



# **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**July 2024**

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# Rachel's Table - Who We Are

## Our Mission

The mission of Rachel's Table is to alleviate hunger and to reduce the waste of our food resources in Western Massachusetts.

## Our Values

- **Collaboration** – We partner at every scale – individual, organizational, communal – to best serve and leverage collective resources.
- **Dignity** – We deliver with dignity in what and how we serve.
- **Intergenerational Leadership** – We listen to the lived experiences of elders as well as raise the imagination, innovation, and insights of young people in our visioning and decision-making processes.
- **Intercultural Community** – We work across diverse cultural, religious, and spiritual traditions to co-create representative and inclusive solutions to food insecurity.
- **Personal Agency** – We believe everyone should have a voice and a choice in what they eat and feed their families.
- **Reciprocity** – We weave a relational, multidirectional web of giving and receiving that honors the unique gifts of all volunteers, constituents, partners, and staff.
- **Tikkun Olam** – We are guided by the Jewish principle of *tikkun olam* (Hebrew for “repair of the world”). We work to knit shards of the world’s soul back together through pursuing food and nourishment for all.

## Our Story

In 1992, Rachel's Table was created by Women's Philanthropy Division members of the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts to address food insecurity in the Springfield/Longmeadow area. Since then, Rachel's Table has grown to serve Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin Counties, at times extending into Berkshire County and Hartford County (in CT).

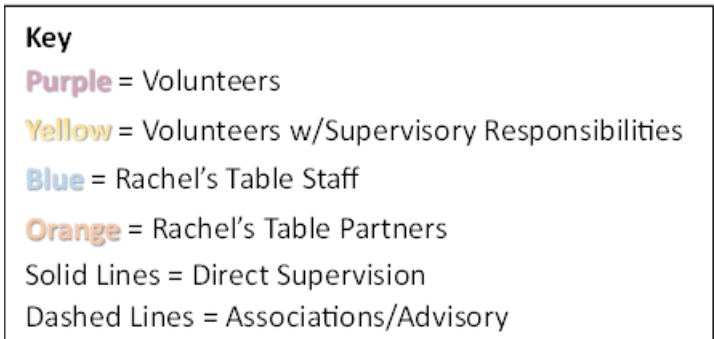
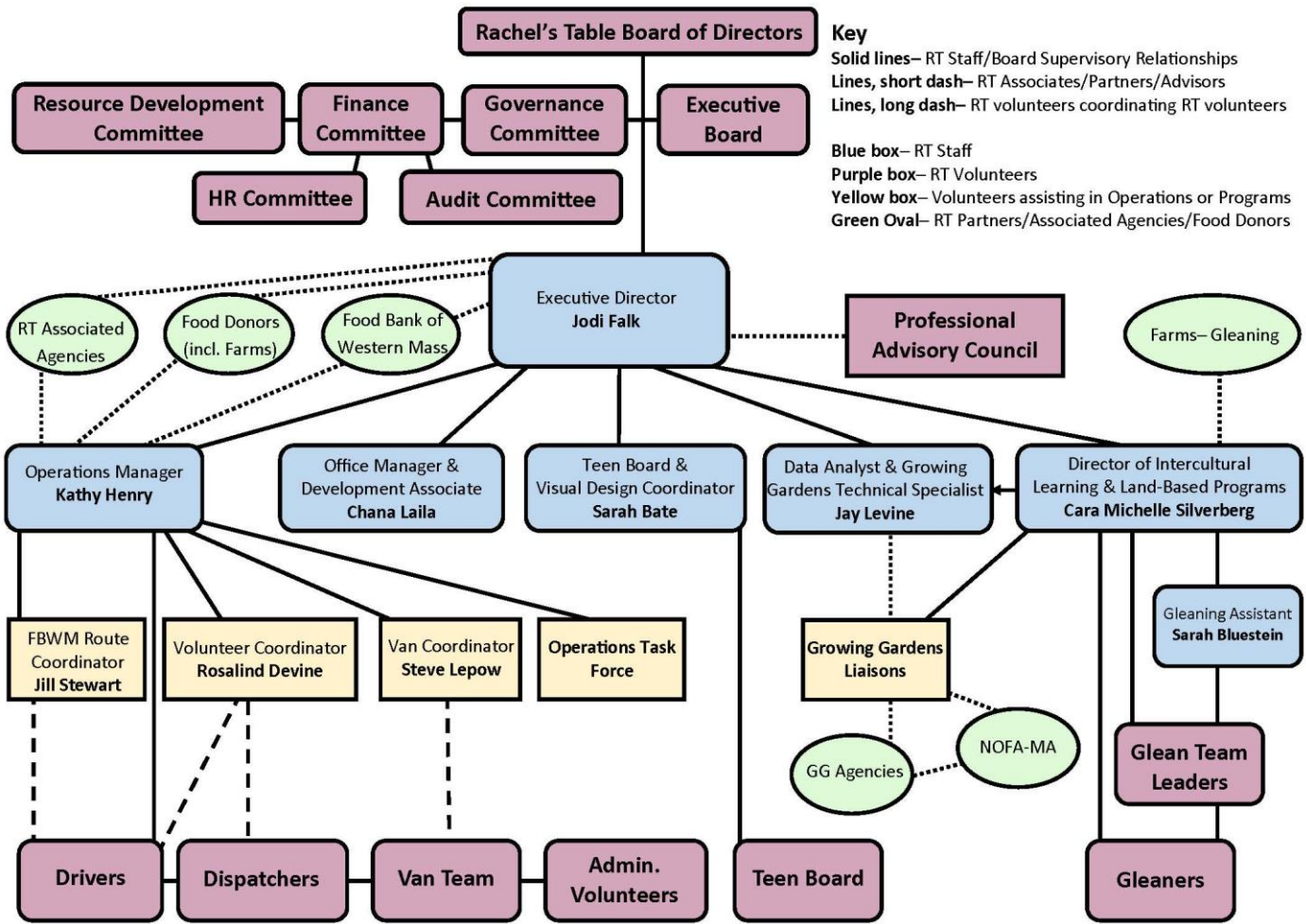


Six days per week, more than 300 volunteers collect food from local supermarkets, restaurants, caterers, farms, and bakeries, and deliver to more than 65 local organizations including food pantries, community meal programs, after school centers, shelters, and more.

Rachel's Table volunteers come from varied backgrounds, religions, and cultures, and range from children to people in their nineties. We work in partnership with other food rescue and redistribution organizations to extend our reach and leverage the effectiveness of our collective resources.

**Rescue, Purchase, Glean, Grow**  
Check out this [\*short film\*](#) about RT!

# Rachel's Table Organizational Chart



Phone Number: **(413) 733-0084**  
 Email address: [khenry@feedwma.org](mailto:khenry@feedwma.org)

# Rachel's Table Volunteer Opportunities

## Driver

**General Route-** You pick up food from 3-6 food donors and deliver it to 1-2 agencies. The driving routes are primarily in the morning, requiring 1-3 hours of time commitment.

**No Call Route-** You commit to pick up from and deliver to the same food donor(s)/agency every week.

**Food Bank Route-** Same as the No Call routes, except you record the temperature of the food and require a bit of extra training.



**Van Route-** Pick up larger donations with our refrigerated van as part of a team of 2 or 3 and deliver to multiple agencies. These routes tend to last into late morning or early afternoon. You do **NOT** need to drive the van.

**Farmers' Market Route (Seasonal)-** Pick up donations from a local Farmer's Market. Pickups are made in the afternoon and generally delivered to an agency the following morning.

**Dispatcher-** Coordinate general routes for drivers

- Call food donors, on daily schedule, in the morning to see if they have donations.
- Group the food donors to form routes for the drivers (you will be given recommended groups).
- Call agencies to see who wants food that day.
- Call drivers to assign their routes for pick-ups and deliveries. ~ approx. 5-10 drivers each day
- Remain available until 12:00 pm in case a driver has an issue to resolve.



## Growing Gardens Liaison

Work with an agency that is part of the Growing Gardens program to help it establish and sustain a vegetable garden on its site. Requires some **background in vegetable gardening**.

**Administrative Volunteer-** Work on a variety of administrative activities. Examples include:

- Data Entry
- Calls to donors and agencies about Rachel's Table holidays
- Help find new food donors/new volunteers
- Assist with periodic mailings

## Public Relations Support

- Tabling: RTWM is often asked to be a part of community events through "tabling" – sharing about our work with supportive documents.



**Gleaning-** Harvest produce from local farms.

# How to Sign Up for Volunteer Shifts:

It is **EASY!** Rachel's Table uses an online system – *Signup.com*

As part of your training to be a Rachel's Table volunteer, you'll be asked to watch a series of videos teaching you how to use Signup.com.

There is a group of volunteers who are happy to help you get set up in the system and give you a tutorial on how to use it if you have any questions.

## Signup.com Instructional Videos

Newcomer video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqhDFgL4Kcs>

All videos in sequence (except newcomer video)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLH4A6Sb6WnmJsmFYBs3rSs4OkXj2Nscna>

Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

- 1) Click the links above to see our Signups on Signup.com: <https://signup.com/go/woiHotu>
- 2) Review the Signups listed and choose the one(s) you like.
- 3) Sign up! It's Easy - you will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on Signup.com

*Access  
Signup.com  
and Find  
Opportunities  
for Me*

- Three ways to access Signup.com
  - Invite email from volunteer coordinator
  - "Find My Signup" feature on Signup.com
  - Group Page Link
- Rachel's Table General Routes vs. Food Bank Routes

*Sign Up for  
Available Shifts  
and View My  
Shifts*

- Find and view available shifts
  - Ratio
  - Filter: Hide Full Spots
  - Calendar
- Sign up for an available shift
- Find and view my shifts
  - Filter: Show My Spots
  - Monthly Schedule List

*What if I can't  
make my  
shift?*

- Cancel as soon as you know
- If cancelling more than 72 hours of shift - Cancel Shift on signup.com and sign up for another
- If cancelling within 72 hours of shift – contact your volunteer coordinator
- If cancelling less than 24 hours before shift – call dispatcher for that day

*Join the  
Waitlist*

- Consider your general availability
- Options for joining the waitlist:
  - Single Shift
  - Single day, any shift
  - Entire signup

# What to do if you're a Driver

## Typical Driver Day

- Between 8:00 am and 9:30 am you will get a call from your dispatcher with your assignment for the day. (Typically, this is 1-5 pick-ups and 1-2 deliveries.)
- Upon arrival at a **food donor**, enter and tell an employee "I'm here to collect for Rachel's Table".
- Wear your RT lanyard and/or RT T-shirt as ID.
- If needed, ask for help with boxes/bags.
- Upon arrival at **agency**, enter and tell employee "I'm here with a delivery from Rachel's Table".
- If needed, ask for help with boxes/bags.
- Submit Report of Donations on the Rachel's Table website form.

## Driver Etiquette

When you are out driving a route, picking up donations from food donors and delivering to Agencies, you will be interacting with many people and acting as a representative of Rachel's Table of Western Massachusetts. To ensure that everything works smoothly for you and everyone you interact with, please follow the guidelines below.



## Food Safety

Volunteers will learn about food safety in their orientation, here are a few things to remember:

- Our food donors have all been trained in food safety.
- Perishable foods should always be frozen or refrigerated – NEVER HOT. Please take care, especially in summer, to deliver promptly.
- Stop & Shop donations may need to be bagged or boxed. Go to the back of the store to ask for boxes or bring large trash bags.
- Keep all boxes closed unless asked to open for temperature-taking (part of Food Bank protocols).
- Remember to keep your car clean.

## When at a Food Donor or Agency

- Don't park in loading zones, fire lanes, handicap parking spaces or other restricted areas.
- Follow whatever instructions you have from your dispatcher, the food donor list, or any instructions you receive from food donor/agency employees.
- Please be courteous and appreciative when dealing with food donor employees. Remember while you are a volunteer, you are interacting with busy employees for whom the donation is just a part of their work that day.
- If an employee/volunteer at a food donor/agency is rude, or disrespectful to you, or you have some other negative interaction with them, please remain courteous and let your dispatcher or the Rachel's Table Operations Manager know as soon as you can so they can handle the situation.

- If the food donor doesn't have the food expected at the time of pickup, again please remain courteous and reach out to your dispatcher or Rachel's Table Operations Manager to let them know and handle the situation.
- Do not solicit more or different donations at the food donor or agency premises.
- When at an agency, give the donations only to agency employees or volunteers, not agency clients. Agencies have procedures they need to follow regarding receiving donations.

## Tips from your fellow drivers:

- Wear your Rachel's Table Volunteer Badge or Rachel's Table T-shirt for each shift.
- Have your cell phone charged and turned on to receive and send updates to dispatcher.
- Clean your car out so you can fit in all the donations you will receive, and food stays uncontaminated.
- Bring your food donor and agency Lists with you in case you need to refer to them while on the road.
- For some food donors, having extra bags in your car is handy so you can easily pack the food donation.
- Your GPS will definitely come in handy!
- The dispatchers are wonderful, if something comes up in the field, don't hesitate to let them know.
- You can enter information into the donation system from the field or when you get home, your choice.
- Bring a notebook with you to record the weights and the foods making up the food donations.

## General Routes vs. Food Bank Partnership Routes

Rachel's Table collects food donations in what we call General and Food Bank Partnership routes. The Food Bank Partnership routes are called such because the Food donors and Agencies are associated with the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. Many also work directly with Rachel's Table. There are some different procedures, training, equipment, and a different place to record the data for the Food Bank routes than for the General routes. These are detailed below.

- The Food Bank wants information on the poundage and temperatures of donated food for each of the following categories: Bread/bakery, Dry foods (includes beverages), Produce, Non-food items, Dairy, assorted Refrigerated foods (includes pre-cut produce), Frozen meat, and assorted Frozen foods.
- Ambient (room temperature) food does not need to have its specific temperature recorded.
- Frozen food does not need to have its temperature taken, but it must be noted that it is frozen when it's received by the driver and still frozen when it gets to the Agency.
- Refrigerated food needs to have its temperature taken both when it is picked up and when it arrives at the Agency. The temperature is taken using an infrared thermometer provided to drivers who drive Food Bank routes.
- The temperature of refrigerated food needs to be 41° F or below when received and when delivered. To help keep the food within this temperature range, Food Bank drivers are provided a thermal insulating blanket which is draped over the food during transport.
- Generally, Food Bank routes are No Call routes.



## Canceling a volunteering spot

- If cancelling a driving or dispatching spot you should cancel the route in Signup.com. If possible, please cancel at least a week ahead of time.
- If you are canceling less than a week ahead, please also email one of the following people.
  - If it's a No Call route, email the Operations Manager.
  - If it's a general route, email the Volunteer Coordinator, currently Rosalind Devine
  - If it's a Food Bank Route, email the Food Bank Volunteer Coordinator, currently Jill Stewart
- If you are scheduled to participate in a Tabling event and you can't attend or if it's an outdoor event and the weather is such that you don't think tabling would be appropriate, contact the Operations Manager or Executive Director.



## Inclement weather (All Drivers, including Van Team)

- All driver's routes in Hampden County are canceled if Springfield and/or Longmeadow Public Schools are closed for the day due to inclement weather.
- If schools are closed for any other reason than inclement weather or vacation, proceed with regularly scheduled routes unless directed differently by the Operations Manager.
- Routes in Hampshire and Franklin County will be determined by instance and by the discretion of the Operations Manager; the determination will be based on the county where you live and/or your route is located, the conditions of the roads and/or the amount of accumulation in these counties.
- If school is not in operation (school vacations and summer) and inclement weather is an issue, operations will be at the discretion of the Operations Manager, who will reach out to the dispatchers of the day and the van coordinator with the determination of operations.
- Safety is our primary concern; If you are signed up to drive on a day and you are not comfortable driving under the weather conditions, please call your dispatcher or the Operations Manager to let them know you are uncomfortable driving for that day.

## Accessing Donation Data

1. Use this link to access the General Donations form:  
<https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/oz6faB813rb699>

2. Use this link to access the Food Bank Partnership form:  
<https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/emf/jefwma/RT-WMFB>

3. You can also access the forms via the RT website:  
[Food donors - Rachel's Table Springfield \(feedwma.org\)](https://www.feedwma.org)

- Click on “Who We Work With”
- Click on the “Learn More” button under “Food donors”
- Click on the “General Food Donations” button if you’re driving a general route (most routes) or the “Food Bank Food donors” button if you’re driving a Food Bank Partnership route.
- Training on donation data entry is provided during volunteer onboarding.

If you’re not sure which type of route you’re driving, call your Dispatcher to find out. If you need assistance in entering data, please contact the Operations Manager.

## Photos of Food Rescue

Volunteers are strongly encouraged to take pictures while driving routes, or at any other volunteering opportunity with Rachel’s Table. These pictures document the great work our food donors, agencies, and you are doing, and we use these pictures in marketing and fundraising activities so it’s important we get plenty of them.

- Drivers **must ask** if someone is comfortable with having their picture taken **before** taking their phone out of their pocket.
- We want pictures with both **people** and **food - if possible**. The people in the picture can be **Food donors, Agency Staff/Clients** and/or the **Driver**.
- All pictures should be emailed to the Operations Manager with as much information as possible – where, who is in photo, what kind of food and poundage.

**RT General Food Donation Form, updated 8-23**  
This form should only be used to enter information from General Food Donations.  
If this is a donation from a Food Bank Partnership Food Donor, please use the Food Bank Partnership form.

**Rachel's TABLE**  
Feeding Western Massachusetts  
Reduce Waste. Relieve Hunger.

Is this part of the Food Bank partnership?  
 Yes  No

Date \*  
MM / DD / YYYY

Is the Restaurant/Supermarket/Farm/ Other Food Donor a regular Rachel's Table Food Donor? \*  
 Yes  No

Source of Donation \*  
 Rescue  
 Cleaning  
 Purchase (ie. ESSEntials, Kalicka Milk, Backpack Program, Snack Program, Lily's Fruit)

Donation Type (select all that apply) \*  
 Bread & Bakery  Dairy & Eggs  Prepared Foods  
 Non-perishables  Produce  Meat & Protein



## Documentation Requirements

If you plan to be a driver, you will need to provide a copy or scan of your Driver's License and the declaration page of your Automobile Insurance (the page that shows your coverages) before you drive any routes. This documentation is kept in a secure location and will not be shared.

In 2024, van drivers will also be required to share their driving records with RTWM. This information can be obtained by the driver from their insurance company.

## Insurance

### **Volunteers using their own cars while driving for Rachel's Table.**

Should a Volunteer be involved in an accident using their personal car while driving for Rachel's Table, they need to put the claim through their personal Auto Policy and also notify Rachel's Table of the incident. There is no Primary coverage available through Rachel's Table for the Physical Damage or Liability; their auto policy needs to respond first. If a Volunteer is sued individually as a result of an accident, the Volunteer would need to file a claim with their personal Auto policy and notify Rachel's Table, too.

Rachel's Table **does have** Secondary coverage that will respond to a claim against the Volunteer up to a limit of \$1,000,000.

We suggest that all Volunteers consult with their insurance agent regarding their current coverages.

### **Volunteers using Rachel's Table Van while making deliveries.**

The van insurance policy protects Rachel's Table for Liability and Physical Damage due to an accident. If a Volunteer is sued individually as a result of an accident with the van, the Volunteer would be covered under Rachel's Table auto policy, and they should also notify their Personal Auto carrier of the suit.

Rachels Table **does have** Secondary coverage that will respond to a claim against the Volunteer up to a limit of \$1,000,000.

We suggest that all Volunteers consult with their insurance agent regarding their current coverages.

# Requirements for Specific Roles of Volunteers

## Dispatcher

Dispatchers serve in the critical role of coordinating General food rescue routes.

### Requirements for Dispatchers:

- Phone and cell phone if you are going to leave the house.
- Availability between 8 AM and 12 Noon. You must be available the entire time to troubleshoot any issues that may come up.
- Ability to organize large amounts of information into manageable pieces in a short time.
- General knowledge of the geographic area to develop reasonable routes.
- Alignment with RTWM values – food is equitably distributed to all our agencies. This means that dispatchers should give to as many agencies as possible depending upon who received food already that week.
- Kind and supportive demeanor to all – drivers, agencies, food donors.

***Specialized training sessions will be provided by a veteran Dispatcher for any prospective Dispatcher, with ongoing support as you get comfortable with the role.***

### Documents Needed to Dispatch:

- Food Donor Listing, providing address and contact information for each donor.
- Agency List (Dispatcher version), providing addresses, contact information, and food preference information, used to determine where to send the donated food.
- Volunteer List, providing contact information for Rachel's Table volunteers.
- Dispatch List, sent by the Operations Manager to all Dispatchers each Friday. This document lists each of the food donors where food is to be picked up. The list is organized by day of the week. Who Got Food Listing, sent by the Operations Manager, weekly, along with the above-mentioned Dispatch List.

Dispatchers also use the Rachel's Table Food Donation Phone Line: **(413) 733-9165**

### Dispatching Process and Tips from Your Fellow Dispatchers:

- **On the evening before your dispatch day, review:**
  - The Dispatch List for your dispatch day to formulate tentative driving routes.
  - Your list of Drivers, on Signup.com, noting their phone numbers and towns where they live (for consideration in route assignments). Review any notes you may have regarding driver preferences. If a driver is new to you, you can check with other Dispatchers or Rachel's Table Operations Manager.
  - The current "Who Got Food" list helps you decide which agencies to bring the donations.
  - Ensure you have handy all the documents needed to dispatch, listed above. You will refer to all of these while dispatching.

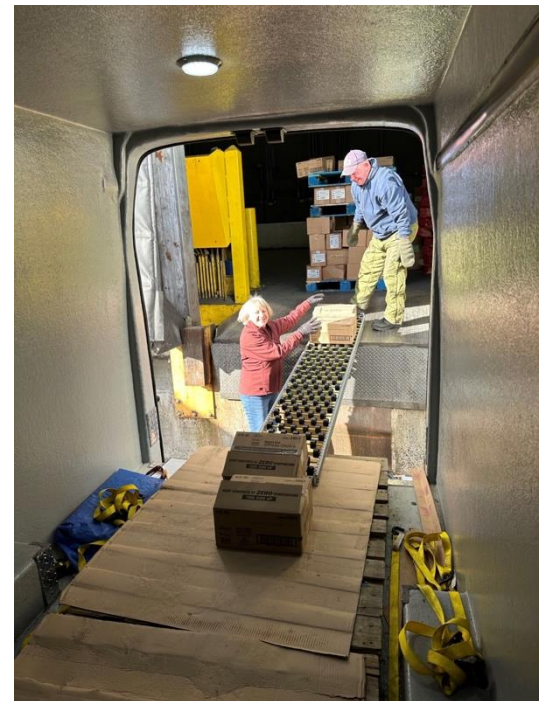
- **On the dispatch morning:**

- Call Rachel's Table Food Donation Line to review messages, incorporating any special pickups with your Food Donor list for the next day. Listen to the "Marker Message" left by the previous day's Dispatcher listing which Agencies received food the previous day. Try not to send food to the same Agencies as the day before.
- Between 8:00 - 8:30 AM, refer to the Dispatch List for the given day and call each donor, noting which have donations, and generally what they will be donating. If you cannot make initial contact, try again in a few minutes.
- Once you have contacted all Food donors, finalize the donor routes you prepared the night before. Group the donors geographically, creating compact routes.
- Call a few Agencies to see if they would like a delivery. Refer to the Who Got Food listing, information from the current Email to Dispatchers, and the Marker Message to determine which Agencies you call. Some Agencies are designated to get donations from certain Food donors on particular days. Refer to the Dispatch List for these. When you call the Agencies, tell them where the donations are coming from and generally what they'll receive. Note which agencies are open to receiving the food. If any are not interested, call another Agency on the list.
  - **Some Agencies open before 9:00 but others don't open until later. Because it's important to make sure food is donated equitably, don't reject donating to an Agency because no one answers the phone before 9:00.**
- Finalized routes should be assigned to one or two agencies.
- Call your Drivers to assign each a route. Ensure the driver has the needed address and contact information for the food donors and the agency they will deliver to.
- Ensure the Drivers have your contact information. Ask each if they will enter their donations online or if they need you to do so. If the latter, have them call you at the end of their route.
- Late morning or early afternoon, after all deliveries are complete, call the Food Donation Phone Line to leave a Marker Message with the agencies that received donations. This will be used by the next day's dispatcher.

# Van Team

## General Policies

- 1) If you are operating the Rachel's Table (RT) refrigerated van, you will be expected to follow the Driver Etiquette rules listed above. You will be expected to comply with all vehicular operating rules and regulations.
  - a. You must have a valid Driver's License if you are driving the van. When you become a Van Driver, RT will make a copy of your license which will be kept on file. The license must be with you anytime you are scheduled to drive the van and remain with you throughout the trip.
  - b. You must also have a clean driving record – driving records can be obtained from your insurance carrier and submitted to the Operations Manager.
  - c. You must obey all traffic regulations including, but not limited to, speed limits, stop lights, stop signs, right turn on red procedures and rights of way.
  - d. Do not park in handicap designated areas, bus loading zones, or in front of fire hydrants. If you receive a parking ticket, present it to the proper RT Operations Manager (currently Kathy Henry) when you return.
- 2) For the purposes of picking up and delivering Food Donations the Van will always be operated by a Van Driver and Van Assistant.
- 3) A Van Assistant is not required if the Van is being driven for maintenance purposes (ie. bringing it to a service appointment).
- 4) As a van driver or van assistant, all volunteers must participate in the Rachel's Table Van Training Program. This consists of both classroom and field (driving, refrigeration system operation, & proper lifting techniques) components. The classroom training is held twice annually, and all new van drivers must attend the training during their first year. The field training in the van is required prior to driving the van.
- 5) If you have a question about proper use of the Van or there is any problem with the Van (i.e., an accident, refrigeration not working properly) contact the Operations Manager, or if that person is unreachable, contact the Van Coordinator, currently Steve Lepow.
- 6) The Van Coordinator is responsible for scheduling Van Teams to drive existing Food Donation routes.
- 7) Van Drivers and Van Assistants are responsible for informing the Van Coordinator if they are unable to participate in a scheduled route due to illness, injury, vacation, or other reason. Please inform the Van Coordinator as soon as you know for such instances.
- 8) The Van Coordinator is responsible for providing keys to the Van to each day's Van Team. A spare set of keys is kept in the JCC front office with a list of names of drivers that are allowed to borrow the keys for the day. Drivers will sign the keys out for the duration of their route that day.
- 9) All Van Team members must complete the Signature page below and give it to the Operations Manager.



## Safety Policies

- 1) Use of a seatbelt is required for the Van Driver and Van Assistant whenever the vehicle is in motion.
- 2) Use of cell phones or other handheld electronics is forbidden by the Van Driver whenever the engine is on. This includes calling, texting, or use of the Internet. The Van Assistant may use a cell phone, but no other handheld electronics.
- 3) A cell phone may be used for GPS only if device is mounted to dashboard or windshield, used audibly only, or if operated by the Van Assistant.
- 4) No cellphone may be in a Driver's hand while the engine is on.
- 5) All doors must be locked whenever away from the vehicle.
- 6) All efforts should be made to avoid collisions with pedestrians, fixed objects, or other vehicles. If you are involved in a collision, follow the steps on the following page. Communication with RTWM staff is critical.
- 7) When backing up, the Van Assistant (VA) will be outside the van helping direct the Driver. This is done by making sure the VA is visible in the Driver's side Side-view mirror and using hand signals (see below) to indicate what the Van Driver should be doing.

Turn Left



Turn Right



Slow Down



Stop



- 8) When opening the rear doors, the doors should be placed in the Locked position or be opened all the way, slope permitting.
- 9) At the end of each Food Donation route, the refrigerated section of the Van must be cleared of any remaining containers or other objects and materials other than items always stored in this area (ie. the rolling ramp, pallets). The sole exception to this is if food is being stored in the area overnight.

## Food Storage Policies

- 1) Food may be stored in the van overnight for delivery the next day.
  - a. Non-perishable items may be stored in the van without use of the refrigeration system.
  - b. Refrigerated items must be maintained in the Van at a temperature below 41° F. Depending on the season this may or may not require running the refrigeration system. If refrigeration is required, the refrigeration system must be operated by plugging the Van into an appropriate (20 amp) electrical outlet.
  - c. Frozen items must be maintained at temperature below 32° F. If this is required, use the plug-in procedure outlined above.

## Maintenance Policies

- 1) The Van Coordinator, in conjunction with RTWM staff, is responsible for making sure recommended maintenance procedures (i.e. oil & other fluid changes) are followed, both for the Van and the installed Refrigeration system.
- 2) The Van is to be washed once/month, preferably, inside, and out. This might be done by volunteers or through a vetted cleaner. The Van may **NOT** be washed by taking it through a mechanized car wash. The refrigerated area should also be cleaned at this time.

- 3) The Van refrigeration system must be run by being plugged into an appropriate (20 amp) electrical outlet on the first Monday of each month. The Van Supervisor is responsible for arranging completion of this procedure. Currently Michael Paysnick (volunteer) has agreed to take responsibility for this task. If the Van is being used the day after this procedure, that day's Van Team is responsible for unplugging the Van, coiling up the electrical cord, and placing it in the cab.
  - a. The outlet currently being used for plugging in the Van is located on a light post located outside the JCC pool.
  - b. The engine for the Van must be turned off BEFORE the Van is plugged in.
- 4) Gassing the Van: When the Van goes below ½ tank, that day's Van Team will alert the Van Coordinator. The Van Coordinator is responsible for putting gas in the van, using the credit card provided for that purpose.

## Record Keeping

- 1) All vehicle and refrigeration system maintenance records must be given to appropriate RT staff immediately after returning the Van to the Jewish Community Center (JCC). These records will be kept in a dedicated file in the RT office.
- 2) A Van Log will be maintained to record the dates on which the Van has been operated. Each day's Van Team is responsible for entering starting and ending mileage, the Food donors & Agencies visited, and any other information deemed important by the Van Team (i.e. an error message on the refrigeration system panel).
- 3) If the Van is driven for a non-Food Donation purpose, that mileage should also be recorded in the Van Log.
- 4) Any such "important information" should be conveyed to the Van Coordinator and the proper RTWM staff – Operations Manager or Office Manager – by that day's Van Team.
- 5) The Van log is to be kept in the van. At the end of each month the pages from the Van Log will be given to RT staff.
- 6) Before leaving the JCC, the van drivers of the day are required to take a walk around the van to check for damage. If damage is found, it should be reported to the Operations Manager immediately. The same procedure is to be followed at the end of the day.

## After an Accident – Instructions to Drivers

### First Steps

1. Stop Immediately
2. Put on flashers
3. Check for injuries. If there are clear injuries, call 911 as necessary.
4. Remain at the scene. Do not move the vehicle unless instructed to do so by Law Enforcement
5. Call the Van Coordinator or Operations Manager. Van Coordinator will also call the Operations Manager.

### Gather Information

1. Write down comments from other parties regarding injuries – be specific.
2. Identify all involved persons and witnesses.
3. Record names, addresses, and phone numbers of involved persons.
4. Ask the other party for Insurance Card and Vehicle Registration – record policy number and plate number.
5. Identify vehicles or property involved and specific information of damages.
6. Record other information that may be a factor – car seat, tinted windows, previous damage, etc.
7. Make a diagram of the scene, show position and direction of travel of your vehicle and of other vehicles
8. Take photos of the scene, including wide angle view of the direction of travel and surroundings and close-ups of traffic signal devices, skid marks, road surface condition.
9. Take photos of other vehicles or property. Show from multiple angles. Include license plates, damage, all sides of the vehicle.



10. NOTE: You cannot take too many pictures of the scene or of vehicles involved. Do NOT take photos of injured persons.

### **Communications With Other Parties**

- 1) Law Enforcement –
  - a) Answer questions honestly – do not volunteer information to questions not asked and do not make any admissions of guilt.
  - b) Obtain the officer's name, badge number, and jurisdiction (State, Town, County, etc.).
  - c) Record statements made by the police regarding citations (to you or others) or other comments about the incident.
- 2) Other Parties -
  - a) Make no admissions of guilt or apologies or speculate about accident cause or fault.
- 3) All Parties –
  - a) Make notes of comments/statements made by other parties, including any admissions that they make.

### **Before Leaving the Scene**

1. Call the Van Supervisor or Operations Manager and relay information
2. Determine if vehicle can be driven and advise supervisor
3. Recheck your notes and diagram. Take additional photos if necessary.

# What to Do if You're a Growing Gardens Liaison

As part of Rachel's Table's efforts to transform food insecurity, we began Growing Gardens in 2022. This program supports partner Agencies in building and maintaining on-site gardens in which they can grow culturally appropriate food that reflects the needs and visions of the communities the Agencies serve. Our partner in this program's training is NOFA/MA (Northeast Organic Farming MA Chapter).

## How The Program Works

Growing Gardens supports local Agencies serving food insecure communities to establish, develop, and maintain their own gardens. In addition to providing healthy and fresh food, participation in the program offers participants opportunities to build skills, develop confidence, connect with each other, connect with the land, engage youth, and so much more.



## Liaison's Role

Each participating Agency is paired with a volunteer liaison who partners with them in the visioning and implementation of their project. Liaisons should have:

- Gardening experience and/or time and desire to actively delve into learning about gardening.
- Relevant or transferable skills such as carpentry and building (e.g. for raised beds or sheds), irrigation systems, or cooking or preserving food.
- Willingness to get their hands dirty.
- Capacity to engage respectfully and meaningfully with diverse groups of people.

Every Agency has unique needs, and every Liaison has unique gifts to offer, so the precise role and relationship of liaison to agency will vary.

## Liaisons commit to:

- Building and sustaining close, supportive relationships with the agency throughout the two years of the program.
- Attending seasonal workshops/community-building events.
- Visiting the agency's garden site at least seasonally if not monthly or bi-weekly.
- Generally staying in communication with the agency rep, which on average means phone calls or text message exchanges 3-4x per month.
- Acting as a conduit for communication between agencies and RTWM staff.
- Providing feedback about the program to RTWM staff so we can better serve in the future.



Each participating Agency has a three-year cycle in the program. Year 1 includes material and technical support in establishing a garden or further developing an existing garden, while Year 2 includes training in topics such as preserving the harvest, soil health, and Food as Medicine and Year 3 includes sustainability planning and implementation.

Each participating Agency in the program is paired with a Liaison who serves as a communication conduit between the agencies and Rachel's Table and as a partner in visioning and implementing the agency's garden plan.

By the end of the three-year cycle, we hope agencies have necessary knowledge, skills, and community engagement strategies in place to continue to expand and refine their garden programs, including understanding where and how to access material resources, technical assistance, and further funding. Participating agencies remain part of Rachel's Table's vendor donation programs as well as the extended Growing Gardens network.

## Tips from Your Fellow Liaisons

- Each agency has its own unique needs, expectations, and dreams for this project. This year's agencies' projects will differ from last years and next year's.
- We're not just building gardens; we're building relationships.
- No one expects you to have all the answers, in the garden or in the program. Use Rachel's Table staff and fellow Growing Gardens volunteers for any questions you might have.
- Sometimes gardens grow very well. Give yourself some credit when they do, but don't fret too much over crop failures.



*Winter milk-jug planting at Christina's House*

# The Gleaning Program

## *What is gleaning?*

'Gleaning' is the practice of gathering leftover produce or grain from fields after harvest. While peoples all over the world historically have had culturally specific ways of ensuring everyone in a community gets fed, the style of gleaning we practice at RTWM has its roots in ancient Jewish agricultural laws.

Open community gleans occur weekly throughout the growing season (July-November) and usually last 1.5-2 hours. Gleaners harvest food for RTWM's partner agencies as well as for their own distribution networks. While we aim to host 2-3 gleans per week, the exact gleaning schedule constantly changes due to the realities of farming and weather.

## *How do I find out when gleans are?*

- **BOOKMARK THE GLEANING CALENDAR:** <https://feedwma.org/events/>
- **Sign up to receive alerts:** [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/eQZ2MYFoF7HBXgdNwHpfhg.](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/eQZ2MYFoF7HBXgdNwHpfhg.)

## *How do I sign up to glean?*

1. Visit <https://signup.com/go/kmAbDzF>
2. Create an account. (Note: SignUp.com does NOT share your email address.)
3. Click on the date when you want to sign up to glean. Click the green "Sign Up" button. Repeat as desired!

Read through our full [Gleaning Handbook](#) to learn more about the history of gleaning, why so much food gets left in farm fields, and what to wear/bring to a glean.



# Rachel's Table of Western Massachusetts Volunteer Code of Conduct

***RTWM's efforts to alleviate hunger and reduce waste of our food resources in Western Massachusetts could not occur without the ongoing work of its volunteers. The individual volunteer is an essential component of RTWM's success.***

This Code of Conduct is designed to provide all RTWM volunteers with a set of principles and expectations for appropriate conduct and behavior.

All volunteers shall abide by and conform to these professional standards:

1. Volunteers shall act honestly and ethically while in the performance of their volunteer duties.
2. Volunteers shall treat all RTWM employees, volunteers, and community members and partners with respect, courtesy, and dignity.
3. Volunteers cannot demand work to be done by staff; staff members have supervisors to whom they report.
4. Volunteers shall abide by community partner rules and requests when working directly with community partners, especially on community partner property.
5. Volunteers shall abide by RTWM rules and regulations on food safety as well as specific guidelines in each of RTWM's programs. This includes following RTWM requests on the amount and nature of food pickup. Volunteers cannot unilaterally decide to take more or less than is allotted for RTWM unless under the discretion of RTWM staff. Volunteers shall not take any donated foods for themselves, unless approved by the RTWM staff, such as in some gleaning operations.
6. Volunteers shall not discriminate and shall be respectful of ethnic, national, and cultural differences.
7. Volunteers shall not harass, bully, or mistreat staff, other volunteers, or community members or partners.
8. Volunteers shall obey all applicable local, state, and federal laws, while acting on behalf of RTWM, including all laws and regulations that govern appropriate conduct in the workplace.
9. Volunteers shall deter wrongdoing and ensure accountability for adherence to the Code of Conduct.
10. Volunteers shall assist and cooperate with all RTWM investigations.
11. Volunteers shall report violations or suspected violations of the Code of Conduct. Violations should be reported to the assigned staff manager or the executive director.
12. Volunteers shall seek assistance if they have questions about any volunteer guidelines, including the Code of Conduct. If a staff member or volunteer has any questions or concerns about the code of conduct or wishes to file a formal complaint, they may contact the staff manager or executive director.

In cases where the staff manager or executive director are a part of the complaint, then the volunteer can file a formal complaint with the board president.

13. Retaliation in any form against a volunteer who, in good faith, reports a violation of this Code and/or possible discriminatory harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary action for the party found to have retaliated against the volunteer.

### **Additional Terms of Participation for Gleaning:**

- Do not bring dogs or other animals to a glean as they are unhygienic and put our farm partners' operations at risk.
- All minors must be supervised by an accompanying adult.
- Pay close attention to and follow all instructions provided by RTWM staff regarding designated gleaning areas, harvesting techniques, parking instructions, property boundaries, and other pertinent information.
- Arrive promptly at the event start time to ensure you receive all necessary instructions and information.

### **Adherence to Policies**

RTWM develops policies, procedures, and guidelines based on input from staff and volunteers and in consultation with legal, finance, and risk management experts; our policies, procedures, and guidelines are updated regularly as new situations emerge. Volunteers are expected to comply with RTWM policies including those described in this document. Failure to comply may be grounds for disqualification and/or removal.

### **Removal or disqualification procedures**

Depending upon severity of non-compliance with code of conduct, disqualification or removal may be immediate. In less severe cases, the procedures will include a discussion and verbal warning, followed by a written warning and finally disqualification and/or removal.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

RTWM requests volunteers to be reliable and punctual in reporting for scheduled volunteer activities. While RTWM will attempt to be flexible in all cases, volunteers are expected to notify a staff member if they will be absent or late, so arrangements can be made for handling their responsibilities.

### **Bullying**

Bullying may rise to the level of harassment and is therefore prohibited. Bullying is defined as unwelcome or unreasonable behavior that demeans, intimidates, or humiliates people, either as individuals or as a group. Bullying behavior is often persistent and part of a pattern, but it can also occur as a single incident. Some examples of bullying behavior include but are not limited to: abusive and offensive language, insults, teasing, and spreading rumors. It can also include manipulation of the work environment or psychological manipulation.

### **Compliance**

Volunteers may be asked to complete paperwork, provide updated information (including proof of insurance), or complete a criminal background check for certain volunteer roles. Failure to complete these requirements may disqualify a volunteer from serving in a particular role. If appropriate based on the circumstances, volunteers who are disqualified for a volunteer role may have the option to explore other volunteer opportunities with their staff partner or with RTWM.

## **Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco use**

Business-related activities must be conducted free from the influence of alcohol and illegal drugs. In addition, these substances may not be possessed or distributed on RTWM premises. During business functions where alcohol is served, volunteers and employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Use of tobacco or e-cigarettes in RTWM offices, on RTWM premises, at RTWM events and functions, and while representing RTWM at any time or function is prohibited.

While medical and recreational marijuana use is legal in certain areas of the United States, federal and state laws indicate that RTWM has no obligation to accommodate cannabis use in our offices or at our events.

Volunteers cannot report to the workplace impaired, nor should a volunteer smell of marijuana per the expectation for scents and hygiene in the workplace.

The workplace consists of all property and facilities owned, leased, or rented by RTWM, including grounds, buildings, vehicles, and any other equipment, and any site where an employee/volunteer performs work.

Under the Drug-Free Workplace Act, employers must prohibit in the workplace the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of controlled substances, including marijuana that is otherwise lawful under state law.

If the volunteer's personal vehicle is parked within an area defined as the workplace, the rules governing a drug free workplace apply. If a volunteer parks in a private lot not under the control of RTWM, the volunteer is subject to any applicable restrictions of the property owner and the laws applicable to marijuana in vehicles.

## **Good Stewardship/Liability**

Serving in a volunteer position requires good judgment and management of reasonable risks. All volunteers will be given a general company orientation and specific training to understand and manage the risks in carrying out their specific jobs. Volunteers will be required to comply with company policy and to conduct RTWM business at the direction of RTWM and within the scope of their duties as a volunteer. This will help minimize the risk of liability to RTWM and reduce the risk of injury (physical or economic) to the volunteer and the people the volunteer associates with or tries to help.

RTWM activities with inherent risks may include the transportation and handling of food in volunteer cars and in RTWM vehicles, interacting with youth, organizing fundraising events (athletic or social), assisting staff in carrying out office duties, or serving in a governance role, on a committee or in a leadership role.

RTWM indemnifies its volunteers against liability incurred while performing their volunteer duties conducted at the request of RTWM. RTWM purchases and maintains insurance policies, wherein volunteers are additional insureds, to provide the financial ability to fully indemnify, defend and settle any claims of liability.

## **Term of disqualification and/or removal**

RTWM is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for both staff and volunteers.

Volunteers who do not comply with the Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action, including and up to disqualification and/or removal.

## Rachel's Table Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability Form

This is the Release and Waiver of Liability release for Rachel's Table of Western Massachusetts, or RTWM, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and each of its directors, officers, employees, and agents. The Volunteer desires to provide volunteer services for RTWM and engage in activities related to serving as a volunteer.

Volunteer understands that the scope of Volunteer's relationship with RTWM is limited to a volunteer position and that no compensation is expected in return for services provided by Volunteer; that RTWM will not provide any benefits traditionally associated with employment to Volunteer; and that Volunteer is responsible for his/her own insurance coverage in the event of personal injury or illness because of Volunteer's services to RTWM.

**1. Waiver and Release:** I, the Volunteer, release and forever discharge and hold harmless RTWM and its successors and assigns from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind of nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise from the services I provide to RTWM. I understand and acknowledge that this Release discharges RTWM from any liability or claim that I may have against RTWM with respect to bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from the services I provide to RTWM or occurring while I am providing volunteer services.

**2. Insurance:** Further I understand that RTWM does not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide me with financial or other assistance, including but not limited to medical, health, or disability benefits or insurance. I expressly waive any such claim for compensation or liability on the part of RTWM beyond what may be offered freely by RTWM in the event of injury or medical expenses incurred by me. (refer back to insurance section on page 11).

**3. Medical Treatment:** I hereby Release and forever discharge RTWM from any claim whatsoever which arises or may hereafter arise on account of any first-aid treatment or other medical services rendered in connection with an emergency during my tenure as a volunteer with RTWM.

**4. Assumption of Risk:** I understand that the services I provide to RTWM may include activities that may be hazardous to me. As a volunteer, I hereby expressly assume risk of injury or harm from these activities and release RTWM from all liability.

**5. Photographic Release:** I grant and convey to RTWM all right, title, and interests in any and all photographs, images, video, or audio recordings of me or my likeness or voice made by RTWM in connection with my providing volunteer services to RTWM.

**Other:** As a volunteer, I expressly agree that this Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and that this Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. I agree that in the event that any clause or provision of this Release is deemed invalid, the enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Release shall not be affected.

By clicking the "I accept Rachel's Table of Western Massachusetts's volunteer waiver form" box on our volunteer sign up form, I express my understanding and intent to enter into this Release and Waiver of liability willingly and voluntarily. Please visit the Rachel's Table website at the link below to acknowledge and sign your Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability form.





We work toward a holistic approach to food security,  
*together.*

We could not do this work without you!

