



Family Partner JOB Description

In Habitat literature, the Family Partner is referred to as S/A/F. These letters stand for sponsor, advocate, friend. Your assumption of these roles will ensure a successful relationship between a selected family and the Habitat organization. You represent the organization to the family and the family to the organization.

Meet your family. Introduce yourself at the orientation meeting (all new families attend a group meeting as the first step in their Habitat experience) or make an appointment to visit the family. If you plan to visit them at home to introduce yourself, you may ask someone from Family Selection who knows the family to go with you.

Attend monthly Partnership meetings at least from the time of selection until the home is sold. The Partnership Team meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 7 P.M. in the Habitat offices, 1001 North J Street. It is expected that the minimum commitment is an approximate year from a family's selection to move-in and at least quarterly contact during the first year of occupancy. It is hoped that a relationship with the family will be continued.

There are four things to accomplish right after the new family selection has been made:

1. Make an appointment for your family to sign a Letter of Intent and accompany your family to the Habitat office to sign the document.
2. Make sure the family understands the financial commitments involved, specifically the \$600 down payment. If they need to make monthly payments, monitor the process to see that the obligation is met.
3. Plan how the required work hours will be met. If possible, work with your family on the site (ability to do site work is not a requirement for a Family Partner). Track the sweat equity hours. Arrange to have your family give you the duplicate sheets from their work books. If the family will receive hours for ESL classes, keep the completed form.
4. Give the photography certificate to your family and make sure the photo is taken as soon as possible. Habitat needs the 5 x 7 picture from the packet and the family keeps the rest. When you have the picture, write a two-paragraph article about your family for publication in the Habitat newsletter. The article will be printed with the picture.

There are four mandatory classes in financial management and homeownership - budgeting, credit and banking, and utilities. Make sure that your family understands that these are obligatory. You may attend with them if you wish. Family Partners who attend the classes with their families often have a more rewarding relationship, as they have an opportunity to see what their family's level of skill is in any of the four categories and get to spend structured time with the family. Also, if you know what they heard on the subject, you would be in a better position to advise them. You may want to help them in the creation of a budget.

Keep in touch with the family. Have some contact at least twice a month until they have actually moved into their house. As you get to know them better, you may be able to help them become aware of community resources.

Become involved in the greater process of how families are served at Habitat. We are always seeking ways to improve the program and ways to make a family's experience more rewarding. From time to time, the Family Partner team also convenes task forces to discuss items pertinent to Family Services: in the past year we've had a sweat equity guidelines task force and a homeowner association (HOA) task force. Seeing something that needs to be done and offering to do it is always a welcome way of improving our program. We are looking for people who are willing to invest in a family in particular *and* in Habitat families in general.

As construction begins on your family's house, help with design decisions for paint color, countertops, flooring, etc. Even before the time the house paint decisions need to be made, you might borrow the "Habitat Colors" booklet to show your family what the range of their choices will be so they have time to consider before the day the choices must be made.

Near completion there are four things to accomplish:

1. Assist the family in making arrangements for utility service – phone, gas, electrical, water & sewer. This may involve deposits or getting letters of credit.
2. Plan moving day with the family. You may want to provide lunch. If trucks are needed, Family Partnership will help.
3. Make sure that the family has a bank account. All mortgages are going to be set up on an electronic funds transfer basis.
4. Help your family plan for a house dedication. This may be elaborate or simple according to the family's wishes. The dedication should take place the week preceding the move-in, preferably on Saturday. At the dedication, the Family Partner traditionally presents the family with the gift of a Bible.

Advise the family of any Habitat-sponsored activities and invite them to attend.

If the family at any time needs help with problems such as immigration issues, unemployment, etc., the Family Partnership Team can be a resource for you and the family.

After they have moved in, let them know they can contact you about house problems. Maintain at least quarterly contact for the first year.

At the end of the first year of ownership, write an "exit" letter. There is a sample in your Family Support Manual at A.2.14.