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SOUTHEAST CENTER

1640 Good Hope Road, SE
Washington, DC 20020
phone: 202.561.8587
fax: 202.587.0537

NORTHWEST CENTER

1525 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
phone: 202.265.2400
fax: 202.518.0545

www.breadforthecity.org
info@breadforthecity.org
UW# 8219 CFC# 61733

May 15, 2017

Dear Clothing Room Coordinator, Intern, or Volunteer:

Welcome to Bread for the City!

As a temporary member of the team in our clothing room, you'll be an important provider of service to Bread for the City's clients. Thank you, in advance, for accepting this responsibility.

Bread for the City's clothing room is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 am to noon. Each month, nearly 1,000 15-minute visits occur, and while you're with us, you'll play an important role in ensuring each individual client visit and overall group rotation occurs smoothly. This booklet will help you prepare for that challenge.

Your staff supervisors will be **Melissa Frazier** (Food, Clothing, and Facilities Director) and **Sonya D. Springfield** (Volunteer & In-Kind Manager).

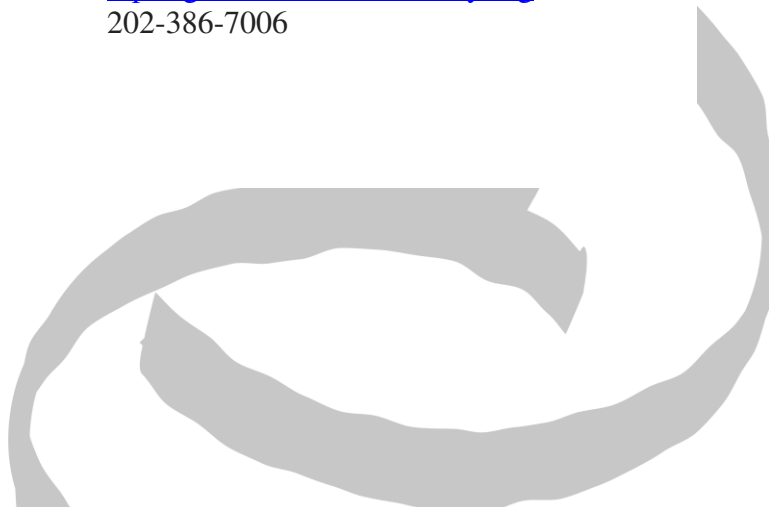
If you are a coordinator or intern, and you anticipate an unexpected absence, please contact Melissa and Sonya as soon as possible. If your absence must occur on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday during open hours, please strive to notify Melissa and Sonya before 7:30 am on the day in question to help ensure time to make alternate arrangements for the leadership of the clothing room on that day.

We're going to have a great time working as a team and providing excellent customer service.

Let's get started!

Melissa Frazier
Food, Clothing & Facilities Director
mfrazier@breadforthecity.org
202-587-0522

Sonya D. Springfield
Volunteer & In-Kind Manager
sspringfield@breadforthecity.org
202-386-7006



GENERAL SCHEDULE

Daily Itinerary (Open Hours)

** This activity continues throughout the entire day.*

Before You Arrive	Eat breakfast! When the clothing room is open, the days can be long. If you are working the full day, you may not have the opportunity to eat a full meal until 2 pm or later. Bring a few small snacks if you are likely to need them before 2 pm.
8:45 am	Clothing Room Coordinator and/or Interns Arrive/Sign-In
	Review anticipated volunteers for the morning shift.
9:00 am	Client Sign-Up Begins/Distribute Group Badges*
	Volunteers Arrive/Note Attendance*
	Prepare Floor for Client Arrival*
	Donation Drop-Offs Begin*
10:00 am	Group #1
10:20 am	Group #2
10:40 am	Group #3
11:00 am	Group #4
11:20 am	Group #5
11:40 am	Group #6
Noon	Group #7
	Review anticipated volunteers for the afternoon shift.
12:20 pm	Group #8
12:40 pm	Group #9
1:00 pm	Group #10
1:20 pm	Group #11
1:40 pm	Group #12
2:00 pm	Clothing Room Closes
2 – 5 pm	Eat lunch, enter the day's information into Salesforce, and prepare the clothing room for the next day.

Clothing room data entry for each week will be due by 5 pm on Friday and must be completed on-site. Admin volunteers may be scheduled to support data entry completion each week, if needed.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Below, we have provided suggested responses to questions commonly received in the clothing room. Please read through each response, and ask your staff lead if anything is unclear. You are welcome to reword all responses in language you find more comfortable, but please always strive for the same meaning/content.

<p>Why is there a limit on how much I can get? Everything in here was donated for us!</p>	<p>Indeed, everything in the clothing room is for Bread for the City's clients, and we are so glad you find the space useful!</p> <p>Each month, the clothing room enjoys nearly 1,000 visits. To help ensure that sufficient, quality stock of various items remains for the bulk of visitors, we place limits on what can be removed by a single individual each week. Some items, purses for example, also come in far less frequently, so we ask our clients to claim only one of such items per visit.</p> <p>Please remember that Bread for the City's clients are able to visit the clothing room once per week, so even if you were unable to acquire everything you would have liked today, you will get a chance to come back and seek out other new things soon.</p>
<p>Why aren't there more items for men?</p> <p>Why aren't there more items for plus-sized individuals?</p>	<p>All of the items we receive for the clothing room are donated, and unfortunately, at this time, we receive far more donations for women than men (OR far more donations for individuals who aren't plus-sized). We apologize for the inconvenience, but we are not able to fully control the quantity of any type of item received. Please know we regularly make requests for additional clothing items for men (OR plus-sized individuals), and we're always exploring new ways to acquire items that will be of use to our clients.</p>
<p>Why do you start taking names at 9:00 if the clothing room doesn't open until 10:00?</p>	<p>Unfortunately, because we don't have a lot of storage space for new donations, we often find many bags to sort and move upon arrival at 9 am. Often, we need that initial hour to get the room ready for our client guests. Though we are unable to open the room at 9 am, we do still want our clients who have arrived at 9 am to be able to select a time to visit the space. We apologize for the inconvenience, but we hope you understand.</p>
<p>How long is the list? How long will I have to wait?</p>	<p>The clothing room receives 12 groups each day, and you are able to either sign up for the nearest available time or a later time of your choosing. Right now, the earliest time I can give you an entry badge for is (<i>indicate time</i>).</p> <p>If that time doesn't work for you, just let me know what later time might be better, and I'll give you an entry badge for that time instead. There's no need to wait in the building. Feel free to leave and run other errands. When you return with your</p>

	entry badge, you'll be allowed into the clothing room at the appropriate time.
Why are you rushing me out?	To accommodate the popularity of the clothing room, it is necessary for us to limit each client's visit to 15 minutes per week. Please keep in mind that Bread for the City has more than 33,000 clients in total, and all are eligible to visit the clothing room once per week. We have to prepare for the possibility of the highest number of clients being accommodated in the clothing room.
Why do I have to listen to you? I've been a client for years, and you just got here!	Thank you for your patience. I know it can be frustrating when new people begin working in a space you've been using for a long time. I'll be interning with Bread for the City for eight weeks, and for that time, I'll be helping to manage this space according to the guidelines set forth for me. If you have questions or concerns, you are welcome to speak with those who provide instruction and supervise my work. (<i>Provide those names.</i>)
The interns and volunteers always get the best of everything before the clients arrive. That isn't fair!	In the past, client volunteers and interns were allowed to acquire items at the same time they served, but that is no longer true. In fact, interns and volunteers are now required to follow a small bag rule, which means they can neither enter nor exit the clothing room with a bag that is larger than 12 inches. In addition, neither group can "shop" while serving. These rules help ensure that clients who have signed up for the clothing room have the best opportunity to access the donated materials on a first-come, first-served basis.
I know the clothing room is closed, but I just need one thing. Can't I just run in and out right quick?	To be fair to all of our clients, the clothing room is only accessible during the posted hours. I apologize for the inconvenience, but we are unable to let you in at this time. If you sincerely need an exception, please talk to one of the social workers on staff. We are able to make exceptions at the request of staff members.
Oooo ... I really like that. Can you put that to the side for me?	I'm sorry, but we only hold special items at the request of Bread for the City staff members who know of special needs that individuals may have. In general, all items are available to clients on a first-come, first-served basis, so we do not put items to the side when people see things they like through the window.
I'm disabled, and it's really hard for me to look around in 15 minutes with other people present. Can I come at a different time?	Yes, we are able to make special accommodations for individuals with disabilities who would like to look through the clothing room during our closed hours. When would you like to visit? I'll make sure you are able to view the space at that time.
How do I volunteer?	It's easy to sign up to serve! Do you have internet on your

	<p>phone or a computer at home? If so, just visit breadforthecity.org/volunteer to explore the options. Click the yellow “select your shift” button to access the calendar and sign-up form. If you don’t have access to a computer, the library two blocks down the street makes computers accessible to the general public. I am also happy to sign you up for a first shift right now.</p>
How do I sign up for Grocery Plus?	<p>I’m not able to help you with Grocery Plus sign-up, but I do have a copy of the application for you. It includes contact details for Sonya D. Springfield, the site lead for that program.</p>
<i>FROM CLIENT:</i> Can I come in early? My badge is for (time), and I can’t wait that long. I have to leave to (reason).	<p>I’m so very sorry for the inconvenience, but no, we are unable to allow you in early. The clothing room is very small, and we already have a full group for the earlier times. Please know I’ll be glad to take you off of the list, if you’d like, to ensure you’re able to have your weekly visit tomorrow or Thursday.</p>
<i>FROM BFC STAFF:</i> Can my client come in early?	<p>Yes, we are glad to make an accommodation for a staff member.</p>
Who is in charge here? I want to register a complaint.	<p>My supervisors are (<i>share names</i>). We also have a complaint form (<i>hand guest a copy</i>) that you are welcome to fill out and return to the front desk. They’ll give the form to Bread for the City’s Volunteer & In-Kind Manager.</p>
What happened to (name)? I used to like (her/him/them).	<p>Bread for the City uses a mix of one-year Public Allies, eight-week interns, and short-term volunteers to work in the clothing room. That being so, there is frequent turnover among those working. I’m sorry (<i>name</i>) is not here, but please know I’ll be glad to help you!</p>

DAILY ASSIGNMENTS

Clothing Handling Processes

After a clothing donation is received in the clothing room, please ask the donor to complete an in-kind donation slip. The donor should keep the white copy. Bread for the City keeps the yellow copy. When you have a significant stack of the yellow slips, please place them in the Volunteer & In-Kind Program bin in the food pantry.

Ask a volunteer or intern to assess the donation. Seasonal items (spring/summer or fall/winter) that are not soiled, smelly, or flimsy (easy to tear, full of holes, etc.) may be hung in the appropriate section of the clothing room.

Unseasonal items should be bagged for removal from the clothing room. Please alert food@breadforthecity.org when you have unseasonal items ready for pick-up. This will notify both Melissa Frazier and the Bread for the City drivers.

Surplus seasonal items should be sorted and stored in the back room as able until space presents for the item to appear on the clothing room floor.

Ongoing Clothing Room Tasks

- Arrange donated books by genre or general subject matter.
- Assist clients as they search for particular sizes and clothing types.
- Ensure all bins and baskets contain only similar items and are labeled appropriately.
- Ensure hanging items are in size order in each section.
- Fold any donated bedding and designate a shelf or bin for it.
- Help donors carry bulk items into the center.
- Help unload donations from the Bread for the City truck.
- Join matching socks. Separate children's socks from adult socks.
- Make an attractive display of donated jewelry.
- Receive client names for entrance, and distribute group badges.
- Remove unnecessary or unhelpful items from The floor of the clothing room.
- Remove vacant hangers from the clothing racks.
- Safely stack any donated dishes for easy visibility and access.
- Separate shoes by gender, type, or size. (Discard any shoes that you would not wear on your own feet.)
- Sort and separate donated clothing items.
- Sweep the floors.
- Take out the trash.
- Use the hanger stackers and bins to neatly arrange similar hangers.
- Straighten the back area. (See image. Please note that bins are labeled. Unsorted donated items are in a separate area, and walking space exists for easy access to sorted bins.)



Intern Sign-In

Each morning upon arrival and departure, clothing room interns should sign their individual PEP attendance log, which is typically stored on a clipboard in a wall bin. Members of the PEP staff will regularly check the log and staff leadership to verify intern attendance.

Volunteer Sign-In

When you sign up to serve, you are entered into the Bread for the City database as confirmed. To have your status changed to completed by a staff member, you should sign the clothing room volunteer log or utilize volunteer text sign in.

Client Sign-In

Bread for the City clients may begin to sign-up for the clothing room at 9 am on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Sign-in concludes when all group badges have been disseminated and/or the room lead's judgement indicates that no additional clients can be accommodated for the day.

Tokens for Client Volunteers

Metro tokens are available to Bread for the City clients who choose to volunteer. A member of the Volunteer Program Staff can assist you in acquiring tokens for volunteer service.

Salesforce Data Entry

Guidelines for entering information into the Salesforce database will be provided separately.

CUSTOMER SERVICE TIPS

- Be accessible. Check in with clients to see if they need help.
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect. Commit to doing what you can to help our guests have an enjoyable experience.
- Listen actively and attentively. Be patient with each guest.
- Don't expect everyone to be the same. Adapt to the needs of each clothing room visitor as best possible.
- Practice self-control. Never get into an argument with a client, even if they are behaving inappropriately.
- Avoid delaying responses to questions, unless it is necessary.
- If you don't know an answer, get a staff member as soon as possible.
- Offer simple, clear, positive responses using a kind demeanor.
- Study the clothing room before it opens to have a sense of where things are.
- Help keep the room orderly to make items easier to find.
- Rotate each group on time.
- If you make a mistake, don't get defensive. Instead, apologize, and try to fix it.
- Don't make promises you can't personally keep. (For example, don't tell a client you'll put something on hold for them.)
- Wear your volunteer badge. (This may help some clients better understand which questions you can and cannot support.)
- Give complete information to staff if a client requires follow up for any reason.
- Use the signage in the room to support your position. (This can sometimes help people understand that you are following a policy rather than restricting them as an individual.)
- Remember the goal ... we're here to help!

Articles on Good Customer Service

- <https://www.groovehq.com/support/essential-customer-service-skills>
- <https://www.helpscout.net/blog/customer-service-skills/>