



Open
Cupboard

Today's
Harvest



Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to Open Cupboard!

We're thrilled to have you here as part of our volunteer team. Open Cupboard is a community-based organization, and volunteers like you make all the difference in fulfilling our mission to support our neighbors in need. Through your time and effort, you're helping to create a welcoming and dignified space for individuals and families facing food insecurity.

The Volunteer Handbook is designed to acquaint you with Open Cupboard and provide you with information about volunteering with our organization.

We encourage all volunteers to read through this handbook. It's designed to answer common questions and help you feel prepared and supported.

No handbook can answer all the questions you might have about our policies and programs. We encourage you to talk with your supervisor or volunteer coordinator if you have questions about the content of this handbook or your volunteer service with Open Cupboard.

Whether you're sorting donations, distributing food, or assisting behind the scenes, know that each task plays a critical role in providing essential resources to those who rely on us. Thank you for bringing your compassion and energy to Open Cupboard. Together, we're building a stronger, more supportive community for everyone.

Sincerely,
Shannon Hollanitsch, Volunteer & Operations Director
Leanna Miller, Volunteer Manager



New Volunteer? Start Here!

Step 1: Apply

- Complete volunteer application at opencupboard.volunteerhub.com

Step 2: Sign In & Complete Training

- Log in to your new account at opencupboard.volunteerhub.com
- Complete Civil Rights training and sign the Volunteer Waiver (automatically prompted when you first sign in)

Step 3: Attend Orientation (Required)

- Sign up for an orientation session in VolunteerHub
 - Orientations are offered in-person at both our Oakdale and Maplewood locations

What to Bring/Wear to Orientation:

- ✓ Comfortable, closed-toe shoes
- ✓ Weather-appropriate clothing (warehouses can be cool)
- ✓ Water bottle (optional)
- ✗ Leave valuables at home

Step 4: Sign Up for Your First Shift

- Browse and sign up for shifts at opencupboard.volunteerhub.com
- Join weather alerts: Text "update" to 651-571-5848

Your First Volunteer Shift:

Arrive 5 minutes early:

1. Enter through volunteer entrance
2. Hang coat, store items in locker
3. Sign in at tablet kiosk
4. Fill out name tag
5. Wait at Huddle Hotspot

At shift start: Quick huddle with manager, paired with buddy volunteer, then get started!

Need Help? volunteer@opencupboard.org or 651-300-0662

Table of Contents

About Open Cupboard	2
Open Cupboard's History	3
Community Impact	5
Open Cupboard's Programs	7
Volunteer Culture & Expectations	10
Orientation & Training	12
Volunteer Opportunities	13
Signing Up & Scheduling	16
Volunteer Policies	18
Glossary of Open Cupboard Terms	26
Who to Contact	30

About Open Cupboard

Our Mission

Our unrelenting focus is to provide nutritious food to our neighbors in a respectful manner while engaging our community in the fight against hunger.

Our Values

We believe that access to nutritious food is a basic human right. We are committed to responding to the needs of our community by providing food distribution and support services with dignity and respect.

These values guide how we work with our volunteers and the families we serve, ensuring that everyone feels respected and empowered.

We welcome and value volunteers of all backgrounds. We believe our community is stronger when everyone feels respected, included, and supported.



Open Cupboard's History

Open Cupboard was established in 1983 as the Christian Cupboard Emergency Food Shelf or CCEFS, and initially started as a food closet in the basement of Woodbury Lutheran Church. During the first year of operation, CCEFS served about five families per week, at a time when Woodbury's population was around 6,000 people. Over the years, the organization grew along with the needs of the community, eventually adding paid staff who worked alongside an army of dedicated volunteers.

During the mid-2010s it had become clear that the organization's work could no longer be sustained in the basement of the church, and in 2017, CCEFS launched a capital campaign to raise funds to move from Woodbury Lutheran Church to a new building on the grounds of Guardian Angels Church. In January 2018, CCEFS opened its doors in its new home. This shift created an enormous opportunity to grow our service to the community. In May 2021, CCEFS added a second site, called Today's Harvest, in Oakdale near the intersection of 694 and Century Avenue. In March 2022, CCEFS opened a Today's Harvest at our Guardian Angels location, allowing for both inside shopping and drive-up service. In July of 2022, CCEFS became Open Cupboard.

Open Cupboard started to consult with other food shelves about launching their own Today's Harvest-like model. We worked with both Basic Needs in Cottage Grove and Fresh Harvest in Hudson to launch their own accessible, choice-based models.

Demand for Today's Harvest outgrew its first space. In May 2023, the first Today's Harvest market closed, and the search began to find a new space. In November 2023, Open Cupboard found a new space with Woodland Hills Church. In December 2024, Today's Harvest Maplewood opened.

What's the difference between Open Cupboard and Today's Harvest?

Open Cupboard is the name of our organization. We're a nonprofit that provides food assistance through a variety of programs to help meet the needs of our community.

Today's Harvest is the name of our largest program — a free, market-style food distribution where visitors can choose fresh produce, dairy, meat, bakery items, and more. It's part of Open Cupboard, but it has its own name and identity to reflect the fresh and daily nature of the food we offer.

Think of it this way:

Open Cupboard is the umbrella organization.

Today's Harvest is one of the services we provide.

So when you visit Today's Harvest, you're participating in a program run by Open Cupboard!



Community Impact

Through a turbulent year, Open Cupboard was a steady presence and a trusted, safe resource for our community.

At Open Cupboard, every box packed, shift worked, and kind word shared by our volunteers adds up to something extraordinary. Together in 2025, we made a powerful difference in the lives of thousands of families across our community.

- **6,681,719 pounds** of food were distributed across all of our programs
- We welcomed **1,179,028 visits** from individuals seeking food support
- **2,343 volunteers** gave their time — including **1,166 first-time** volunteers
- A total of **60,220 volunteer hours** were served throughout the year
- Volunteer contributions represented **\$2.3 million** in added value to our community
- We rescued **2,346,783 pounds** of food that might otherwise have gone to waste

Thanks to this incredible support, for every \$1 invested in our programs, Open Cupboard generates \$27 in community benefit — a testament to the power of this work and the people who make it possible.

None of this would be possible without volunteers like you. Whether you're helping at a market, sorting rescued food, delivering groceries, or supporting operations behind the scenes — ***you are a vital part of this work.***

In a year of uncertainty, Open Cupboard remained constant. That constancy is built on you.



“As a single mom of three kids and a domestic abuse survivor, I found this program lifesaving. I felt understood, without oversharing what I have been going through. I feel safe with this program and loved!”

– Jackie

“Words can’t express how much Open Cupboard has helped us. We’re grateful to be able to visit when we need, and as often as we need. You’ll never know when you’ll need the resources, and Open Cupboard is always there.”

– Luther



Open Cupboard Programs

We offer a wide variety of programs dedicated to alleviating food insecurity, welcoming individuals from all communities and backgrounds. No matter where you live or your circumstances, if you're in need of food, we are here to help.

Today's Harvest

Today's Harvest is a fresh approach to food access—free, dignified, and barrier-free. This unique market model helps increase access to fresh, healthy food while reducing food waste in the community. Food offerings change daily, depending on what's available through local food rescue efforts.

The market provides a quick, convenient way for people to stretch their food budgets, offering a 1- to 2-day supply of produce, bread, meat, and other groceries. There are no income requirements, paperwork, or appointments—anyone who can use fresh and frozen food before it expires is welcome.

Shoppers are invited to visit once per day at either of our two locations: Oakdale and Maplewood.



Delivery Program

Our Delivery Program helps ensure that individuals and families who face transportation challenges can still access the food and essentials they need. In addition to fresh and shelf-stable food, we may offer diapers, pet food, personal hygiene products, and household essentials like toilet paper, dish soap, and paper towels, depending on what is available. Deliveries are available once per month to households within a 10-mile radius of our Maplewood location. Each family receiving a delivery has a conversation with our delivery coordinator to get to know their needs and help identify other resources. We partner with DoorDash to provide delivery service at a lower cost to Open Cupboard.



Drive-Up Program

Through our Drive-Up Service at the Oakdale location—open on Thursdays and Fridays—we offer a convenient way for households to receive fresh produce, meat, dairy, deli items, and some non-perishable groceries.

Households may access this service once per month by scheduling an appointment online. Our Drive-Up Service works particularly well for those that have mobility issues but still drive, adults that have their kids along, and those that don't mind not choosing their own food.

Mobile Food Shelf

Our Mobile Food Shelf program brings nutritious food directly to where people live, helping remove barriers to access for seniors and residents in local communities.

We currently serve seven senior living facilities in Woodbury, Oakdale, and Newport, as well as two mobile home parks, Landfall and Cimarron. We provide monthly food distributions modeled after our Fresh Food Market—offering fresh produce, shelf-stable items, and more in a welcoming, market-style setup or a prepacked delivery style.



“Life happens and programs like this are so important. You tend to think that there's not many places to turn to when you're in a tight spot in life. That's why I really appreciate programs like this who are truly there to help people. It's hard to put pride aside and show your face, ***but the volunteers that are there truly make you feel equal***, and not less than for having to use such programs.”

— Keesha S.

Volunteer Culture & Expectations

Welcome to Our Volunteer Community!

At Open Cupboard, volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. Together, we create a welcoming, respectful, and compassionate environment where everyone can access the food they need with dignity. This section outlines the values and expectations that shape our volunteer culture.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As a volunteer, you have the right to:

- A safe, respectful, and inclusive environment
- Clear information about your role and responsibilities
- Support and training to help you succeed
- Recognition for your contributions

As a volunteer, you have the responsibility to:

- Follow Open Cupboard policies and procedures
- Treat everyone with kindness and respect
- Communicate openly and honestly with staff and volunteers
- Arrive on time and do your best to complete scheduled shifts

The Value of Volunteering

Volunteering at Open Cupboard provides meaningful opportunities to:

- Give back to your community
- Build new skills and grow your confidence
- Expand your social and professional network
- Enhance your well-being and sense of purpose

Together, we strengthen both individuals and our broader community.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct reflects the values that guide our daily work. As an Open Cupboard volunteer, we ask that you:

- Treat all customers, staff, and fellow volunteers with respect
- Follow instructions and communicate in a professional, courteous manner
- Demonstrate dependability by arriving on time and staying for your full shift

Customer Interactions

- **Welcome & Respect**
 - Be welcoming, warm, and judgment-free
 - Respect shopper privacy—avoid personal questions or sharing private information
 - Respect shoppers' privacy outside the organization
- **Boundaries**
 - Do not give or accept gifts or tips from clients; refer donations to staff
 - Do not provide rides or accompany clients off-site
 - Do not serve food or drinks unless directed by staff
 - Avoid discussing political, religious, or other sensitive topics with clients
- **When Concerns Arise**
 - Refer concerns or rule violations to staff; do not enforce rules yourself
 - Our goal is a welcoming, respectful environment—please help us maintain it

Teamwork and Communication

- Work collaboratively and assist new volunteers when possible
- Accept supervision and be open to respectful redirection
- Respect diverse experiences, perspectives, and personalities

Orientation & Training

To ensure a safe, consistent, and welcoming experience for all, volunteers must complete required training before getting started—and may be asked to complete additional training based on their role.

Required Trainings

Orientation

All volunteers must attend an orientation before their first shift. During orientation, you'll receive a tour of our spaces, learn about all of Open Cupboard's programs, get an overview of common volunteer roles, and cover the basics of volunteering at the food shelf. There will also be time to ask questions!

Orientations are offered in-person at both our Oakdale and Maplewood locations. If none of the available times work for your schedule, please contact us — we're happy to help you find an alternative.

Civil Rights Training

All volunteers are required to complete our Civil Rights training annually. This training and agreement are sent through our volunteer platform. For volunteers who work directly with shoppers or want a deeper understanding of Civil Rights policies, we also offer an optional extended video training.

Additional Trainings

Some trainings are optional, while others are required for specific roles.

- **Food Sorting Training** – Optional hands-on training with a staff member for volunteers who want guided practice sorting food rescue donations. Sign up in VolunteerHub.
- **Market Assistant Training** – For roles interacting with shoppers
- **Pallet Jack Training** – *Required* for Supply Captains and Warehouse Support
- **Intake Training** – *Required* for Drive-Up Intake volunteers

Want to go deeper on any topic? Additional training is available upon request — reach out to volunteer@opencupboard.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

Here's a quick overview of the regular volunteer roles available at Open Cupboard. Whether you enjoy working behind the scenes or directly with people, there's something for everyone!

These are our core volunteer roles. Training is provided, and we'll help you find the right fit based on your interests and availability.

Today's Harvest

Great for New Volunteers

Market Prep

Help get the market ready before it opens. Tasks include cleaning and sorting produce, meat, dairy, and baked goods to make sure everything is good quality.

Food Rescue Sorter

Sort donated food and place items where they belong. Check dates and make sure everything is fresh.

Market Restocking

Keep the market shelves full while we're open. You'll be assigned a section like coolers, produce, freezer, dry goods, or bakery.

Client-Facing Roles

Market Assistant

Walk through the store with shoppers, explain how the market works, and help with checkout. You might also hand out produce bags at the front desk. (Bilingual volunteers welcome!)

Market Greeter

Welcome shoppers at the front desk. Hand out pagers, call shoppers in, and explain how the market works to new visitors. (Bilingual volunteers welcome!)

Backroom and Warehouse Roles

Box & Recycling Hauler

Help with general tasks like breaking down boxes and emptying trash. Some heavy lifting may be needed.

Warehouse Support

Move pallets and large bins to help keep things running smoothly behind the scenes.

Clean-Up Crew

Help clean and close down the market at the end of the day.

Drive-Up Program

Backroom Roles

Produce Sorting & Packing

Sort and pack fresh produce for Drive-Up and Today's Harvest.

Backroom Packing Helper

Pack meat and bread, take out trash, and break down cardboard. Some heavy lifting required.

Day-Of Roles

Surprise Item Specialist

Greet clients in their cars and offer optional bonus items.

Intake

Ask clients intake questions and enter info into a tablet.

Interested? Contact Leanna Miller at leanna@opencupboard.org.

Drive-Up Assistant

Pack food boxes and load them into cars. Heavy lifting required.

Supply Captain (Must be trained)

Help move pallets and keep the Drive-Up area running smoothly. Requires heavy lifting.

Delivery Program

Box Packing

Pack boxes with produce, dry goods, meat, dairy, and hygiene items for home deliveries. Includes breaking down boxes and cleaning up.

Mobile Program

Food Packing - At Open Cupboard (Oakdale)

Pack produce or dry goods to be sent out with the Mobile Program.

Distribution Team - At Off-Site Locations

Help set up, assist shoppers, and clean up at Mobile Food Shelf sites.

Other Volunteer Roles

Data Entry

Enter data from home or onsite in a designated space.

Produce Team (Seasonal)

Help load and unload fresh produce at the St. Paul Farmers Market on late Sunday mornings.

Special Events

Help with occasional off-site events throughout the year.



Signing Up & Scheduling

How to Sign Up

Once your orientation is complete, you'll be able to sign up for a volunteer shift through our online portal. It's easy and flexible—choose any opportunity that fits your schedule at any of our locations.

To sign up:

1. Go to opencupboard.volunteerhub.com
2. Log in using the email and password you used for your application. If you forgot your password, click “**Forget Your Password?**” to reset it.
3. On the homepage, you'll see the **Open Cupboard Volunteer Portal**, including quick links to sites like Today's Harvest Maplewood.
4. The upcoming volunteer opportunities will be listed. Use the right-hand side to switch between list, map, or calendar views.
5. Filter jobs using the “**Events**” dropdown to find specific roles.
6. Click any opportunity to view details like location and job description.
7. When you find one that works for you, click “**Sign Up.**”

Need help? Check out our detailed guide:

[“How to Sign Up for Volunteer Shifts”](#)

Volunteer Scheduling

To keep our programs running smoothly and safely, all volunteers must sign up before arriving. With multiple locations and activities happening each day, it's important we know who to expect and where help is needed.

Why scheduling matters:

- Ensures the right number of volunteers are in each area
- Helps staff plan effectively and maintain safety
- Prevents overcrowding and confusion during busy times

If you arrive without signing up:

We appreciate your willingness to help! However, we may not be able to place you in your preferred area. In most cases, we'll assign you to general support tasks like cleaning or restocking.

Changing or Canceling a Shift

Volunteers may cancel a shift any time before their shift through the volunteer portal. If it's within 24 hours of the shift, please also email **volunteer@opencupboard.org** so the Volunteer Team knows you're unable to attend.

When You Arrive to Volunteer

Parking:

- **Oakdale:** Enter through the main entrance and park to the right of the building.
- **Maplewood:** Please park on the far north side of the parking lot.



Personal Belongings:

Most volunteer roles involve being on your feet and moving around. We recommend leaving personal items at home. However, lockers are available in the volunteer break room. Instructions for using the lockers are posted at each location.

Volunteer Policies

These policies are designed to support a consistent, safe, and equitable experience for all volunteers, customers, and staff. We ask that all volunteers review and follow the policies outlined below.

Quick Reference Guide



Age Requirements

- 12-14: Must volunteer with parent/guardian
- 15+: May volunteer independently
- Under 18: Parent waiver required



Dress Code

- Closed-toe shoes (no sandals)
- Clean, modest clothing
- Wear your name tag during shifts



Attendance

- Sign up before arriving
- Cancel via VolunteerHub portal
- Email if less than 24 hours notice



Shopping Policy

- Shop AFTER your shift ends
- Regular checkout process
- Same access as all shoppers



Safety & Conduct

- Report injuries immediately
- No weapons, drugs, or alcohol
- Tobacco and vape-free facility



Equipment Use

- Training required before use
- Ask staff before operating
- Safety first, always

Volunteer Policies: Before You Arrive

Age Requirements

- Ages 12-14: May volunteer with a parent or legal guardian. Both must complete orientation, and they should remain together for the shift.
- Ages 15+: May volunteer independently if able to follow instructions and work as part of the team. (We cannot provide one-on-one supervision for individual volunteers.)
- All Volunteers Under 18: Parent/guardian waiver must be completed online before signing up for shifts.

Dress Code

- Wear closed-toe shoes (no sandals or flip-flops)
- Dress in modest, clean, practical clothing
- Avoid offensive graphics or language
- Tie back long hair and maintain good hygiene
- Wear your volunteer name tag while on shift

Note: *Some tasks involve working in coolers, freezers, or outdoor areas. Dress appropriately for the temperature - we recommend bringing a jacket for cold storage areas even in summer.*

Parking & Arrival

- Park in designated volunteer parking areas
- Enter through the volunteer entrance
- Sign in at the volunteer station when you arrive
- Store personal belongings (coats, bags, phones) in a locker or designated area

Your First Day

On your first day, arrive 10 minutes early. A staff member or experienced volunteer will:

- Greet you and show you around
- Explain your assigned tasks
- Introduce you to other volunteers and staff
- Answer any questions you have

Don't worry if you feel uncertain at first - everyone starts somewhere!

Volunteer Policies: During Your Shift

General Expectations

Volunteers are expected to:

- Be reliable and engaged during shifts
- Treat all individuals with respect and kindness
- Follow safety practices and staff directions
- Ask questions and report concerns when unsure

If a shift isn't going well, let us know - we'll help you find the right fit!

Schedule Changes & Attendance

If you need to cancel a shift:

- Contact us as early as possible
- Email: volunteer@opencupboard.org OR Phone: 651-300-0662
- We understand emergencies happen. If you're unable to give advance notice, just contact us when you're able.
- For non-emergency cancellations, please give us at least 24 hours notice when possible

Repeated no-shows without communication may be addressed through our conduct policy.

Thank you for helping us maintain smooth and consistent operations.

Equipment Use

Only operate equipment if you have been trained and authorized to do so.

Equipment requiring training includes:

- Pallet jacks (Yale, Clark, Toyota)
- Stackers and other powered equipment
- Any equipment marked with safety warnings

If you're unsure whether you can use a piece of equipment, ask a staff member before operating it. Your safety and the safety of others is our top priority.

Volunteer Policies: During Your Shift

Cell Phone, Device, & Earbud Policy

- No earbuds or headphones during shifts unless part of a task with staff approval
- Use phones only during breaks or for brief check-ins
- Step away and inform staff if you need to take a call during your shift
- If you need to be reachable for a family emergency, please let staff know at the start of your shift
- Do not take photos of customers without staff approval (see Confidentiality Policy)

Breaks

- We encourage volunteers to take breaks as needed during their shifts
- Break room is located near the volunteer sign-in area
- Water and seating are available
- Pace yourself and take breaks as needed - we want you to feel good while volunteering!

Safety & Conflict Resolution

Volunteers should:

- Follow all safety guidelines and report unsafe conditions
- Remain calm and alert staff about difficult or unsafe behavior
- Never attempt to physically intervene in conflicts
- Report any safety hazards (spills, broken equipment, etc.) immediately

Volunteer Policies: After Your Shift

Shopping Policy

You are Welcome to Shop!

We encourage volunteers to shop at Today's Harvest! Our market is open to everyone, and we want you to have access to the nutritious food we provide. To maintain fairness and comply with our food bank partner agreements, we ask that volunteers shop the same way as everyone else.

The Basics

- Shop after your shift ends and you have signed out
- Shop on the market floor only, through the regular checkout process
- Follow the same quantity guidelines as all other shoppers
- Volunteers may only take items currently available on the market floor. Backstock and items not yet available to shoppers are not available to volunteers

What to Know

- **Equal access for all.** All shoppers, including volunteers, access food on a first-come, first-served basis. Do not set aside, reserve, or save items during your shift. Every shopper deserves the same opportunity to access what's available.
- **Shop in the market only.** Volunteers may only shop for items that are currently out on the market floor and available to all shoppers. Items in backstock, storage areas, or that have not yet been placed in the market are not available to volunteers.
- **Inventory changes constantly.** Our rescue-based model means what's available shifts throughout the day. If something you saw during your shift is gone by the time you're done — that's normal, and it happens to all shoppers.
- **When in doubt, ask.** If you're unsure whether something is available to shoppers, check with a staff member before taking it.

Why It Matters

This policy exists to protect the integrity of Today's Harvest for everyone who relies on it. It helps us comply with our food bank partner agreements and ensures that volunteers and shoppers alike can trust that access to food is fair and consistent.

Volunteer Policies: Important to Know

Illness Policy

Please stay home if you're not feeling well to protect others, especially if you have symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, sore throat, fatigue, or nausea.

To cancel your shift, log in at opencupboard.volunteerhub.com, email volunteer@opencupboard.org or call 651-300-0662.

We understand emergencies happen. If you're too sick to give notice in advance, just contact us when you're able.

Injury & Incident Reporting

If you are injured or witness an incident during your shift:

- **Tell a staff member immediately**
- Seek medical attention if needed
- Staff will complete an incident report
- Contact volunteer@opencupboard.org with any follow-up questions

If you have concerns about another volunteer's behavior:

- Speak with a staff member, Volunteer Manager, or Program Director during your shift
- Email volunteer@opencupboard.org for non-urgent concerns
- All concerns are taken seriously and handled confidentially

Inclement Weather

If weather conditions or other unexpected events affect our operations, staff will communicate any closures or changes via:

- A Facebook post
- A text alert to those on our weather list (To join: text 'update' to 651-571-5848)
- An email notification if your scheduled shift is impacted

We want all volunteers to feel safe coming to and from their shifts. If weather conditions make you feel unsafe, please use your best judgment. You are always welcome to cancel your shift, leave early, or wait until conditions improve.

Prohibited Behavior

- No horseplay, disruptive behavior, or inappropriate jokes
- No weapons, drugs, or alcohol on-site
- Open Cupboard is tobacco- and vape-free

Confidentiality Policy

- Keep customer, volunteer, and donor information private
- If you do see someone you recognize outside of Open Cupboard, please do not mention where you know them from or that they visit Open Cupboard
- Do not take or share customer photos without staff approval
- Ask staff if you are unsure about privacy issues

Conduct & Discipline Policy

Open Cupboard is committed to a safe, respectful environment for all volunteers, staff, and guests. Most conduct concerns will follow this progressive process:

1. Verbal reminder (documented)
2. Written warning
3. Final warning
4. Dismissal

Serious violations (harassment, threats, theft, endangering others) may result in immediate dismissal. Steps may also be skipped based on severity. Suspension may be used while a concern is under review.

Dismissal from volunteering does not affect eligibility for food assistance.

Grievance Procedure

If you have a concern:

1. Speak directly with the person involved (if safe/appropriate)
2. Talk with a staff member, Volunteer Manager, or Program Director
3. Escalate to the Executive Director if needed

We are committed to supporting you through any concerns.

Feedback & Suggestions

Your input is welcome. You can share feedback:

- On paper forms near volunteer sign-in
- Via our anonymous online form (link provided on-site)
- Directly with a staff member

Media & Image Use Policy

By signing the volunteer waiver, you grant permission for Open Cupboard to use your photo in materials like social media or newsletters.

- We will ask before taking photos
- We will not use your name without permission
- If you prefer not to be photographed, inform a staff member and we'll note your profile

Volunteer Recognition

We celebrate your service:

- 10+ Hours: Open Cupboard T-shirt
- 35+ Hours: Personalized name badge

Appreciation events are also held throughout the year.

Court-Ordered Service Policy

We do not accept volunteers with offenses involving:

- Violence
- Sexual misconduct
- Theft or burglary

Other cases are reviewed individually; documentation may be requested.

Schedule Changes & Absences

If you need to cancel:

- Contact us as early as possible
- Email: volunteer@opencupboard.org | Phone: 651-300-0662
- Avoid last-minute cancellations when possible

Thank you for helping us maintain smooth and consistent operations.

Glossary of Open Cupboard Terms

When you start volunteering at Open Cupboard, you may hear a lot of terms that are new or unique to food shelves. From program names to equipment and food categories, there's a bit of lingo that might take some getting used to. This glossary includes many of the common words and phrases you'll hear around the building. Don't worry if something isn't familiar right away — this list is here to help, and you're always welcome to ask questions anytime something doesn't make sense.

First Day Quick Reference

- **TH (Today's Harvest)** – The former name of Open Cupboard.
- **Food Rescue (Rescue)** – The process of picking up safe but unsellable food from local grocery stores and retailers
- **Pagers/Beepers** – Devices used to manage shopper lines at TH
- **U-boats** – U-shaped metal carts for moving food around
- **Walk-in** – The walk-in cooler (or freezer) where cold items are stored
- **Produce Bags** – Clear plastic bags shoppers use at Today's Harvest
- **Thank You Bags** – Plastic bags used for packing items for Drive-Up
- **Banana Box** – Sturdy cardboard box with handles and a bottom hole, used for food rescue pickups.
- **Bonus** – Extra food items given when there's surplus
- **Compost** – Food waste including bad produce, unpackaged bakery items, or unsafe meat; placed in green-bag compost bins



Names & Programs

- **CCEFS / Christian Cupboard** – The former name of Open Cupboard.
- **Delivery** – Open Cupboard's delivery program, dispatched 3×/week through our DoorDash partnership.
- **Drive-Up** – Customers receive pre-packed food by vehicle at the back of the building on Thursdays and Fridays.
- **Landfall** – One of our mobile food distributions, held at Landfall Mobile Home Park.
- **Maplewood** – Open Cupboard's second location at 1740 Van Dyke St, Maplewood.
- **Mobile** – Off-site food shelf program held at community locations such as Landfall, serving neighborhoods throughout our area.
- **Oakdale** – Open Cupboard's main location at 8264 4th St N, Oakdale.
- **TEFAP** – The Emergency Food Assistance Program (government-funded program); items not available through Today's Harvest.
- **TH (Today's Harvest)** – Our indoor market program where customers shop for their own groceries with dignity and choice.

Equipment & Tools

- **Banana Box** – Sturdy cardboard box with handles and a bottom hole, used for food rescue pickups.
- **Container** – One of three storage containers outside at Oakdale (Container 1 is closest to the building, Container 3 is furthest).
- **Gaylord** – Large cardboard container on a pallet, used for storing bulk items, like watermelons.
- **Pagers (Beepers)** – Handheld devices used at Today's Harvest to manage shopper flow and notify customers when it's their turn.
- **Pallet Jack** – Equipment for moving pallets; requires training.
 - **Clark** – Smaller green electric jack
 - **Toyota** – Orange electric jack
 - **Yale** – Large yellow electric jack
- **Racks (Metro Racks)** – Metal shelving units used for organizing and storing food throughout the facility.
- **Skid** – Another term for a pallet (the wooden platform that holds Gaylords and other bulk items).

Equipment & Tools (Continued)

- **U-boats** – Metal "U"-shaped carts for transporting goods around the building.
- **Walk-in** – Walk-in cooler on-site where refrigerated items are stored.
- **Wrap** – Large roll of stretch wrap (plastic film) for securing and stabilizing pallets.

Food & Packaging

- **Bakery** – Includes bread, cakes, cookies, and sweet items; separated into "Bread" and "Sweets" for distribution.
- **Birthday Bag** – Special bag prepared for Drive-Up customers celebrating birthdays; includes cake mix, frosting, decorations, etc.
- **Bonus** – Extra food items given to customers when there is surplus available (e.g., bonus produce, bonus protein).
- **Cold Produce** – Refrigerated produce items such as salad mixes, lettuce, and pre-cut fruit.
- **Dairy** – Milk, eggs, cheese, yogurt, butter, and similar items.
- **Deli** – Ready-to-eat items including prepared meals, sandwiches, salads, and cut fruit.
- **Dry Goods (Dry)** – Shelf-stable foods including pasta, rice, canned goods, boxed items, and other non-perishable foods.
- **Dumpers** – Meat packages that are already 5 pounds or more and do not need to be repackaged into smaller bags.
- **Expiration Date / Sell By / Best By** – Quality indicators rather than safety dates; food is generally safe to distribute past these dates (exception: infant formula and baby food).
- **Load** – A delivery of food from a food bank partner, typically arriving on a semi-truck with multiple pallets.
- **Meat / Frozen** – Protein items and other foods that require a freezer.
- **Produce** – Fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Produce Bags** – Clear plastic bags used by shoppers during Today's Harvest to select their own produce.
- **Thank You Bags** – White plastic bags with handles (printed with "Thank You") used for packing produce, meat, frozen items, diapers, pet food, and other items for Drive-Up and Mobile distributions.

Processes & Procedures

- **Compost** – Food waste including bad produce, unpackaged bakery items, or unsafe meat; placed in green-bag compost bins.
- **Community Outreach Shelf** – Designated shelf reserved for outreach programs and partner organizations.
- **Food Rescue (Rescue)** – The process of picking up safe but unsellable food from local grocery stores; rescued food goes to TH.
- **Grant** – Food purchased by food banks using restricted donor funds and passed on to food shelves at no cost.
- **Intake** – The initial collection of household information (name, address, household size, income verification) when customers register for Drive-Up and Mobile services. Staff and trained volunteers conduct intake.
- **Middle** – The space between the two Drive-Up lanes where volunteers hand out non-food and optional items such as diapers, pet food, hygiene products, and seasonal items.
- **PantrySoft** – The computer system used for customer registration, appointments, and tracking household visits.
- **Sorting** – The process of organizing food rescue items by category (produce, bakery, deli, etc.) and checking items for quality and safety.

Partners & External Organizations

- **Bridge to Basics** – Partner organization that provides diapers and hygiene products.
- **DoorDash** – Delivery service partner; provides subsidized delivery service for customers who cannot visit in person.
- **Food Bank** – Large organizations that purchase, store, and distribute food to local food shelves and pantries. Our primary partners are Second Harvest Heartland and The Food Group.
- **Second Harvest Heartland** – Our primary food bank, delivering 4 weekly purchased loads to each site (Oakdale and Maplewood).
- **The Food Group** – Food bank partner that delivers on Thursdays.

Questions?

If you encounter a term not listed here or need clarification on anything, please don't hesitate to ask a staff member or experienced volunteer.

Who to Contact

We're here to support you! Below is a quick guide to who you can reach out to with questions or concerns related to your volunteer experience.

Topic	Contact Person/Team	Contact Information
General Volunteer Questions	Volunteer Manager	volunteer@opencupboard.org
Scheduling or Shift Changes	Volunteer Manager	volunteer@opencupboard.org 651-300-0662
First-Day Help or Site Questions	On-Site Staff (Ask at check-in)	Available at each location
Training & Orientation	Volunteer Manager	volunteer@opencupboard.org
Delivery Program Questions	Lina Christopher, Delivery Coordinator	delivery@opencupboard.org
Drive-Up Program Questions	Drive-Up Lead Staff	Ask during shift or email volunteer@opencupboard.org
Mobile Program Questions	Alaya Matters, Mobile Program Coordinator	mobile@opencupboard.org
Today's Harvest Questions	On-site Market Manager	Available at Today's Harvest Oakdale/Maplewood
Injuries, Incidents, or Safety Concerns	Program Manager or Any On-Site Staff	Tell someone right away or email volunteer@opencupboard.org
Grievances or Confidential Concerns	Shannon Hollanitsch, Volunteer & Operations Director	shannon@opencupboard.org
Weather Alerts Opt-In	Volunteer Team	Text update to 651-571-5848