



# Havasupai Project Participant Handbook



**Project Guide**  
**December, 2023-March, 2024**

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## Introduction

Volunteering with Arizona Habitat Affiliates (Affiliates) for the Havasupai Blitz Build is about much more than building houses. You will be immersed in the community and will learn about the Havasupai Tribe and connect with other Habitat friends and supporters across Arizona. If this is your first travel build experience, questions are likely running through your mind, such as:

- What will the experience be like?
- Will I be able to contribute with quality work?
- What will my teammates be like?

Each program is a unique opportunity to experience something new or different. You are encouraged to take some time to reflect on your thoughts and expectations before you join our program.

The guidance in this handbook is intended to prepare you for the Arizona Habitat Blitz Build program. Becoming a Habitat volunteer comes with great rewards and responsibilities. Volunteers like you are representatives of Habitat for Humanity and its ministry. When you accept a volunteer role with Habitat, you are committing to act in a way that promotes Habitat's mission, respects the local community, and ensures the safety of all participants. In addition to complying with all laws and regulations applicable to the countries and communities you will serve as a volunteer, you are expected to follow the volunteer code of conduct and Habitat's safeguarding policies.

Each volunteer must acknowledge the Volunteer Code of Conduct of your program registration.

## Habitat for Humanity's Safeguarding Behavior Commitments

Habitat for Humanity is opposed to any form of discrimination, exploitation and abuse, including slavery, coerced conscription, prostitution, trafficking of people for any purpose, vulnerable adult or child abuse, and dangerous or exploitative child labor. In the design and implementation of programs and policies, we seek always to work without bias, to do no harm, and to reduce — rather than contribute to — the consequences of discrimination, exploitation and abuse. All Habitat for Humanity representatives commit to respecting and safeguarding the rights and dignities of all people, and to protecting our staff members, volunteers, partners, beneficiaries, research participants and community members — especially vulnerable adults and children — from exploitation and abuse.

This includes the following general standards of behavior:

- Habitat representatives will respect, promote and safeguard the rights and dignities of all people, with particular attention to those we intend to serve, vulnerable adults and children, without discrimination or bullying of any kind.
- Habitat representatives will treat all intended and actual individuals we serve with respect, courtesy and dignity.
- Habitat representatives will not engage in any form of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior toward those we intend to serve in any circumstances.
- Habitat representatives will not engage in any abuse of authority, position or influence by withholding humanitarian assistance or manipulating selection or targeting processes for those we intend to serve.

### Speak up!

Habitat for Humanity embraces a “see something, say something” culture. If you become aware of potential misconduct, help reinforce our culture of courage and accountability by sharing your concerns with an appropriate Habitat staff member or supervising volunteer.

- Habitat representatives will help to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and that safeguards the rights of those we intend to serve, research participants, and community members, especially vulnerable adults and children.
- Habitat representatives will never engage in sexual exploitation or abuse.
- Habitat representatives will never engage in sexual activity with a child — anyone who is not yet 18 years old — regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.
- Habitat representatives will never exchange money, employment, goods or services (including assistance that is due to those we intend to serve) for sex, sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior.
- Habitat representatives will not engage in a sexual relationship with those we intend to serve, since it is based on inherently unequal power dynamics and undermines the credibility and integrity of Habitat for Humanity's charitable mission.

## Community interaction

Approaching your program with humility and a flexible attitude will ensure that you are ready for a meaningful experience. This section reviews what you may encounter when you interact with the community during your volunteering.

### Respecting other cultures

Located within Havasu Canyon, a large tributary on the south side of the Colorado River, Supai Village is not accessible by road. The Havasupai Tribe administers the land, which lies outside the boundary and jurisdiction of Grand Canyon National Park.

Havasupai means people of the blue-green waters. The spectacular waterfalls and isolated community within the Havasupai Indian Reservation attract thousands of visitors each year. The Havasupai are intimately connected to the water and the land. When you enter their land, be respectful, you are entering their home.

The community can be different from what you are accustomed to at home. People might greet each other in different ways or might be mildly offended by your well-intentioned yet unfamiliar attempts to demonstrate friendliness. You will spend time with people from diverse backgrounds.

We do not all react to or recognize cultural differences in the same way. Some people withdraw; others become overly energetic about trying to fit in. It is recommended that Habitat volunteers embrace the opportunity to learn about the culture and community, and be respectful of what is culturally sacred.

A recommended way to adapt to cultural difference is to be open, practice humility and embrace differences. Attempt to learn some basic words (e.g., hello, goodbye, good morning) in the local language. Learn more by asking your program coordinators about the area, their way of life, their families and their experiences. Show as much interest and respect toward tribal residents, as they will help you better understand.

#### Open the lines of communication

When you become confused or border on information overload, discuss your dilemma with your team. Seek a better understanding from your program coordinators, or write your experiences and observations in a journal. Becoming immersed in a new experience is an opportunity that promotes personal growth for you and those around you.

### The Affiliate program community

Arizona build participants reflect the mission and purpose of Habitat for Humanity: bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope. We help to develop communities through shelter. Habitat volunteers are visitors to this land. It is imperative that team members' actions reflect the values of Habitat's mission, which are humility, courage, accountability and safeguarding.

In addition to the Code of Conduct we expect Habitat volunteers to adhere to these ethics while in the program community:

- Team members are expected to respect the ethics and morals of Habitat and of the area in which they visit. Equally important to the team's physical labor in construction is their expression of solidarity through humility and respect toward the future homeowners, community, Habitat staff and each other.
- Clothing should be appropriate for the work site. Team members should dress comfortably yet modestly.

- Travel in a spirit of humility and with a genuine desire to learn more about the people of Havasupai. Instead of “knowing all the answers,” ask respectful questions and actively listen to the replies.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of other participants, staff, beneficiaries, and community members, including through use of social media. Remember you are not on the Reservation as a tourist. Unless you receive prior written approval from Habitat Central Arizona and the Havasupai Tribe, you must not disclose confidential Habitat or tribal information. Do not unnecessarily wander around residential areas in Supai Village. Taking pictures or videos of community members without consent, burial sites, animals, and property is strictly prohibited. Drones are not allowed.
- Realize that the people in the community you visit have concepts of time and thought patterns that should be respected even when they may be different from your own.
- Spend time reflecting on your daily experiences to deepen your understanding of the country or affiliate program’s engagement with community partners to eliminate threats to housing security.

## Gift giving

To avoid potential misunderstandings, participants are asked not to give or exchange gifts with Habitat beneficiaries, staff members, or community members without first consulting with Habitat staff. Habitat staff is happy to suggest gifts that will benefit the entire community.

## Beyond the build site

Our primary purpose for the build will be to complete the two homes within an 8-10 week period. We also acknowledge the beauty of the sacred land, and will schedule and encourage volunteers to visit Havasupai falls on occasion during your time of service. These visits will need to be coordinated with your affiliate leader and volunteers may only have 1 or 2 opportunities to do so during your stay.

## What to expect

### Habitat’s staff and the build site

Habitat staff members plan volunteer-led activities in partnership with the local community to ensure that they contribute to meeting the needs identified. Consider the following to make sure that you are prepared for the build aspects of the program:

- **Are you prepared to commit to completing the work within your mobilization?** Our primary goal is to complete the housing solution in 8-10 weeks.
- **Show up to the build site with a spirit of service and humility, ready to follow the work schedule prepared by the community staff team.** While you or your teammates may be ready to get back to work

after a quick 20-minute lunch break, be courteous of others and mindful of safety or your peers.

- **Homeowners and or community members may or may not be available.** At times you may work alongside a community member.

## The construction project

The volunteer work you will do varies by depends on the phase of construction and the type of project you will participate in. A flexible attitude is key, as inclement weather or a variety of other reasons can delay construction progress.

You may not see much machinery on the build site. It will be common for volunteers to perform more manual labor and routine tasks.

The project will be executed by Arizona affiliates in four mobilizations, with each affiliate performing the labor, work, materials and subcontractor management for their mobilization according to the following estimated schedule:

- Mobilization 1: HFH Tucson – Underground, Substructure, and Structure, Interior Rough, Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing
- Mobilization 2: HFHCAZ – Exterior Skin and Roofing
- Mobilization 3: HFH Northern Arizona – Drywall, Insulation
- Mobilization 4: HFH Affiliates – Interior Finishes and Trim

## Project activity

Volunteers should talk with their team leader to gain a clear understanding about the project and the work they will likely be doing to better prepare themselves for their program.

This project involves the construction of two homes, a 3-bed and 5-bed and will build from the ground up. In this case, you may be digging footers, laying block, constructing flooring systems, or framing and raising walls. On other projects, you will arrive to find the house partially built. In that case, your team might concentrate on installing siding, windows, doors, floors, roofing or drywall. Once the exterior of the house nears completion, efforts focus on finishing the interior.

Sometimes teams are divided into smaller work units that will assist at multiple build sites. Our goal for this Blitz build is to complete both homes within 8-10 weeks, start to finish. This will require long days (10-12 hours), seven days a week of work with proper breaks for meals, hydration and rest.

As Habitat works to fulfill its mission of serving more families in need of a decent place to live, the types of projects will vary. Be open to a spirit of service with humility; everything you do on a construction site, whether it is installing siding, digging footers, hauling water, sifting sand, removing or placing fill dirt, mixing cement by hand, or passing buckets of concrete to crews, will support decent shelter for future homeowners.

## Work site safety

Safety is everyone's concern and an important consideration at all Habitat work sites. Whether you are very experienced and comfortable on the build site or this is your first time constructing anything, everyone must be committed to safety. An observer can often see danger better than the worker directly involved in a task. Be cautious at all times and ask questions if you are uncertain how a task should be performed.

Safety is based on knowledge, skill and an attitude of care and concern. The on-site construction supervisor (mason or contractor) or experienced Habitat staff members will instruct volunteers in the proper procedures for each task and will familiarize you with potential hazards and how to minimize risk. Your team leader and local Habitat program coordinator will work together to maintain a safe working environment. The final responsibility for each team member's personal safety lies with that individual member.

## Attitude

Safety begins with a safe attitude. Keep the following in mind when working on site:

- Pause and think before you begin a task.
- If you are uncertain how to perform a task or operate a tool, ask.
- Avoid distractions and concentrate on the task at hand.
- Inspect all tools, ladders and scaffolding before use.
- Immediately advise the team leader or affiliate coordinator of any unsafe or hazardous tools or conditions.
- Know where the first-aid kit is located and how to summon emergency help.

## Work attire

It is important to dress in a way that is practical and safe for the work being done. Loose or low-coverage clothing can be dangerous. Follow these basic guidelines:

- Wear pants on the build site.
- Use work gloves.
- Wear work boots or thick-soled shoes at all times on the build site.
- Wear hard hats while doing demolition work and when others are working overhead. Hard hats, if required, will be provided by the affiliate program.
- Use protective glasses when there is any possibility of an eye injury.
- Wear a dust mask when sanding or installing insulation.
- Come prepared with layered clothing. Temperatures typically range from 30-60 degrees in January, and 40-70 degrees in March. Rain protection is highly recommended, especially in the January and February build months.

The above recommendations are minimum standards. Depending on the work being performed or the area you are visiting, the on-site supervisor may request that volunteers take additional safety precautions.

## Personal precautions

It is easy to overexert yourself on the build site. Most volunteers are not used to intensive physical labor — at times in high heat. It is important that you recognize your limitations and work within them so that you do not get injured.

- **Lifting:** Always use the proper lifting technique: bent legs and straight, vertical back. Do not exceed your lifting capacity. Ask another volunteer to help if an object is very heavy.
- **Overexertion:** Let go of your competitive side and avoid struggling to keep up with other team members. Take rest and water breaks often.
- **Hydration:** Replenish liquid often since physical work causes you to perspire, which can result in dehydration. Always drink more water than normal. Every job site will have safe drinking water available.
- **Sun:** Your work site might not have shade. Make sure to apply sunscreen often. A wide-brimmed hat and long-sleeved clothing can also help.

## Power tools and other electrical equipment

Power tools will be used on most work sites, if your project requires power tools, it is important to keep these guidelines in mind:

- You must be 18 years or older to operate power tools on the build site.
- Ensure you are wearing appropriate safety gear each time you operate a power tool.
- A power tool should not be used without proper instruction on its use and an explanation of the potential consequences of misuse.
- Defective tools should not be used. They should be labeled “defective” and reported to the construction supervisor or team leader immediately. Do not wait until the end of the day to report a defective tool.

## Hand tools

- Use the tool that the construction supervisor directs you to use.

- There may not always be enough hand tools for everyone on the team. Ask the supervisor what other tasks you can assist with.

### Ladders and scaffolding

- You must be over 18 to use a ladder or be on scaffolding.
- Inspect ladders and scaffolding before you use them. Ensure that they are stable and safe.
- Use a ladder that will reach the work area, getting an extension ladder if necessary.
- Move your ladder with your work. If both of your shoulders are extended outside the ladder while you are working, you are overreaching.
- Ensure the ladder or scaffolding is on solid footing in a safe location.
- When climbing, always face the ladder and keep your hands free for climbing. Carry tools and materials in proper carrying devices.

### Roofs

- You must be over 18 to be on a roof.
- Do not cut roof materials aloft.
- Avoid laying tools and other items on the roof when they are not in use.
- Secure building materials to prevent them from sliding or being blown off the roof.
- Some tasks along the edge of the roof are easier and more safely done off a ladder from below.
- Do not allow scrap materials and sawdust to accumulate on the roof.
- Do not work on the roof when the surface is wet.
- Secure the access ladder to the edge of the roof to prevent the ladder from moving.
- Do not throw items from the roof unless someone on the ground declares the landing area “all clear” and prevents others from entering the area until the thrown item has landed.
- Avoid wearing leather-soled or slipper-soled shoes when working aloft.

### Maintaining a safe, clean, secure work site

Good housekeeping prevents accidents.

- Clean up the site before you leave each day.
- Keep tools and equipment clean and in their proper place when not in use. This protects both tools and workers.
- Take the time to mark any significant holes or or hazard areas that may not have been noticed by others.

### Build site emergency medical care

If someone is injured on the job site, contact your team leader immediately. They will use the first-aid kit or summon additional medical help, if needed. Make the injured person comfortable and attempt to stabilize the injury until medical help arrives. Your team leader possesses an emergency management plan that outlines specific procedures to follow in any emergency, including injury or illness. Your affiliate coordinator will discuss emergency procedures with you during the orientation.

Indian Health Services (“IHS”) operates Supai Health Clinic, a medical clinic in Supai Village. IHS is responsible for providing health care to tribal members and non-beneficiaries who are in or around Supai Village. In emergency situations, IHS requests a medical evacuation helicopter regardless of a patient’s eligibility for IHS services. Non-beneficiaries are responsible for costs related to medical care, including medical helicopter evacuations.

In the event of an injury, it may take many hours to get treatment or be transported out of the canyon. Trained emergency rescue teams are not available in the village. In case of an emergency, helicopter transportation is necessary, and the financial cost will be high. The cost of evacuation is solely responsible of the injured party and reason we strongly encourage travel insurance.

### Accommodations

Setting realistic expectations is important to a positive experience, and your team leader is your point of contact to raise any concerns regarding your volunteering journey.

Teams will stay in in the lodge in Supai Village ([Havasupai Lodge Reservations](#)). In some instances, alternative accommodations are prepared for the team, such as a communal camping indoors or out. The Lodge for most



travelers will be double occupancy and offer electricity, bathrooms with showers. Showers are cold water showers so be prepared and bring your own soaps, shampoo, toiletries and towels. A few of the rooms are equipped with a small refrigerator and be shared across the participants for storage of personal items and medications.

The lodge does have wifi, but it is very slow. Expect to not be able to download email attachments or stream entertainment. There are no TV's in rooms, so bring a book or download your entertainment to an ipad prior to travel to watch in the evenings if desired.

To coordinate housekeeping services and room accommodations, Habitat asks that volunteers commit to one week stay in most occasions arriving at the beginning of the week for the mobilization desired. For traveling volunteers, accommodations will be available the night before the first day start at the Grand Canyon Caverns Inn, about an hour from the helipad.

Cell phone service is spotty or unavailable for most providers, you may find locations you have a signal to send a message but rare to find a signal to make a phone call.

Please speak with your team leader if you have specific requirements for travel. The lodging accommodations may be located anywhere from 1-2 miles from the build site, with a daily walk to and from. In addition to working 10-12 hour days, volunteers should be prepared to walk 4-5 miles per day.

### Meals and transportation

Breakfast lunch and dinner will be provided, along with snack and water. Lunch will be on the build site. These will be modest accommodations, please notify your team leader if you have special dietary needs or restrictions. Fresh fruits and vegetables are in limited supply in Supai. It's highly encouraged you bring personal food items you may need, all medicines (prescription, over the counter), vitamins and supplements that you may need in addition to the meals provided. There is a small store (sells canned goods, snacks, soda) and cafeteria in Supai Village with limited supply if needed.

Transport to and from the village will be provided by helicopter, which only travels two days per week. Luggage should be limited to a manageable size, with a small backpack for daily trips to the build site. For those desiring to hike, the hike into the canyon to the village is 10 miles approximately. Please notify Habitat if you intend to hike in or out during your stay.

Some affiliates will be coordinating transportation by charter to and from the helipad from Tucson or other areas. Speak with your coordinator at your local affiliate for details/.

### Medications

If you use prescription medications, carry an adequate supply for the duration of the program, along with a signed and dated statement from your physician indicating the dosage and the reason for the medications. This information is helpful to medical authorities in case of emergency. Be sure to discuss with your doctor the climate at your destination, as some medicines are ineffective at extreme temperatures or when the patient is exposed to large amounts of sunlight.

A card, tag or bracelet identifying any physical condition that may require emergency care is helpful when traveling. Also pack a copy of your medical history, including blood type, allergies and any special conditions.

If you wear prescription glasses, bring an extra pair and sufficient contact lens for wearers.

Travel with anti-diarrhea medicine (available over the counter) and ensure that you are drinking plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration. If you experience symptoms for several days without improvement, notify your team leader and consult a physician right away.

### Travel accident and sickness insurance

We strongly encourage all travelers to purchase accident and sickness insurance, covering medical costs arising from accidents; illnesses; and accidental loss of life, limb, sight, speech or hearing while participating in volunteer activities sponsored and supervised by Habitat for Humanity. This policy also covers certain evacuations due to medical emergencies. This insurance coverage is designed to protect Habitat's program volunteers and is part of a comprehensive risk management program, and will be reimbursed by Habitat for Humanity. For details about insurance coverage, please reference the Insurance Registration Information.

Every Habitat volunteer should have an up-to-date tetanus shot before participating in any project.

At this time the Havasupai Indian Reservation does not have COVID travel requirements. Visit your doctor and consult the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's travel site](#) for details on immunization requirements and recommendations for area you will be visiting. It is highly recommended that you consult your doctor for personalized counsel concerning your health and travel plans.

Habitat for Humanity strongly recommends that you self-test for COVID-19 using an **FDA-authorized** test as close to your time of departure as possible, but no more than two days before your departure date.

We strongly encourage all volunteers be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations. You are up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines when you have completed a COVID-19 vaccine primary series and received the most recent booster dose recommended for you by the CDC.

As noted in the labeling for authorized over-the-counter tests, negative results should be treated as presumptive and do not rule out SARS-CoV-2 infection. If you test positive for COVID-19 or have **symptoms of COVID-19**, please do not travel. Contact your team leader to communicate your absence.

Volunteers must comply with any COVID-19 requirements in place at the time of travel by the Havasupai Tribe, including but not limited to entry and exit requirements and all health protocols in place. Any costs related to COVID-19 requirements are your sole responsibility.

### Personal health and safety

Each affiliate leader has access to a first-aid kit, an emergency management plan, and the emergency contact information that you provided during registration. The affiliate program has also prepared emergency management plans before the team's arrival.

Be aware of potential risks while traveling, especially to a remote area. Should medical attention be required beyond first aid, the only option will be air evacuation. Heed the advice of your team leader or affiliate program coordinator about areas and activity to avoid and proper safety procedures. There are inherent risks in any travel opportunity, but we have a thorough and comprehensive safety and emergency management plan and travel accident and sickness insurance policies in place.

### Returning home

Immersing yourself in a new community and building with future homeowners, even if only for a week, can be a life-changing experience. You may find yourself reevaluating your life priorities after your program ends and considering additional ways to stay engaged. Give yourself time to process the experience and reach out to your team leader if you need guidance on next steps. We encourage you to become an advocate for sustainable, affordable housing by getting involved with your local Habitat affiliate or by joining our advocacy efforts. For additional ways to support our mission, reach out to the leadership of your local organization.

## Sharing your story with others

Remember to be mindful of the media-related disclosure statement signed and that sharing of approved photos on social media requires consent of the Havasupai Tribe. Take advantage of this powerful opportunity to share your story with friends and family to convey the power of the Habitat mission, the importance of volunteers and financial support to achieve its mission of partnering with families to build and improve places to call home.

Thank you for your commitment to building homes, communities and hope

### Stay involved

Be sure to learn more about how Habitat for Humanity is continuing to impact lives through shelter. Check out opportunities to volunteer at your local Habitat affiliate, learn more about our advocacy campaign, and join future learning opportunities.

