



**Nobody's Just Hungry:  
Basic Needs Outreach & Referral  
Community Resource  
Volunteer Job Description**

### **General Information – Community Resource Team**

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank (RICFB) provides food to people in need and promotes long-term solutions to the problem of hunger. Food Bank member agencies provide various types of food assistance everyday throughout the state. But we also know **nobody's just hungry**. Many people needing food assistance also seek support for housing, utilities, healthcare and many other basic needs services or economic supports. The **RI Community Food Bank Community Resource Team** provides basic need information, resources, and training to our member agencies and direct referral outreach to their guests.

### **Role of Community Resource Volunteer Network**

As a critical part of the team, the **Community Resource Volunteer Network** assists the Food Bank Community Resource (CR) staff. The volunteers will go out to food pantries and meal sites to talk directly with guests, and guide and refer them to the programs and organizations that will best address their additional service needs. Community resource volunteers *are not* case workers or eligibility specialists. Volunteers are knowledgeable referral sources for guests as a way to support the self-sufficiency and self-efficacy of individuals and families in need.

### **What Volunteers Are Expected to Do**

Generally, volunteers will work in pairs, often with RICFB staff. There may be some situations where fully trained volunteers might work on their own. The primary work is to have meaningful conversations with agency guests in order to guide them towards the services they need.

Community Resource Volunteers will:

- Become knowledgeable about 6 Core Basic Needs programs
- Be familiar with an array of social services and know how to access them
- Be aware of most current information about basic needs services through RICFB weekly e-blasts, discussions with CR team, and other credible sources
- Make quality referrals to or respond to questions from agency guests about the social service programs and services they could use

To do this effectively, volunteers will:

- Only use materials provided or approved by the CR team in order to maintain consistent quality
- Set-up a display table with current materials and signage
- Wear a name tag and/or RICFB apparel
- Participate in trainings or in-service discussions when possible
- Work in cooperation with member agency staff/volunteers, RICFB team, and other CR volunteers
- Complete and return an outreach data sheet promptly after each visit

## Skills Needed to Be a Community Resources Volunteer

Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age, and should have access to reliable transportation. We also ask that you have consistent access to email and the Internet. Volunteers may request to work in locations close to their home, but willingness to travel to other areas of the state are appreciated.

Additionally, volunteers should be able to:

- Communicate respectfully and compassionately with agency guests
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
  - Exercise discretion and demonstrate sensitivity toward any information that participants may want to share about the hardships they experience
  - If you see someone you know, give space for them to initiate contact or awareness that they already know you

Language skills in Spanish, Portuguese, or other languages are not required, but definitely a bonus!

## Training and Support

All volunteers are required to train with the Community Resource Staff at a formal training. During the training, volunteers will:

- Discuss how to make quality referrals
- Become familiar with reference tools and resources
- Learn the details about 6 Core Basic Needs programs

After the training, volunteers are mentored by Food Bank staff at outreach visits until the staff confirms that volunteers are ready, and the volunteers feel confident to go out on their own. On-going support and in-service meetings is provided by Community Resources Food Bank staff. This includes subscription to the weekly community resources e-blast. Volunteers are provided with materials they will need to make outreach visits.

## Time Commitment

Outreach visits happen year round, though the busiest (and critical) period is between the months of October through May. Volunteers are requested to participate in at least six (6) outreach visits during this time. Because programs across the state are open for service at various times throughout the day and week, volunteers may set their own times according to their availability based on visits scheduled by the CR Coordinator with participating agencies.

*Please note: The Food Bank will not be able to reimburse your travel expenses. However, we recommend that you keep records for your own tax filing purposes.*

## Contact Information at Rhode Island Community Food Bank:

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Community Resource Coordinator  
Direct Line: (401) 230-1701  
[kfox@rifoodbank.org](mailto:kfox@rifoodbank.org)

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

*Your signature confirms you understand and accept these responsibilities*