well as 140 Thanksgiving dinners were provided during the holidays.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Most of our Volunteer Opportunities are “on-going,” meaning that we need volunteers on a regular basis, year-round. The greatest need is for individuals who can commit a few hours a week on a specific day, allowing us to build teams to support scheduled pantry activities. Some flexible commitments may exist depending on specialized skills you may offer.

Listed below are the types of volunteer opportunities that we typically have:

**Monday- 7am-9am- Stocking Shelves:** Volunteers help stock the shopping area with needed products. They sort food into different food categories, check expiration dates, discard damaged product or products otherwise unfit for human consumption, and check for recalled items.

**Monday- 11am-1pm- Receive Deliveries-** Volunteers work with donating agencies to choose the food and non-perishable items that can be utilized by the people that shop at the food pantry.

**Tuesday- 8:30am-11:30am-Pantry Open-** Volunteers assist shoppers in registering or signing in, choosing items based on their family size, unpacking grocery carts, bagging items and delivering filled bags to the client’s transport. Volunteers assist with sorting products and stocking shelves, sweeping, trash removal and other general duties as needed.

**Wednesday- 8:30am-11:30am-Pantry Open-** Volunteers assist shoppers in registering or signing in, choosing items based on their family size, unpacking grocery carts, bagging items and delivering filled bags to the client’s transport. Volunteers assist with sorting products and stocking shelves, sweeping, trash removal and other general duties as needed.

**Friday- Once a month- Receive Deliveries-** Volunteers unload the food and non-perishable items from Greater Boston Food Bank that can be utilized by the people that shop at the food pantry.

**The First Saturday of Each Month- 8:30am-11:30am-Pantry Open-** Volunteers assist shoppers in registering or signing in, choosing items based on their family size, unpacking grocery carts, bagging items and delivering filled bags to the client’s transport. Volunteers assist with sorting products and stocking shelves, sweeping, trash removal and other general duties as needed.

**Flexible Pickups- Various Days and Times-** Pick up donated food at Pratt Realty, The Canton Library, Bank of Canton, Panera, Big Y, Brookwood farms (summer only) and other community locations that donate food. Volunteers need a car or truck that can carry the donations to the Canton Food Pantry.

**Clerical, Data Entry and/or Computer Based Volunteer:** Volunteers assist staff members with various clerical tasks including: data entry, filing, phone calls, mass mailings, and other clerical tasks as needed. They may post information on the Food Pantry web site, social media and/or blog. Volunteers should have strong computer and clerical skills.

**Special Events Volunteers:** Volunteers are periodically needed to help with various special events including, but not limited to: Thanksgiving Food Shopping, Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, and the Canton Volunteer Fair. There are also opportunities to help local youth groups and schools who would like to tour the food pantry, deliver, sort and shelve food that they collected in their food drives. Volunteers should be able to work well with a team of people to help in the success of the event. Some opportunities require experience and/or comfort working with school age children.

## **Applying to Volunteer**

Call or email the Canton Food Pantry to receive a Food Pantry Volunteer Questionnaire and Application to complete. Once the forms are complete, they can be returned to the Canton Food Pantry by mail or email so an interview and tour can be scheduled. Prospective volunteers are matched with opportunities that fit their skills and availability. Volunteers over the age of 18 years need to complete a CORI check. Volunteers needing documentation of hours for school are responsible for maintaining a record of their volunteer hours. A Canton Food Pantry Volunteer Time Sheet is available to those who need one.

## **Volunteer Guidelines & Procedures**

- Volunteers should dress casually and wear comfortable, sturdy and non-slip footwear.
- No headphones or cell phones are to be used while volunteering.
- Please leave purses, jewelry and other valuables at home or locked in your car. The Canton Food Pantry will not be responsible for any missing personal belongings.
- Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the building, around the building, or in vehicles.
- No one under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be permitted to volunteer.
- Sexual harassment, violence, harassing behavior, or offensive speech is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Volunteers between the ages of 8 and 13 are accepted to volunteer only by special arrangement and must be supervised by an adult at all times (unless special permission is granted).

**Confidentiality-** Volunteers may be exposed to private information about food pantry clients or volunteers in the regular course of their duties. To respect the dignity and privacy of all people affiliated with the food pantry, client and volunteer information will be used only for agency business and will be kept confidential. Volunteers will not discuss private information about clients or other volunteers.

**Conduct-** All people at the food pantry have a right to be treated fairly and with respect. No inappropriate comments about anyone or toward anyone will be tolerated. Any verbal and/or physical abuse by any person must be reported immediately to food pantry coordinator, who will investigate the matter and determine the appropriate actions to be taken.

**Safety Policies & Procedures-** All accidents and injuries must be reported immediately to the Supervisor on site. Please report any safety hazards you see to a coordinator. Use proper lifting techniques: when lifting heavy objects, use your legs to push upwards, keep your back straight and your body balanced. Don't attempt to lift heavy boxes or items (more than 45 lbs) without assistance. Any person with physical or medical limitations will not exceed the limits set by their doctor under any circumstances.

**Use Of Food Bank Resources-** The food bank is a non-profit organization designed to feed hungry people. All donations become the property of the food bank and will be used to support our mission to our community. No food bank resources (money, gift cards, food, property, etc.) will be used for personal reasons or gain by any volunteer or employee. Volunteers are not eligible to take food home after completing shifts at the food bank. Food that is no longer able to be provided to clients due to expiration dates may be used or discarded by food pantry volunteers.

**CORI Check-** All volunteers of the Canton Food Pantry need to have a CORI criminal check completed and future pending charges or criminal convictions will lead to ineligibility to volunteer at the Canton Food Pantry.

Volunteers who violate the aforementioned guidelines and procedures will be asked to leave the Canton Food Pantry.

### **Other Helpful Information**

**Packing Grocery Bags for Clients-** The general rule of grocery bag packing is heavy items on the bottom, lighter items on top. Here's a sample list of layers keep in mind:

Lower Layer (heavy items) – canned goods, potatoes, apples, carrots, pineapples, large bottled beverages, and heavy boxed goods

Middle Layer (midweight items) – medium and small boxed goods and jars, hard vegetables, and leafy vegetables in plastic bags with indeterminate shapes

Top Layer (light items) – anything that might mush and anything that goes crunch such as: eggs, bread, bananas, marshmallows, soft fruits like peaches or plums, tomatoes, chips, crackers, and cookies

**Shelving Food-** The food on the pantry shelves needs to meet quality and freshness guidelines. When food is donated all expiration dates need to be checked and products need to meet the freshness guidelines of the Greater Boston Food Bank. When products are placed on the shelves, they are rotated so that the food from the back of the shelf is brought forward and the newest food is placed behind the shelved food.

**Inclement Weather-** In the event of inclement weather, Canton Food Pantry will follow the guidelines of the Canton Public Schools. Notification is usually announced by local news stations, as well as located on the Canton Public Schools website. If the district cancels or delays the opening of schools, the food pantry will not be open.

Thank you for making the commitment to volunteer at the Canton Food Pantry. Every volunteer counts and everyone makes a difference in our community.

### **Attachments:**

Canton Food Pantry Questionnaire

Canton Food Pantry Application

Criminal Offender Record information (CORI) Request Form

# Canton Food Pantry Volunteer Questionnaire

*The greatest need in our all-volunteer organization is for individuals who can commit a few hours a week on a consistent and longer-term basis, allowing us to build teams to support scheduled pantry activities. Some flexible commitments may exist depending on specialized skills you may offer. Your responses below will assist us in matching your interests against our current needs.*

*Thank you for your interest.*

1. Please indicate in the boxes below any day-time(s) that you would be available to volunteer. If more than one, you may indicate order of preference, if any. (1 = first choice)

<b>Monday A</b>	<b>Monday B</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Friday TBD Monthly</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Monthly</b>	<b>Days Vary</b>
7AM-9AM	11AM-1PM	8:30AM-11:30AM	8:30AM-11:30AM	2 hrs, early afternoon	9:30AM-11:00AM	Times Vary
Stocking	Delivery	Pantry Open	Pantry Open	Delivery	Pantry Open	Store Pickups

2. Do you have a strength or interest that the pantry might be able to utilize, as needed--computer support, administrative/office support, community relations, management, operational efficiency, etc.?

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3. Please note any predictable times of the year when you may not available.... school vacations, specific summer or winter months, other? (There may be some flexibility to work around individual needs for trained staff.)

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4. Please list any physical limitations (chronic back pain, vision, etc.) that may affect role assignments.

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5. Contact information

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

- I am a student seeking a community service opportunity.

**960R WASHINGTON ST, CANTON, MA 02021    781-821-8062    [cantonfoodpantry@gmail.com](mailto:cantonfoodpantry@gmail.com)**

*Please return via email or mailing address above. Once received, a Food Pantry Director will contact you for an interview, tour and trial volunteer service of the facility.*

# CANTON FOOD PANTRY

## Volunteer Application

960R Washington street

Canton, MA 02021

Tel: (781) 821-8062

### **Contact Information**

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Apt. City Zip Code

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home or Work

Emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any physical limitations? (ie-chronic back pain, poor vision, etc.)

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Confidentiality Acknowledgement**

In the course of your volunteer activities for the Canton Food Pantry you may gain access to, and knowledge of, personal and sensitive information regarding the clients served by the Canton Food Pantry. It is important that all information be treated confidentially and with discretion and that no further disclosure be made of the information.

By signing below you acknowledge and agree to maintain the confidentiality of all information you may be exposed to regarding clients of the Canton Food Pantry.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Note: If you have any criminal charges pending or convictions you are NOT eligible to volunteer.

# CORI Report Request

Please complete this section using the information of the person whose CORI you are requesting.  
The fields marked with an asterisk (\*) are required fields.

\*First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix (Jr., Sr., etc) \_\_\_\_\_

Former Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY): \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Last SIX digits of Social Security Number : \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_ No Social Security Number

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_ ft. \_\_\_\_ in. Eye Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License or ID Number : \_\_\_\_\_ State of Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Current Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # or Suite : \_\_\_\_\_

\*City: \_\_\_\_\_ \*State: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

## Subject Verification to be Completed by Food Pantry Director

The above information was verified by reviewing the following form(s) of government-issued identification:

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Verified by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Print Name of Verifying Employee

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Verifying Employee

\_\_\_\_\_ Date