

2024



# Volunteer Handbook

Dear New Volunteer,

Thank you for joining the Open Table Team. Volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization and we appreciate the gift of your time. We rely on your energy, talent, and enthusiasm to deliver our mission of ending hunger. Whether you are looking for a place to give back a few hours a week or delve into a larger monthly commitment in other managerial or administrative capacities, Open Table welcomes your involvement.

We are fortunate to have a clean, safe and state of the art facility to set the backdrop for an excellent volunteer experience. CERVIS, our volunteer management system was selected so that our volunteers have complete flexibility of schedule and direct connection to our greatest volunteer needs. We pride ourselves in recognizing the talent of our volunteers and the ability to connect them to meaningful work. Whether you are a talented cook, enjoy a physical workout while stocking food or have a particular talent for customer service – there is definitely a role for you at Open Table.

We look forward to rolling up our sleeves along side you to make sure no one goes to bed hungry this year.

The Open Table staff

# OUR MISSION

Open Table's mission is to end hunger in our local community by providing healthy food in ways that respect the dignity and diversity of those served. We achieve our mission by:

- Offering a wide variety of healthy and culturally appropriate food choices in our pantry and meal programs.
- Engaging a team of diverse, committed and passionate staff and volunteers

**Value Statement:** We believe that people should not be hungry. We recognize that economic, racial and gender inequality are the main drivers of food insecurity. We welcome our neighbors in need with compassion and respect.

**Vision Statement:** We strive to end hunger by removing the barriers to food caused by race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, income and age.

# THE BASICS

## **Openness**

We welcome all to our pantry in Maynard or one of our mobile pantries or home delivery programs. Open Table does not ask for proof of income for guests to acquire groceries from our pantry. Our service area for the pantry is vast and includes 21 towns in Middlesex County. If a client arrives who lives outside the service area we meet their immediate need for food and help connect them to services closer to home. At a time when it seems that more divides us than unites us, Open Table continues to be a welcoming place for all.

## **What brings people to Open Table?**

A need for community, unemployment, underemployment, medical issues, legal problems, death in the family, housing problems, divorce, accidents, illness and recent immigration. Stigma, access to transportation, and caregiving responsibilities are all barriers for guests to access or services.

## **Food Insecurity**

Food insecurity refers to the USDA's measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food-insecure households are not necessarily food insecure all the time. Food insecurity may reflect a household's need to make trade-offs between important basic needs, such as housing or medical bills, and purchasing nutritionally adequate foods. In 2021, approximately 16.6% households with children in Massachusetts faced food insecurity.

# THE BASICS

## **Where does our food come from?**

39% Greater Boston Food Bank (supplied by farmers, MFAP, grocers & companies)

33% local farms & grocery stores

24% food drives & community donations

## **Open Table's funding**

20% grants

70% individual and group donations

10% fundraising events

We take food that others make safely available to us. Open Table relies on its refrigerated truck and volunteers to pick up food from local farms and rescue food from local grocery stores. Additionally, volunteers spend 100s of hours processing, preparing and packing our pantry offerings. Our In-Kind Donors include: Assabet Market, Crosby's Marketplace, Drumlin Farm/Mass. Audubon Society, Gaining Ground, Greater Boston Food Bank, Lovin' Spoonfuls, Market Basket of Maynard, Stop and Shop of Acton, Sudbury Farms, Trader Joe's & Verrill Farms.

# FOOD PROGRAMS

Open Table has a variety of food programs to support those who would benefit from food. We also strive to provide a welcoming, friendly environment for all who wish to join us.

- **Groceries**

Groceries are provided weekly at our Maynard pantry and through our mobile pantry and food delivery programs in Acton, Hudson, Carlisle, Concord, Wayland and Maynard. Pantry items include non-perishable groceries, fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products and other staples. Clients can receive standard grocery bags or order online.

- **Prepared Meals**

Delicious and healthy pre-cooked Standard and Healthy Helpings meals are made fresh in our professional kitchen and frozen in individual portions, which simply require reheating. Meals are included in all grocery offerings.

- **Senior Lunch**

Seniors (65+) are treated to a delicious grab-and-go style lunch distributed during Senior shopping hours at the Maynard site.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

Every week we need 225 volunteers to run our pantry and meal programs!

## SERVICE AREAS FOR VOLUNTEERING:

**Pick and Pack:** Sort through our donated produce and shelf stable food and pack them for distribution. Fulfill online orders and other related pantry projects. Must be able to lift 20lbs. Shifts are 2 hours.

Mon 9, 12 and 2; Tues 9; Wed 9 and 11; Thurs 9

**Distribution:** Help distribute food to our clients during OT Fresh Air Pantry. Volunteers direct traffic, take orders, “shop” and pack orders and load clients cars. Must be able to lift 20lb. Shifts are 2.25hrs

Tues 12:15, 2:15, and 4:15; Thurs 10:45, 12:15 and 2:15.

**Kitchen:** Work with cooking team or wash dishes under the supervision of our Kitchen staff to prepare single serving to go meals for distribution. Must be able to lift 20lbs and be on your feet the entirety of the shift. Shifts are:

Monday-Thursday 9-11:30 and 2-5.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

**Client administration:** Volunteers interface with the computer software system to check in clients and log groceries delivered. Shifts are 2:25hrs

Tues 12:15, 2:15, and 4:15; Thurs 10:45, 12:15 and 2:15.

**Transport food (inbound):** Help gather food from local grocery stores, farms and donation bins and deliver to open table. Volunteers weigh and log the food delivered. Volunteers must have their own vehicle and be able to lift 20lbs. Shifts vary

**Transport food (outbound):** Deliver groceries and meals to mobile pantries in the area or for the home delivery program. Volunteers must either drive their own vehicle or the Open Table van. Shifts vary

**Student teams:** Pick and pack shift after school hours specifically for students. Fulfill online orders and help prepare groceries for distribution among fellow students in our pantry. Shifts are:

Mon 4-5pm and Wed 3-4pm

**Phone Orders:** Assist clients by taking online grocery orders over the phone. Calls are made on between Thursday 5pm and Monday 12pm

**Special Events:** Help represent Open Table at community events and activities in the evening and weekends as an Open Table Ambassador.



# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

**Behind the Scenes:** There are also many opportunities to volunteer behind the scenes with more flexibility of schedule. Volunteers serve on our board, communication, finance, fundraising and event planning committees. Additionally, you can contribute your time and talents completing projects for us from home, leading outreaches, taking phone orders, fundraising events and food drives.

We are always looking for volunteers with skill sets in grant writing, PR, marketing, event planning, fundraising, community outreach, and speaking multiple languages. Additional current open positions can be found in our “Help Wanted” section at [www.opentable.org/volunteer](http://www.opentable.org/volunteer)

**Group Volunteering:** Preparing individual Kid’s Bags for Open Table clients aged 12 and under or hosting a food drive can be easy and fun, and it is a great project for a club, scout troop, school, business, or neighborhood to do together. Information can be found at [www.opentable.org/donate-groceries/](http://www.opentable.org/donate-groceries/). Additional opporutinties are limited, to learn more contact [groupvolunteer@opentable.org](mailto:groupvolunteer@opentable.org)

**Donating groceries:** Grocery donation in any quantity helps us keep our pantries well stocked. It all adds up! Groceries can be delivered directly to the pantry or to any of our drop-off locations at partner grocery stores.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## **Volunteer Attire**

- Dress casually and be prepared to get messy. Also bring layers. The pantry can be cold in the winter and many jobs are outside. Please leave purses, jewelry, and other valuables at home or locked in your car. Open Table will not be responsible for any missing personal belongings. We have a lost and found in the volunteer closet.

## **Volunteers Under the Age of 14**

- Open Table welcomes High School students (including the summer before High School) to volunteer at Open Table. Volunteers must be 16 and older to work in the Kitchen. Kids under 14 can participate through our community donations programs. Check out our website for information about organizing food drives and creating kids bags. Unfortunately, there are few other opportunities for kids to volunteer at Open Table when we are open due to safety concerns.

## **Community Service**

- If you are choosing to fulfill your community service hours at Open Table, your service hours are tracked in CERVIS. Please contact the Volunteer Manager to sign CS forms or document hours served. If you are completing your court ordered community service you must coordinate directly with the Volunteer Manager before volunteering at Open Table.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## **Inclement weather Policy**

- Open Table relies on a volunteer workforce to operate. The facility will be open unless the facilities manager deems it too dangerous to operate. If the facility closes, this will be posted on our website, social media pages, and our voice mail message. Volunteers scheduled for that day will be notified by email of cancellations. Volunteers are expected to make their own decision about volunteering on a day of inclement weather based on personal safety and communicate this decision to the volunteer manager or shift leader and/or cancel their registration through CERVIS.

## **Parking**

- The pantry is located right in the heart of downtown Maynard. Although there is parking in the municipal lot directly behind the building, volunteers are encouraged to park in the River Street Municipal lot, reserved for OT use, just a short walk away to reduce congestion, make room for our drive-by fresh air pantry operation, and allow downtown parking to remain available for visitors and patrons for stores and restaurants in our community. Thank you!

## **Volunteer Feedback**

- We encourage open feedback about your volunteer experience with us. You can speak directly with any Program Manager or send comments by email to: [volunteer@opentable.org](mailto:volunteer@opentable.org). Periodically we solicit volunteer feedback in a formal manner through interviews or surveys. We hope you enjoy your volunteer experience and find your time serving both fruitful and meaningful.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## SIGNING UP TO VOLUNTEER

**Registration:** The first step in volunteering at Open Table is filling out an application online at [opentable.org/volunteer](http://opentable.org/volunteer). Based on your availability, skills, and job preference selections you will receive an email, inviting you to join a service area and be scheduled for your first shift. Volunteers are added to Service Area teams and are able to register for any shift in that area. Volunteers may belong to more than 1 service area. Open Table reserves the right to change volunteer placement based on everchanging needs at Open Table and/or volunteer fit.

We use CERVIS, an online self-scheduling system which provides access to the volunteer to sign up for any of the shifts within their approved service area. While you are responsible for your schedule, signing up in advance and keeping a regular schedule is helpful to aid roster filling and team building. You are able to sign up for up to 2 months in advance and we encourage you to be a regular volunteer.

**Cancelling a shift:** You will receive a reminder e-mail about your scheduled shift with Open Table. If you are unable to attend, you can cancel through the link in the email. While sometimes unavoidable, please make every effort to give as much notice as possible to find a replacement. If you must cancel within 24hours, please email your area coordinator.

**Requests for help:** Each month, a “nudge” email will go out to all volunteers reminding them to self-schedule for shifts. In addition (if necessary), service area coordinators may email weekly with requests to fill open roster spots. “Pinch Hitters”, those that fill open roster spots when needed, are also welcome.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## CERVIS Scheduling Instructions

To sign up from your CERVIS volunteer portal for future shifts, go to Opentable.org and select "Self-schedule" under Existing volunteers. This will bring you to your volunteer portal home:

- Select "Register/Apply for upcoming opportunity" - you will then see your opportunities in the events list
- Step 1: select your name from the drop down menu,
- Step 2: select the shift (day of the week and time),
- Step 3: select time slots by checking the box next to desired dates.

Another way to sign up for shifts:

- Select "Register/Apply for upcoming opportunity"
- Under "Step 1" box click the little blue "show event calendar"
- In the calendar, green numbered boxes are available opportunities, click on box
- Click Sign Up button
- Select time slots

Once you register you will receive a confirmation with additional information about volunteering.

You can also see your schedule and cancel shifts by clicking "View or Cancel an Upcoming Opportunity".

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## SAFE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Open Table is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for our community.

Our Official Statement of Respect: We proudly commit to treating everyone with both dignity and respect, and ask you to commit to the same. Please help us by keeping our facility clean and well cared for.

In service of this goal:

- Open Table is an alcohol and drug free environment.
- Open Table is a smoke free environment. Smoking is prohibited on Open Table property. Open Table believes that everyone has a role in stewarding care and maintenance of our facility.

The Board of Health requires that all volunteers and staff abide by the following:

- Volunteers must wash their hands before handling food items and after visiting the restroom or after cell phone use.
- Have your hair tied back or wear a hat (provided) when working with food.
- Wear closed-toed shoes when volunteering.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## Guiding Principles of Volunteering at Open Table

- We strive to be as green as we can. We rescue food and also recycle and compost 90% of our waste.
- Everybody has something to contribute to our community.
- We encourage clients to volunteer with us.
- We are food connectors, not food police.
- We are food connectors, not social workers.
- We engage with clients in a positive way while maintaining professional boundaries. This includes, not initiating touch or asking personal questions.
- We respectfully respond when clients want to share information about their lives and needs but do not initiate these conversations or deepen the conversation. Use discretion when sharing information about yourself. Your role is to help distribute food in a friendly manner.

## Rules About Interacting with Clients

- Never give a client money, employ a clients, or purchase goods or services from a clients.
- Do not solicit funds from clients.
- Never give a clients additional food or resources without checking with your program manager. We strive to maintain equitable access to resources.
- Never take pictures of a clients.
- Do not initiate physical contact with clients or other volunteers.

# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

- Open Table will not share specific, detailed information about clients, donors, or volunteers with external parties.
- A volunteer's name and the fact that they are affiliated with Open Table is not considered confidential and may be used in public relations material. Volunteers may opt out by checking "No" on the media release.
- If you see a clients at Open Table from your outside life, follow the clients' cues about acknowledging your relationship. If the clients greets you openly, respond in kind. If the clients ignores you, do not engage them apart from fulfilling your volunteer duties.
- Open Table volunteers should not discuss the specifics of pantry clients outside of Open Table. You may discuss your experiences, thoughts and feelings with other people in your lives. It is a breach of confidentiality if you tell others specifically who you interacted with. (It is not OK to go home and say, "Guess what Mom! I saw Sarah's dad at the Pantry!")

## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

- Open Table shall not discriminate against any volunteer based on race, color, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, national origin, genetics, or veteran status.
- Open Table will not tolerate or allow:
  - Sexual Harassment.
  - Circulation of written materials or pictures degrading populations listed above.
  - Verbal Abuse or insults directed at others.
- If a person engages in prohibited behaviors, Open Table reserves the right to ban that person from all activities related to Open Table.
- Reporting Discrimination or Harassment:
  - If you have experienced discrimination or harassment at Open Table, you can report it to our Executive Director, Jeanine Calabria at [executivedirector@opentable.org](mailto:executivedirector@opentable.org)



# VOLUNTEERING WITH OPEN TABLE

## Staff and Coordinator Directory

### Staff

• Executive Director	Alex Depalo	<a href="mailto:executivedirector@opentable.org">executivedirector@opentable.org</a>
• Business Manager	Aiko Pinkoski	<a href="mailto:apinkoski@opentable.org">apinkoski@opentable.org</a>
• Finance and Grants Manager	Jessica Kirkwood	<a href="mailto:jkirkwood@opentable.org">jkirkwood@opentable.org</a>
• Kitchen Operations Manager	Jed Hackney	<a href="mailto:jhackney@opentable.org">jhackney@opentable.org</a>
• Assistant Kitchen Manager	Peter Kilbridge	<a href="mailto:pkilbridge@opentable.org">pkilbridge@opentable.org</a>
• Marketing & Development Manager	Christine Evans	<a href="mailto:communications@opentable.org">communications@opentable.org</a>
• Marketing & Development Associate	Alannah Gustavson	<a href="mailto:events@opentable.org">events@opentable.org</a>
• Operations and Facilities Manager	Rob Slattery	<a href="mailto:operations@opentable.org">operations@opentable.org</a>
• Program Manager	Jill Tsakiris	<a href="mailto:itsakiris@opentable.org">itsakiris@opentable.org</a>
• Assistant Program Manager	Maeve Hale	<a href="mailto:mhale@opentable.org">mhale@opentable.org</a>
• Truck Driver and Pantry Assistant	Jeff Geraghty	<a href="mailto:jgeraghty@opentable.org">jgeraghty@opentable.org</a>
• Beharrell Street Manager	Liz Sullivan	<a href="mailto:lsullivan@opentable.org">lsullivan@opentable.org</a>
• Volunteer Manager	Gretchen Findlay	<a href="mailto:volunteer@opentable.org">volunteer@opentable.org</a>

### Service Area Volunteer Coordinators:

• Client Administration	Gretchen Findlay	<a href="mailto:volunteer@opentable.org">volunteer@opentable.org</a>
• Concord Home Delivery	Nicole Bloomfield	<a href="mailto:nbloomfield@opentable.org">nbloomfield@opentable.org</a>
• Distribution	Gretchen Findlay	<a href="mailto:gfindlay@opentable.org">gfindlay@opentable.org</a>
• Group volunteering	Gretchen Findlay	<a href="mailto:groupvolunteering@opentable.org">groupvolunteering@opentable.org</a>
• Kitchen	Karen Young	<a href="mailto:kyoung@opentable.org">kyoung@opentable.org</a>
• Pick & Pack	Danielle Hankey	<a href="mailto:djhankey@comcast.net">djhankey@comcast.net</a>
• Phone Orders	Karen Young	<a href="mailto:kyoung@opentable.org">kyoung@opentable.org</a>
• Student team	Danielle Hankey	<a href="mailto:djhankey@comcast.net">djhankey@comcast.net</a>
• Transporting food	Jean Husson	<a href="mailto:jhusson@opentable.org">jhusson@opentable.org</a>