Best and Emerging Practices in Habitat for Humanity
ReStore Policies, Programs, and Volunteer Structures

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For the Anchorage Habitat for Humanity ReStore
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Introduction

This research project is part of a coordinated effort between the Habitat for Humanity Anchorage (HFHA) ReStore and a team of graduate students and professor from the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), College of Business and Public Policy.

Client

The client of this research project, the Anchorage, Alaska ReStore, is a local Habitat for Humanity affiliate that provides the community access to low cost household items and supports the building and renovating of Habitat homes. The principal investigator of this project will be working with the Anchorage ReStore manager, Anders Harstad-Bell, and the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity Anchorage (HFHA) chapter, Craig Jaeger. Due to the partnership and collaboration between the ReStore and the HFHA main office, both the manager and the executive director were consulted throughout the project.

The ReStore mission is to “provide additional funding to support affiliates’ housebuilding goals; expand opportunities to serve a broader base of the low-income community by providing low-cost materials; and to provide good stewardship of sustainable resources in the community.” The Anchorage ReStore currently serves a community of approximately 300,000 individuals and donates approximately 25 percent ($75,000) of the HFHA operating funds. According to the Habitat for Humanity Anchorage strategic plan, one of the financial goals for HFHA is to receive at least 25 percent of their operating funds from the ReStore. The ReStore donation to HFHA varies each year depending on their revenue and the funding that is needed to support HFHA.

The HFHA mission states: “HFHA works in partnership with people throughout our community to build homes, build hope and change lives. We do this by building and renovating simple, decent, affordable houses and by making adequate housing a matter of conscience and action.” Habitat for Humanity Anchorage strives to build between 8 and 10 homes each year that effectively serve partner families. In order to complete this task,
they rely on several funding sources including government funding, grants, individual and ReStore donations. ReStore donations are non-restricted funds that allow HFHA to cover operating costs as well as additional costs for building homes. When the ReStore is able, they will provide more than the required 25 percent donation.

**Intent**

This research project is designed to improve the Anchorage ReStore operations by providing structure to daily activities and volunteer programs. By improving operations, it is hopeful that donations and revenues will increase and allow the ReStore to meet the required donation to the Habitat For Humanity Anchorage regularly and to possibly increase it in the future. To complete this task, all policies, procedures, and volunteer structures pertaining to the Anchorage ReStore will be assessed and analyzed and compared to nationally best and emerging practices. The research conducted will identify best and emerging ReStore practices in policies, programs and volunteer structures used by ReStores in communities comparable to Anchorage. It will assess and compare the best emerging practices to the Anchorage ReStore and propose policies, programs, and volunteer options that can be used to strengthen the Anchorage ReStore.

Best and emerging practices will be identified in pricing, discounts, donations, safety, and volunteer job descriptions, and will be utilized to create a comprehensive ReStore operations manual. The manual will provide structure in these five organizational policy areas as well as other identified practices and policies that are emerging in ReStores nationwide. The operations manual will be provided as a guide for the store to develop structure and improve operations. A formal structure will then allow the ReStore the opportunity to focus on attracting new volunteers, increasing the amount and quality of donations, and increasing revenue.
Historical Context

Habitat for Humanity is a nationally and internationally known nonprofit organization that provides “decent, safe, and affordable” housing for people in need. With approximately two billion people worldwide living in poverty housing and over 100 million people being homeless, Habitat for Humanity believes in a world “where everyone has a decent place to live.” Their core principles center around faith and putting faith into action by building relationships, creating opportunities for everyone, providing affordable housing, and promoting dignity, hope, and stewardship. There are approximately 2300 Habitat for Humanity International affiliates across the United States and globe, including the HFHA chapter. Both Habitat International and their local affiliates have a variety of funding streams to help support the work and mission of the organization. Included in these are individual donations, grants, government funds (as long as the conditions do not violate the mission), and ReStore profits.

Habitat for Humanity International created its first ReStore in September of 1992 as a small second hand store that only sold building materials. The ReStore concept quickly grew throughout communities and now totals over 800 stores worldwide, selling everything from building materials to furniture and other household items. The ReStore was developed as a place where Habitat could recycle building materials from their housing projects that could be resold to the public at a discount. As the stores continued to expand, they quickly became an asset to communities by supporting local Habitat for Humanity chapters build and renovate homes within them by raising and donating their funds towards the work. Proceeds are generated by the sales of gently-used household and home improvement items including furniture, appliances, and building materials and if the demand and space allows, then items such as clothes, books, bicycles, and other miscellaneous items can be sold; the majority of merchandise sold by the Anchorage ReStore is building materials, appliances and home accessories as they do not have the capacity to stock and sell furniture.
The Habitat for Humanity Anchorage ReStore was started in November of 2004. Currently the ReStore is undergoing a restructuring of the organization to improve its operations which includes finding a new facility, implementing new advertising and marketing strategies, updating their website, and determining best practices to update their policies and procedures. While all aspects of the restructuring are being developed by the UAA graduate team, this research and report will only focus on determining best practices to update the policies and procedures and providing the ReStore with support.

The restructuring of the ReStore has several areas in which changes and improvements are being made in hopes of showcasing the ReStore mission to local residents and eventually increasing the stores revenue. By increasing the profits of the ReStore, more donations can be made to Habitat for Humanity for housing projects; the ultimate goal of the ReStore. In addition to increasing profits, the restructuring is hoping to provide larger and safer place for individuals to work and volunteer, and to increase sales and donations. Before operations can be changed, structure must be created and provided internally to the ReStore management.

Habitat for Humanity Anchorage ReStore Challenges

The Anchorage ReStore is currently in its ninth year of being a nonprofit organization and affiliate to Habitat for Humanity. It is an important source of revenue in supporting HFHA projects and providing the community with low cost appliances, building materials, and other household items. Even though it has been servicing the community for almost nine years, it has yet to become a high performing organization. Non-profit organizations that are within their first ten years of operating, are still considered new and are often in need of assistance in several areas including, reviewing, updating, and recommending policies and procedures, and defining roles and responsibilities for their volunteers.

The Anchorage ReStore currently occupies a 5,000 square foot building that it has outgrown due to the size and amount of donations and the organization of how they are
displayed. They currently have three full time employees whose job duties are broad and vary across several areas as well volunteer job descriptions that are non-existent. Only one policy is visibly seen by the general public while all others are either minimally enforced or do not exist.

According to the Habitat for Humanity Affiliate Operations Manual for ReStores, “a Habitat ReStore must be well-organized and easy for the customers to navigate.” This phrase speaks to all areas of the organization including its practices, policies and procedures. The ReStore has a history of employee turnover within management and a general lack of organizational structure and workplace practices. As a relatively new organization it has yet to develop a strong set of policies and procedures to guide its operations. The policies and procedures that are vital to the success of the organization and that will be updated and/or created are pricing, donations, safety, and volunteers. In addition to these, other policies and practices will be reviewed and an operations manual will be created so that policies can be maintained in one location. While reviewing policies and procedures is only a small portion of the reorganization, it is a necessary element for the ReStores future sustainability.
Methodology

The methodology design is to assess the Anchorage ReStore programs, practices and staffing structures, in relation to best and emerging practices, programs and staffing structures identified in ReStores in communities that are comparable to Anchorage. This study uses a mixed methods research design drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research tools. The design uses several instruments to collect data pertaining to the Habitat for Humanity ReStore policies and procedures. Those instruments include:

1. Assessment of Anchorage ReStore Policies and Programs to Identify Areas of Need and Development

The Anchorage ReStore program analysis will utilize three instruments including a document review and analysis, key informant interviews, and a site observation. A program analysis of the Anchorage ReStore will determine the current status of the ReStore operations and allow the principal investigator to prioritize which policies and procedures are needed for their improvement.

i. Key Informant Interviews

a. Subjects: Six individuals will be interviewed during the information gathering process. These individuals are all a part of the Habitat for Humanity organization and include the Executive Director of the Anchorage Habitat for Humanity organization, the Anchorage ReStore manager, three Anchorage ReStore advisory board members, and an Anchorage ReStore employee. All interview candidates have a relationship with the organization and are experienced and knowledgeable of the Anchorage ReStore and its policies and procedures.

b. Questions: The interviews will use a combination of closed and open ended questions, they will be conducted in person and by phone, and in both formal and informal environments. Interview questions will vary depending on the individual and their role in the organization.
All questions will be designed and directed towards answering the overall theme of determining best practices and developing and updating Anchorage ReStore policies and procedures. The main interview questions include:

1. Which policies are currently being enforced at the Anchorage ReStore?
2. Which current policies need updated?
3. Which policies currently do not exist, but are important to the growth of the ReStore?
4. Are you aware of policies, procedures, and best practices that are being done at other ReStore locations?
5. What would you like to see implemented?
6. Which current policies are and are not working?

General questions will also be asked to the ReStore manager to gain information on employees and volunteers and to understand daily ReStore operations. The ReStore manager and HFHA executive director will also assist the principal investigator in determine which comparable ReStores to survey analyze. To ensure all policies and procedures developed from this project align with the mission and vision of the organization, bi-weekly meetings will be held with the clients and presentations will be made monthly to the client advisory board.

ii. Document Review and Analysis

a. Prioritization and Review: The document analysis consists of a formal review of all current policies and procedures of the Anchorage ReStore. Policies will be prioritized by the Anchorage ReStore manager during a key informant interview. Existing documents that
pertain to the policies will be reviewed and compared to national ReStore locations.

The ReStore manager and the Habitat for Humanity Anchorage Executive Director will consult with the principal investigator to determine which policies and procedures currently exist and which policies and procedures they are looking to develop. After the policies and procedures are identified, they will be prioritized in relation to the impact they have on the success and operations of the organization from the most critical to the least critical. Feedback from management will also be provided on current issues within the ReStore that they would like addressed in the policies.

b. **Analysis:** All documents will be provided to the principal investigator in either an electronic or hard copy form by the ReStore management. Once documents are received, they will be analyzed based on the following criteria:

1. Are the policy and/or procedures critical to the operations of the ReStore?
2. Has the policy and/or procedure been updated recently or in the last seven years? (Seven years was used as the Anchorage ReStore has only been in existence that long. If a policy and/or procedure have been updated in the last five years, then it would be considered as recently updated).
3. Are the policy and/or procedures currently being enforced?
4. Are the documents in a hard or electronic form or both?

After documents are analyzed, they will be compared to policies and procedures of other comparable ReStores in which best practices will be identified and incorporated.
Policies and procedures that exist informally will be discussed with the management team and developed into a written form. Once in a written form, the management team will review it to ensure its accuracy and the principal investigator will analyze it in accordance with the above mentioned criteria. All documents, once updated with best and emerging practices, will be combined into a single operations manual.

iii. Site Observation
   a. Subjects: A site observation will be conducted at the Anchorage ReStore warehouse in which the employees, volunteers, and clients will be observed. All participants present during the observation will not be made aware of the principal investigator or their intentions.

   b. Observation: The principal investigator will visit the Anchorage ReStore and observe basic interactions between employees, volunteers, and customers to determine daily operations and identify problem areas. The principal investigator will observe major policies areas identified from the interviews and gather information for generating or updating them. Interactions that will be observed include equipment handling, customer service, donations, price quoting and types of clothing for staff and volunteers.

2. Assessment of Comparable ReStore Policies and Programs to Identify Best and Emerging Practices

   The principal investigator will identify successful and comparable ReStore serving communities. The criteria that will be used in determining the comparable store are ReStores of similar size (square feet), that serve between 200 and 400 thousand residents,
that have similar rent/costs per square feet, and similar revenues and profits as the Anchorage ReStore. High performing, successful, and aspiring ReStores who do not meet the comparable requirements, but who maintain high operation standards, will also be identified and analyzed. ReStore data and demographics will be provided by Habitat International in an annually created spreadsheet. The spreadsheet will help the principal investigator identify ReStores who meet the comparable and high performance criteria. The principal investigator will consult with the Anchorage ReStore manager and Habitat for Humanity Anchorage executive director to reduce the number of ReStores in accordance to their preferences. All ReStores will be analyzed to determine best and emerging practices. Practices will be identified through three forms of instruments including surveys, key informant interviews and document review and analysis.

i. **Surveys**
   a. **Intent:** The surveys of comparable ReStores will be used to determine current policies and procedures as well as store operating data that could be compared to the Anchorage ReStore. The surveys will be designed to identify best and emerging practices among ReStore operations.
   b. **Distribution:** All comparable and high performing ReStore locations that are identified by the determined criteria will be surveyed on their policies and procedures and additional practices that have proven to be effective. One survey will be used for all ReStores in which the same questions will be asked.
   c. **Questions:** Only closed ended questions will be used, however, different follow up questions may arise depending on the individual responses and situations. Before the surveys are conducted, the principal investigator will introduce themselves and the objective. The survey asked a total of 15 structured questions. A full list of questions can be found in Appendix A.
In addition to the structured questions, the survey will also identify demographic information including as hours of operations, number of full and part time employees, and average number of volunteers. The results of this survey will determine which policies are being utilized the most at other ReStore locations and will be compared to the Anchorage Restore data.

ii. **Key Informant Interviews**
   
a. **Subjects:** Interviews will be conducted with ReStore managers of the identified comparable and high performing ReStores. ReStore managers will be selected due to their position within and knowledge of the organization. All interviews will be conducted by phone.

   b. **Questions:** In addition to answering survey questions, ReStore managers will be asked specific questions regarding their time at the organization, policies and/or programs that they have updated or created, and current successful practices. Interview questions will use a combination of open and closed ended questions and will allow the interviewee to provide substantial feedback on important policy issues.

iii. **Document Review and Analysis**
   
a. **Retrieval and Review:** Documents of comparable and high performing ReStores will be gathered during the surveying period. Documents will be retrieved electronically. All documents will be prioritized based on ReStore criteria and reviewed for content. Documents will also be retrieved from my.habitat.org if limited policies are retrieved during the surveying process. My.habitat.org is an online database for the Habitat for Humanity community that serves as a resource for news, partnerships, and provides open
forums where employees, volunteers, and affiliates can communicate and share ideas.

b. **Analysis:** All documents will be analyzed and compared for consistencies and differences among each other. All documents will be compared to the same Anchorage ReStore policy if one exists. All documents will be used to determine common and best practices among ReStores and will serve as a basis for creating and updating Anchorage ReStore policies.

### 3. Literature Review of Best Practices in Nonprofit Organizations and HFH ReStores

a. Nonprofit literature and case studies will be reviewed to enhance the importance of strong operations and to identify best and emerging practices in high performing nonprofit organizations.

b. Nonprofit literature will provide a knowledgeable background on the attributes associated with high performing organizations and how to successfully incorporate them. Turning points of beginning nonprofit organizations will also be consulted to provide context of the current state of the Anchorage ReStore and how they can grow past them and ensure a sustainable future.

c. My.habitat.org as well as other acclaimed journal resources will be searched to locate case studies that are similar to the Anchorage ReStore restructuring. Case studies will be reviewed to showcase the importance of resource development within a Habitat for Humanity ReStore and discusses the struggles and successes associated. The case studies will analyze organizational structure, staffing assignments, collaborative relationships, volunteer management and policies and procedures. All areas of the case study are important to the objective of this project and support the findings and recommendations.
4. **Analysis of Findings**

All findings from the survey will be presented in two matrices. The first matrix will be a condensed version of the survey results and will only focus on policy areas. The second matrix will show the responses to all of the survey questions. In addition to the two matrices, all findings and best practices will be utilized to develop and update policies and procedures that will be combined into a single operations manual. Both the matrices and operations manual will serve as a tool for the Anchorage ReStore as it strengthens their programs.

i. **Development of Matrices**

Two matrices will be created to compile the information from comparable ReStore surveys. Both matrices will identify every comparable and high performance ReStore surveyed and will include the results of the Anchorage ReStore; the Anchorage ReStore will be highlighted on the matrices to provide the reader with a quick visual comparison between the Anchorage ReStore and the ReStores surveyed. Both matrices will be presented to the Anchorage ReStore management team and will showcase the best and emerging practices.

ii. **Development of Policy and Procedure Manual**

Due to the lack of formal written policies and an emerging trend among ReStores, an operations manual will be created and will house all updated and newly formed policies in a single location. The operations manual will provide policy for all areas surveyed (pricing, discounts, donations, safety, and volunteer) as well as additional emerging policies that are common among ReStores. The operations manual will serve as the main enforcing doctrine for the Anchorage ReStore and will serve as a tool for employee and volunteer trainings.
5. **Recommendations and next step actions**

After conducting a national review of best and emerging practices for Habitat for Humanity ReStores, the principal investigator will propose options that can be used to redefine the Anchorage ReStore programs.

**Methodological Limitations**

1. The time frame in which the research was conducted and writing portions created, occurred in a three month period.

2. Despite the large number of ReStores in the United States and the comprehensive database provided by Habitat International, the amount of information and case studies relating to ReStore development is extremely limited.
Review of Nonprofit Literature and ReStore Case Study

“As nonprofit organizations mature and grow – as their staffs and programs expand, their operations and dynamics become more complex... The leadership, structure, management, and operating norms that worked at one point in their development no longer work at the next.” (Gross, 2009). There are several ‘turning points’ that nonprofits face whenever they first begin, expand, or change in some form. These turning points include getting organized, forming infrastructure, forming a strong management team, and focusing the organizations needs and mission. Susan Gross, an expert in nonprofit management, details seven turning points of nonprofit organizations and explains the critical importance that each has on the success of the organization.

The first turning point for nonprofit organizations is getting organized. For nonprofit organizations, the pivotal years to get through are most often those at the beginning of the organizations existence as the lack of formal management, structure, or common way of operating can lead to dissolution. In order to survive these trivial times, the management team needs to focus the day-to-day operations and define and specialize its systems, policies, and procedures since vague and flexible policies lead to inconsistencies among personnel, volunteers, and customer transactions. When policies are determined in the beginning years, it prevents personnel and customers from having resentment towards them if developed and implemented later. Having clear policies and procedures also provides structure to employees and volunteers; a benefit to retaining and attracting both. (Pakroo).

Other areas where adjustments need to be made in order to get organized include the need to define roles and responsibilities of personnel, develop systematic communication, and clarify the decision-making process; however, the focus of this project will only relate to establishing clear and consistently enforced policies and defining volunteer job descriptions that will be encompassed in an operations manual. According to the National Council of Nonprofits, nonprofit organizations should adopt certain principles that will help
the organization operate and set benchmarks to which they can measure their own progress. Nineteen members of the Council of Nonprofits’ Network developed a framework of principles and practices that each nonprofit organization within their state should adopt and are identified as “The Standards of Excellence.” “The Standards of Excellence” documents and/or best practices identified by these nineteen members are published in an online form to be utilized by nonprofits operating in states that are not a part of the Council or that do not have a guide.

It is important for an organization to develop job descriptions that clarify who are accountable for certain tasks and define precisely each staff member’s roles and responsibilities; the same importance is applied for individuals who volunteer. In certain nonprofits, the ReStore included, volunteers have served as many hours at the organization as its part time employees and can often times stay longer than the employees. Due to the continuity and change that are associated with veteran and new volunteers, it is important to have job descriptions in place that can be easily followed. In accordance to how regular job descriptions are formed, volunteer descriptions should be shaped around the positions and not the people occupying them; a common mistake in new nonprofit organizations. Loosely defined roles and responsibilities can cause stress for the Executive Director or management team as staff complain about the amount of guidance, work, and the lack of communication and knowledge.

Maintaining an organizational structure is vital for the future sustainability of any organization. The Standards of Excellence as well as other high performing nonprofit management literature, highlight the impact that policies, procedures, and accountability can have on the success of nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit literature and individual research will be utilized to align the Anchorage ReStore with current practices and create a sustainable future for the organization.
Findings and Policy Options

The focus of this research was placed on five main policy areas for the Anchorage ReStore and included pricing, discounts, donations, safety, and volunteers; these five areas were prioritized and requested by the clients. Currently the Anchorage ReStore has very few formal written policies that are enforced on a daily basis. The policies that do exist are very broad, not very visible, and not heavily enforced. Most of them exist on an ad hoc or as needed basis and continuously change as circumstances permit. Due to the lack of formalities, the Anchorage ReStore has succumbed to internal disorganization and poor operations leading to frustrated staff, volunteers, and clients. The interviews of staff members revealed the frustration associated with not having formal policies and expressed the importance and focus needed in this department.

ReStore staff noted their efforts in trying to establish policies within the store, but found it difficult with the lack of support; there are currently only three full time staff members, including the ReStore manager, who are responsible for ReStore operations. Staff members felt it was difficult to focus on a single task as responsibilities and job duties are stretched across all three employees. Staff interviews reinforced the nonprofit literature and highlighted the importance of getting organized.

To help the ReStore restructure their operations in regards to policies and procedures, a matrix and operations manual were compiled to include the identified best practices. Nine comparable and three high performing ReStores were identified and were contacted for surveying; however, only nine ReStores could be reached. All nine ReStores participated in the surveying and interview process. General policy findings can be seen in Figure 1. Figure 1. only showcases whether or not the surveyed ReStore had a policy in place for the corresponding column, it does not detail the specifics of the policy. The Anchorage ReStore is highlighted for easy comparison.
The findings in Figure 1. are represented by a ‘Y’ or ‘N’ in each row/column to distinguish a yes (Y) or no (N) response. If a ReStore had a policy in place a ‘Y’ was placed in the corresponding column, if they did not have a policy in place then a ‘N’ was placed in the corresponding column. Six out of nine stores had an operations/policies/procedures manual in place that housed all of their current policies. All stores surveyed had a pricing, donation, safety, and discount policy in place. Even though all of the stores surveyed had some form of volunteer policy, only five out of nine stores had individual job descriptions for volunteers.

According to Figure 1. operations manuals, pricing, and safety policies are a best practice and an emerging trend among ReStores; currently the Anchorage ReStore falls with the minority in all three areas. The Anchorage ReStore is comparable in not having individual job descriptions and having a donation and discount policy.

A more detailed matrix of the survey results is seen in Figure 2. Figure 2. provides a detailed analysis of the survey answers, but does not include the broad categorical information from Figure 1. The headings in Figure 2. correspond with the survey questions asked, for example, question two of the survey asked “Do you price all merchandise before it goes on the floor?” This question was abbreviated to ‘Price’ to ensure all data was
displayed in the matrix. Abbreviations E, V, and C, were used to represent employees (E), volunteers (V), and customers (C).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restore Name</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Negotiate</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>Discounts</th>
<th>Pick-up or Drop-Off</th>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Dress Code</th>
<th>Age Restriction</th>
<th>Cash Register</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage ReStore</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y Y N</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boise Valley HFH ReStore</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N N N</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Valley HFH ReStore</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y Y Y</td>
<td>Pick-up</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland ReStore, HFH Greater</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y Y N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>Southeastern Connecticut ReStore</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y Y Y</td>
<td>Pick-up</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London HFH ReStore</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y Y N</td>
<td>Pick-up</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexington HFH ReStore</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y Y Y</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asheville Area HFH ReStore</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y Y N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sarasota ReStore 1</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y Y N</td>
<td>Pick-up</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarasota ReStore 2</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y Y N</td>
<td>Pick-up</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach Co. ReStore</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y Y Y</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Operations Manual**

Six out of nine ReStores had an operations manual that combined all policies and procedures. Two out of the six stores had operation manuals that were in an electronic form and that were shared with and analyzed by the principal investigator. Two additional ReStore manuals as well as one generic manual from Habitat International were retrieved from my.habita.org and reviewed. Habitat International provides a generic ReStore manual that can be utilized by all ReStores as a resource in creating their own. The majority of manuals reviewed used a similar format as the generic manual; the same layout is applied to the Anchorage ReStore manual (see Appendix B.). The contents of each manual were similar in regards to which policies and procedures were included, but were specific to each store.

The best practices identified in the manuals included areas for:

- Operations (staff, store hours, safety and security, insurance)
- Merchandise (hold/sold items, deliveries, staff and volunteer purchases, returns/refunds)
- Donations (acceptance, pick-up, acknowledgement of donors)
• Pricing (guidelines, price gun, stickers/signage, negotiating)
• Volunteers (requirements, code of conduct, attendance, responsibilities)
• Safety (trainings and equipment)
• Emergency Procedures (emergency action plan and evacuation procedures)

All areas are incorporated in the Anchorage ReStore manual.

Pricing

• **All surveyed ReStores had a pricing policy in place**
  Every ReStore was asked two main questions that pertained to pricing, the first identified if all merchandise was priced before it went on the retail floor and the second asked if they negotiated the price after it was marked. All ReStores priced merchandise before it was able to be purchased and eight out of nine ReStores included a date at the time it was initially priced.

• **All ReStores compared merchandise to their counterparts**
  All Restores were in agreement in comparing items to large retail stores to determine the original price and to help determine how far to mark down. The majority of stores surveyed compared merchandise to a similar or exact product at Home Depot, Lowes, and other local retail/hardware stores; one ReStore used Craigslist to determine pricing.

• **The majority of ReStores surveyed discounted merchandise at 50 to 60 percent**
  The majority surveyed discounted merchandise at 50 to 60 percent from its original price; depending on the condition the item may be marked down more. The Anchorage ReStore tries to approximate a 65 percent decrease in price.

• **Anchorage ReStore faces problems in maintaining similar pricing strategy as stores surveyed**
  While the Anchorage Restore tries to maintain a similar pricing strategy to the stores surveyed, they currently lack the space and manpower to price all
donations before they go on the floor to sell. This costs the employees, volunteers, and manager time during store hours when customers have to consistently ask for prices on store items. This also allows the opportunity for haggling to occur; something the ReStore is trying to minimize. Both the pricing and haggling operations of the Anchorage ReStore are uncommon amongst the comparably surveyed ReStores as all nine ReStores stated they price all products and that they do not negotiate once the price has been set. The only time that a store may negotiate price is if a product has been on the floor for more than 30 days; an explanation as to why date stamping is important.

All policy manuals analyzed include formal language regarding their pricing strategies and several mentioned hanging signs around the store to notify customers of their fair prices and asking them not to haggle. Some ReStore managers will allow haggling if a client does not think the price is fair and can prove it, if the item has been on the floor for a long period of time, or if they are a preferred client.

**Discounts**

Currently the Anchorage ReStore offers employees and volunteers a 20 percent discount on all merchandise; due to their negotiation policy, no formal discount is implemented for customers.

- **Compared to national ReStore practices, the Anchorage ReStore is similar in their discount for employees and volunteers.**
  
  Eight out of nine ReStores offer some sort of discount to staff and volunteers. Of those that offer volunteers discounts, four of them require the volunteer to work a minimum amount of hours before they are eligible. Two ReStores also make staff and volunteers wait two days before they can purchase an item so that customers can have the first opportunity for purchase. Only four ReStores offered a discount to customers.

- **The discounts for customers varied across all four stores**
One ReStore offers a 10 percent senior and military discount on Wednesdays only; one store offers a frequent shopper card where customers can get 10 percent off every purchase after they spend $500 in a calendar year; one offers homeowners 10 percent off every purchase; and one offers 10 percent off to new customers.

- Those ReStore that did not offer customer discounts felt their prices were fair

The main explanation received as to why they did not offer customer discounts was that they felt their prices were fair and that it did not draw in more customers. The Restore manager of Palm Beach, Florida stated that a military or senior discount one day a week did not improve their sales as customers would only come in one day to shop. Two ReStores stated that instead of offering customer discounts, they hold two large sales a year.

**Donations**

- All nine ReStores stated that they had a formal donation policy in place

Most policies included a list of items that are acceptable to donate and a list of items and conditions (i.e. pet hair, stains, etc.) that are not acceptable. The majority of ReStores only accepted donations that were home improvement related and on not accepting items that are broken, stained, have an odor, or older than 10 years. Most ReStores do not accept electronics, carpet, clothing, books, and paint; certain stores will accept paint if unopened. All items accepted depend on the store and their capacity to display and sell the items.

Other best practices identified from the survey included having a Goodwill or Salvation Army donation bin that miscellaneous items could be placed in and then re-donated to Goodwill or Salvation Army. The ReStore manager of Asheville, North Carolina stated that having another thrift store bin at their store helped them maintain contact with the donor. He stated that the donor is appreciative of not having to drive to another donation location and is more likely to return as a customer to the store. The manager also recommended
putting a ReStore donation bin at a local thrift store so that items can be swapped and more donations can be received.

Currently the Anchorage ReStore does have a formal policy on donations; however, due to the lack of enforcement and manpower, the ReStore has not developed a vetting system for accepting donations allowing customers to become accustomed to donating multiple non-house ware items. Several non-household items are received despite their relativeness to other store items. Upon doing the site observation, the manager toured the principal investigator through the store and receiving area to highlight problem areas, included in these were the miscellaneous items being held in storage. Miscellaneous items included used skis, church pews, and scales. Despite the managers attempt at minimizing the amount of miscellaneous items from being received, several donators have become accustomed to the open policy and take advantage of the lack of personnel in receiving. After interviewing the Anchorage ReStore manager, his main goal for the store is to minimize the number of unsupervised drop offs and to improve the process of receiving.

Certain ReStores, such as the Boise Valley ReStore in Boise, ID, have a clear donation policy outlined in their operations manual that includes sections for both monetary and non-monetary donations. Also included in the policy are clear directions on how donations should be received, prepped, and stocked. They include disclaimers regarding ownership, pickups, and donation receipts. Habitat for Humanity international also provides resources for developing a donation policy and includes a list of materials that can and cannot be accepted.

Safety

All nine ReStores surveyed stated they had some form of safety policy in place. The most common safety element was having a dress code in place for employees and volunteers. All dress codes were very similar and included wearing closed toed shoes, no loose fitting clothes, jeans only, no clothes that had holes, and no clothing that bared skin. Safety items also included:
• employee and volunteer trainings and briefings upon starting
• showing the Habitat International safety video
• demonstrations on how to lift heavy items
• equipment/machinery certifications

Other practices identified in the safety/dress code responses included having volunteers and staff wear vests or t-shirts with the ReStore logo on them and name tags so customers can distinguish between employees and volunteers. Habitat International highly encourages ReStores to develop a dress code and provide staff and volunteers with ReStore clothing or nametags. Currently the Anchorage ReStore does not enforce a dress code policy nor do they require staff or volunteers to wear vests or name tags; during the site review, it was difficult to determine who were volunteers, employees, and customers.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

One item that was requested by the Anchorage ReStore manager and noted as a high priority was the creating of individual job descriptions for volunteers. Even though this item was important for the Anchorage ReStore, it did not rate as a best practice or emerging trends among the ReStores surveyed. After surveying the nine ReStore locations, only four were found to have incorporated separate duties and responsibilities for volunteers in their policies. Of these four, only one ReStore ranked volunteers in tiers depending on the length of time they have been with the organization; each tier had corresponding duties that the volunteer could perform. The volunteer descriptions varied between lists of duties and full descriptions; full descriptions often resembled job descriptions.

Another important aspect identified by the Anchorage ReStore manager, was whether or not other ReStores allowed volunteers to operate the cash register. Due to a past theft at the Anchorage ReStore by a volunteer, this subject was of high importance to the store. Six out of nine ReStores allowed volunteers to operate the cash register. Explanations varied as to why volunteers were allowed to operate the cash register. They included the cost of
hiring a cashier in relation to the cost of a volunteer, experience of the volunteer, and length of time volunteering with the organization. One manager required that all volunteers go through a training and interview process before operating the cash register. Another manager required a certain number of supervised volunteer hours before being allowed to operate the register. Despite the theft, the Anchorage ReStore still allows volunteers to operate the cash register due to the lack of staff support.
Anchorage ReStore Program Recommendations

After surveying, interviewing, and analyzing ReStores and ReStore documents, it is recommended that the Anchorage ReStore:

1. Implement the operations manual provided by the principal investigator. By adopting the operations manual, all policies can be combined and located in one document and to include areas designated in the general Habitat International manual. A table of contents of policy and procedures can be found in Appendix B with the proposed manual. It is recommended that this table of contents be used in the manual as it incorporates areas of best practices that are included in other ReStore manuals.

2. Develop a donation vetting area that can be utilized for receiving, prepping, pricing, and dating all donated merchandise. It is also highly recommended that every item be priced and dated before going on the retail floor. These recommendations were prevalent in every comparable and high performing ReStore and are quoted as being the most vital to the ReStore success. These recommendations also prevent negotiations from occurring which can prevent the potential for lost revenue.

3. Organize the store in a more conducive and customer friendly way, by organizing and cleaning merchandise, and providing an appreciative atmosphere. It is recommended that the donation policy be enforced so that miscellaneous and non-sellable items do not take up space in the store/vetting area and to provide customers with a uniform display of merchandise.

4. Create and maintain relationships with local contractors/construction companies, thrift stores, and other nonprofit organizations. The Anchorage ReStore can also benefit from participating in local nonprofit furniture distribution/sharing programs that will potentially increase donations and in turn revenues.
All recommendations are designed to improve operations, donations, volunteers, and customers by providing structure within the organization and mainstreaming practices to incorporate best and emerging trends that align with comparable and high performing ReStores.
Appendix A: Survey Questions

1. Do you have a policy/procedure/operations manual?
2. Do you price all merchandise before it goes on the floor?
3. Do you date stamp all merchandise at the initial time it is priced?
4. Do you haggle?
5. Do you have a point of sale system?
6. Do you offer discounts to staff, volunteers, and customers?
7. If yes to volunteers: Do volunteers have to be there so many hours/shifts before they can receive the discount?
8. Do you have a donation policy in place of items you do and do not accept?
9. Are most of your donations made by pick-up or drop-offs?
10. How often does a truck driver go out for donations?
11. Do you have a safety policy?
12. Do you have a dress code?
13. Do you have an age limit for volunteers?
14. Do you have individual job descriptions for volunteers?
15. Can volunteers operate the cash register?
Appendix B: Anchorage ReStore Operations Manual

Policy & Procedure Manual

5023 Cordova St
Anchorage, AK 99503

907-743-8060

http://www.hfhanchorage.org/restore/
Effective: 1 April 2013

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Disclaimer: This policy and procedure manual is designed to set guidelines that help ensure safe, efficient and compliant operations at Anchorage ReStore.
I. Operations

It is the policy of the ReStore that there is at least one paid Manager or key carrier present during business hours.

Staff authorized to carry keys:
  Executive Director
  ReStore Manager
  All Paid Staff

Only the Executive Director and ReStore Manager are authorized to carry keys to the safe.

Store Hours
Monday – Saturday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Store hours are subject to review. Adjustments to opening and closing times as well as Holiday and other closures will be assessed and decided by the store manager and approved by the Executive Director.

Safety and Security
Safety is a priority at ReStore. Anyone acting in an unsafe manner or refusing to abide by set safety regulations or our code of conduct will be asked to leave. The use of alcohol or drugs prior to or while volunteering is strictly prohibited. Cell phones not in use for ReStore business should be used at a minimum. (See the dress code section of this manual for safe dress rules and the full Safety section for additional information on workplace safety)

ReStore security during daily operation is the responsibility of all staff. Any building issues or concerns should be directed to the key carrier on duty. Any other keys (i.e. trucks, etc.) must be signed out for use by staff or volunteers prior to use and returned immediately after use. Sign out sheets are located in the vehicle binders in the office.

Insurance
The ReStore will hold all appropriate insurance coverage for all aspects of daily operation including, but not limited to: building, vehicle, workman's comp. and any other supplemental insurance. All insurance issues, concerns and claims should be directed to the ReStore Manager.
II. Merchandise

Terms and Hold Items
All sales must be paid in full at the time of purchase. No partial payments or payment plans are allowed. The ReStore does not offer layaway. A customer may place an item on hold for up to 24 hours. If a customer does not purchase the held item within 24 hours, the hold tag will be removed and the item put back up for resale. Appliance items waiting for testing are not ready to sell and will not be put on hold. Deviations from the hold policy must be approved by the store manager.

Cash, Visa, MasterCard and Discover are the approved form of payment.

Sold Items
Customers may keep their paid item at the ReStore for up to 3 business days after purchase. Customers that return to pick up a sold item must present their receipt at the time of pick up. The receipt will be marked item delivered and the date by store staff or volunteers. It is the responsibility of the customer to pick up their item within the set amount of time. A courtesy call will be placed after 3 days to remind the customer to pick up their item. After 14 days the item is subject to resale with no refund or store credit due the customer. Deviations from the sold policy must be approved by the store Manager.

Item Delivery
ReStore does not offer delivery services. Under rare circumstances an item can be delivered for $25.00. Delivery will only be made to an area outside a building or into a garage or outbuilding. ReStore will not under any circumstances install items or bring items into a home. It is the responsibility of the manager member to clearly communicate the delivery terms to the truck driver. Every effort will be made to schedule deliveries on scheduled donation pick up dates.

Staff & Volunteer Purchases
Staff and volunteers can receive 10 percent off ReStore purchases. Volunteers can receive the discount after 16 volunteer hours have been reached. Staff members and volunteers may not price items that they intend to purchase. Products must be presented on the sales
floor for a full store open day before they can be purchased by a paid employee or volunteer.

**Returns & Refunds**
ReStore makes every effort to ensure items presented for sale are in working order and suitable to the customer’s need. In the rare case that a sold item is deemed defective the ReStore will accept a return. The returned item must be in the same condition as it was when it left the store.

ReStore does not offer cash refunds on returned merchandise. When a customer would like to return an item they may either:
  - donate it back to the store
  - exchange the item for an item of the same price
  - receive an in-store credit for the purchase amount

To return an item for exchange or in-store credit, the customer must:
  - return the item within 10 days of the purchase and,
  - have a valid receipt for the item being returned

Credits are good for one year from the return date. Any exceptions to the above policy are at the sole discretion of management.

**III. Donations**

**Acceptance**
Donations are accepted Monday through Saturday between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6 p.m. All donations must be home improvement related, in good, working order and able to be resold. Donation acceptance guidelines are available and should be adhered to. All donations are subject to refusal upon inspection. Certain items that may never be accepted are as follows:
  - Electronics
  - Exercise Equipment
  - Books/Clothes/Toys (exception: Construction related books are allowed)
  - Automotive Parts
  - Used carpeting
  - Upholstered Furniture/Bedding
  - Dangerous items such as ammunition, firearms, flares etc.
  - **Exceptions may be made by management only.**
All donations should be taken to the receiving areas of the store to be cleaned and priced before being put on the floor for sale. Donations should be prepped, priced and stocked for sale within two store operation days of receipt.

All donations are property of Habitat for Humanity and cannot be given to staff, volunteers or customers.

**Item Pick-up**
Potential donors should be encouraged to bring their items to ReStore. Donors may schedule a donation pick up by ReStore volunteers or staff if necessary. (large or awkward items, etc.). All pick-ups must be approved and scheduled by the ReStore staff. Pick-ups are scheduled based on driver availability but generally will be done on Monday through Friday. Complete information regarding the donor’s name, address where the donation is to be picked up, items being donated and any special instructions must be clearly noted on the driver message slip. There is a flat $5 fee for picking up donations.

**Acknowledgement**
All donors should be offered a donation receipt at the time of drop-off. When picking up donations, a donation receipt should be pre-filled and left with the donor. The valuation of the donation is the sole responsibility of the donor.

**Cash Donations**
Any cash donations received must be documented. Small cash donations (loose change at cashier’s desk, etc.) should be checked once a month and documented accordingly. The ReStore Manager is responsible for tracking all cash donations.

**IV. Pricing**

**Pricing Guidelines**
The *Pricing Policy & Guidelines* are used to assist in the pricing of all incoming merchandise. All items priced at the ReStore should be priced based on age, condition, size and demand and should be priced at 50% off or more of retail price. Use of price comparisons with retail websites, local retailers and local thrift stores is encouraged.

All pricing must be done by paid staff or authorized volunteers. Most items should be priced with a sticker, while some bulk items may simply have a sign posted. All priced items should also include the date (day, month, year) in which it was marked.

All merchandise should be priced BEFORE THE ITEM REACHES THE SALES FLOOR!
**Pricing Guns**
The pricing guns are located in the Office Manager’s office and must be signed out for use and signed back in after use EACH DAY.

**Price Sticker**
The price sticker should be well marked and easily visible on the item. In some cases, two stickers should be placed on an item in two different spots (highly profitable items, oversized, etc.).

**Negotiating Price & Mark-downs**
THE ReSTORE DOES NOT NEGOTIATE PRICES WITH CUSTOMERS. Items may have their prices adjusted due to factors such as lack of space, item on the sales floor over 90 days, condition missed at time of original pricing, or pricing mistake made. All price adjustments require approval by ReStore manager.

**V. Volunteers**

**Recognition**
Volunteers are the heart of ReStore regardless of their reason for volunteering and should be recognized as such. Make sure volunteers hear a thank you often. Volunteer recognition events will be held at least annually. Hours of service will be kept track of and volunteers will be recognized and rewarded for reaching certain milestones. ReStore management is responsible for tracking volunteer hours and recognition activities.

**Requirements**
Volunteers must complete a volunteer form and take part in an orientation and safety training prior to any volunteer activity.

Any groups must first be approved by management prior to volunteering and cannot total more than 10 people unless approved by management.

Community service volunteers who have been convicted of any sexual offense are prohibited from volunteering at the ReStore.

**Code of Conduct**
Every person at any Habitat activity is entitled to be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. Consistent with that policy, the ReStore does not condone: verbal abuse, insults or demeaning remarks, any uninvited physical contact, the display of offensive objects, gestures or pictures, repeated or unwelcome flirtation or other sexually oriented discussions, profanity or vulgarity.

Safety is a priority at the Anchorage Habitat ReStore. Anyone acting in an unsafe manner or refusing to abide by set safety regulations or our code of conduct will be asked to leave.
The use of alcohol or drugs prior to or while volunteering is strictly prohibited. Headphones present a true safety hazard in a warehouse setting. Volunteers are not allowed to use them during a shift. Cell phones should be used at a minimum.

Habitat ReStore does not allow discrimination based on race, sex, creed, marital status, age, physical and/or developmental disability, color, or national origin. Discrimination will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Habitat ReStore reserves the right to dismiss anyone from an event or worksite who engages in activities prohibited by this policy and to bar such persons from coming to any of our events or worksites in the future.

**Attendance**
Volunteers are expected to work in shifts of at least two hours. Management may decide if volunteers with extenuating circumstances may work a shift of less than two hours. Volunteers must sign in at the beginning of their shift and sign out at the end of their shift or their hours will not count.

It is preferred that volunteers make management aware if they cannot make a regularly scheduled shift.

**Dress Code**
Tennis Shoes, work boots or steel toed shoes must be worn when working at the ReStore or on construction sites. NO SANDALS, FLIP-FLOPS, HIGH HEELS, SLIPPER TYPE, or OPEN TOED SHOES. No apparel that advertises drugs, alcohol, sex or violence can be worn. No spaghetti straps or bare midriffs. Pants must be worn at the waist. Nametags must be worn during each shift.

**Specific Volunteer Duties**
In order to accomplish its mission, the Habitat ReStores rely on volunteers to help with all aspects of store operations from helping pick-up donations to pricing and display of items. Volunteers needed in the following areas:
- Organization/merchandising
- Customer service
- Administrative assistance
- Internet Sales and Advertising
- Greeter/receptionist
- Pricing/receiving
- Warehouse
- Truck help
- Cleaning
- Handyman/repairs

**Cashiers**
Cashiers play a key role at the ReStore. Cashiers must undergo extensive training on the register prior to starting. Community service volunteers are not allowed to operate the cash register.

Cashiers are responsible for running the register properly including; accepting checks, stamping them appropriately, using markers to ensure $50 and $100 bills are not counterfeit. Should the register require change, a manager should be called.

A manager is responsible for balancing the register at each shift change and at the end of each night. The register is again verified each morning by the ReStore manager.

**Truck Drivers**

Any volunteer who will be a truck driver must read the Drivers Manual and adhere to its policies at all times. All drivers must also have training from a Manager before using the truck for any purpose.

All truck drivers must have a clean driving record. Truck drivers must provide their driver’s license to the ReStore manager to be kept on file at the ReStore.

All drivers should be cleared by HFH’s insurance carrier prior to driving.

**VI. Customer Service**

Though the ReStore is a non-profit organization, it is run as a business and should have the same customer service standards as any other building materials business. Customers should be greeted as they enter and thanked as they leave or make a purchase. All staff and volunteers should make every attempt to help a customer with questions and assist them with carry outs or out-of-reach items whenever possible.

Sales and store policies apply to all customers. Only in extenuating circumstances and at a manager’s discretion will an exception be made.

Any escalated discussions or customer service issues should be taken away from other customers. Unruly customers should be approached by two staff members or the manager and a staff member and every attempt should be made to calm said customer down. If the customer remains unruly, a Manager should call the police at once to handle the matter.

**VII. Collaborations and Partnerships**

**Other Local Organizations**

The ReStore should encourage partnerships with other local organizations to achieve its goals. Partnerships of any kind will be approved and overseen by management.
Non-Profit Patronage
The ReStore will offer other non-profit organizations 20 percent off of their purchase when patronizing the ReStore. Organizations must show their tax-exempt status prior to receiving the discount. This should be approved by the ReStore Manager.

VIII. Safety

General
Safety at the ReStore is a priority and responsibility of every staff member and volunteer. Safety should not be seen as an end goal, but rather a constant work in progress. Management is responsible for monthly checklists and any building issues regarding the safety of staff, customers and volunteers. All staff and volunteers are responsible for addressing daily safety issues and correcting any violations as soon as possible.

Trainings and Equipment
Certain equipment and machinery can only be used by staff and volunteers that have been trained. This equipment includes:
- Forklift / Pallet Jack (must be certified by ReStore Manager)
- Ladders
- Any ReStore vehicle (must be certified by ReStore Manager)
- Any power tool
- Any other tool or equipment at the manager’s discretion

In addition, none of the aforementioned machinery/tools may be used by ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18.

Trainings on machinery will be offered on an as-needed basis by management or in collaboration with a knowledgeable professional.

Any building/machinery maintenance will be kept up to date and is the responsibility of the Operations Manager.

VIII. Emergency Procedures

Emergency Action Plan
The Anchorage Habitat for Humanity ReStore is committed to the safety and well-being of employees and volunteers during emergency situations. OSHA’s Emergency Action Plan requirements, found at 29 CFR 1910.38, require Habitat for Humanity ReStore to have a written Emergency Action Plan (EAP). This plan applies to all operations in the ReStore
where employees, volunteers or customers may encounter an emergency situation. The EAP is laid out as follows:

**Administrative Duties**
In the event of any emergency, management or volunteers will direct those in the store to the appropriate places. They will determine the type of emergency response needed.

Management is trained to:
- Direct and assist in safe and orderly emergency evacuation
- Provide guidance and instruction for all types of emergency situations
- Be aware of employees with special needs who may require extra assistance
- Use the buddy system
- Avoid hazardous areas during an emergency evacuation

Management should also be trained in first-aid/CPR and in using fire extinguishers. Appropriate first-aid supplies have also been provided. Professional emergency services responding in an emergency will help with and direct all rescue and medical duty assignments upon their arrival on site. The trained personnel also serve as a resource of information about emergency procedures and conduct head counts once evacuation is complete.

**Types of Emergency**
An emergency is defined as a sudden, urgent, and usually unexpected occurrence requiring immediate action. Some examples of possible emergencies at the ReStore may be but are not limited to:

- Fire
- Severe weather (tornadoes)
- Medical emergency
- Power outage
- Robberies
- Missing child
- Workplace violence

**Evacuation Procedures**
When staff detects an emergency that requires an evacuation, such as a fire, they should conduct an all-store page and notify a staff member immediately.

The following list defines necessary procedures in evacuation situations:

- Fire
  - In the event of a fire, the fire suppression system should activate.
  - In the event the fire suppression system miscues, a page should be made in the store.
If the fire is small and contained, a trained employee may attempt to put the fire out.

- Staff should lead volunteers and customers to the nearest available exit route out of the building.
- If leaving through the front entrance, all evacuees should proceed to a designated area; in this case, the ReStore/Theda Care signs across the parking lot.
- If leaving through the back entrance, all evacuees should proceed across the parking lot to the back of the Cinder’s building.
- Management should account for all staff and volunteers, assess the situation for injuries and conduct first-aid if warranted.
- A manager should contact 911 immediately.

**Non-Evacuation Procedures**

Some emergencies do not require evacuation. The following list defines necessary procedures of non-evacuation emergencies:

- **Severe Weather**
  - Severe weather alerts are monitored in-store by radio and severe weather monitor located at the cashiers’ desk.
  - If a tornado watch is issued, monitor the situation closely and remain on alert until the event has passed.
  - In the event of a tornado warning, a page should be made to alert staff, volunteers and customers of the event.
  - All those in the store must be directed to the Tornado Assembly Area, located in the northwest corner of the building, in the break room and Office Manager’s office.
  - Management will determine when the all clear can be given.
  - The Store Manager should ensure that a battery powered radio and light are available.
  - Staff, volunteers and customers should remain in the designated area until the threat has passed.

- **Medical Emergency**
  - In the event if medical emergency, a staff member should assess the injury.
  - If the injury is minor, a trained staff member may administer first-aid.
  - If the injury is major, a staff member should contact 911 immediately, notify the manager, and keep the injured calm and comfortable until authorities arrive.

- **Power Outage**
  - Should a power outage occur, a staff member should attempt via bullhorn or yell that everyone should stay still in their place until further notice.
  - An attempt should be made to assess the situation and fix the problem.
If an immediate solution is not found, a staff member should contact police for assistance.

- Robbery
  o In the event of a robbery, cooperate with the suspect. Do not try to detain the suspect; the safety of those in the store is more important than cash.
  o Try to get a description of the suspect for authorities.
  o Once the robber has left, notify staff and police immediately.

- Missing Child
  o In the event a missing child is reported, take a detailed description of the child and conduct a page in the store.
  o If the child is not found within 10 minutes, contact police.

- Workplace Violence
  o In the event of workplace violence, management should attempt to keep the party calm.
  o Without putting anyone in harm’s way, an attempt can be made to diffuse the situation.
  o If the situation cannot be diffused, another staff member should notify police of the situation right away.