

Sussex County Habitat for Humanity's COVID-19 Update

Dear Habitat volunteers, partner families, friends, and supporters,

I can't believe eight weeks have passed since our last build day, ReStore shopping trip, or day with everyone in the office. While we are ready to get back to some sense of normalcy, the situation in Sussex County makes it hard for us to open operations right away. As you know, Sussex County has been identified as a hot-spot for COVID-19 cases, and new cases continue to increase. We have been following the local, state, federal and Habitat International's recommendations closely to make informed decisions about how we can do our part to slow the spread of the Coronavirus and keep our volunteers, staff, and partner families safe.

At this time, SCHFH is aligning with the Governor's new timeline and targeting June 1 for Phase 1 of our reopening.

What does this mean?

Office

The office will remain closed to volunteers and the public until June 1. Office staff will continue to work remotely, and on June 1 begin to come back to the office with new cleaning protocols while promoting social distancing. If this date changes, we will let you know.

ReStore

ReStore has gone virtual! ReStore is now doing online sales and no-contact scheduled pickups of purchases. Check out the new online ReStore at <https://lewesrestore.square.site/>. ReStore is developing their phased reopening plan now but does not expect to have volunteers in the store before June 1.

Construction Sites

All construction sites continue to be closed to volunteers and partner families until June 1. If anything changes, we will let you know.

Our construction staff, classified as essential workers, continues to build while keeping a safe physical distance. Additionally, we secured emergency grant funding to contract out necessary work to keep our projects moving forward, this includes getting two homes in Milton under roof. But rest assured that there will be plenty of volunteer work when we can safely return. We have 12 partner families to build homes with over the next 12 months.

Our construction volunteer program will start phasing in operations on June 1. There will be limited volunteers on site, more volunteer days on the schedule, required signup, daily waivers, and new safety and COVID-19 prevention practices on site. These are small changes that will have a big impact on keeping everyone safe. In the beginning, slots will only open internally to regular volunteers, Women Build volunteers and Partner Families.

Partner Families and Homeowners

Most of our partner families and homeowners are doing well. However, others have been laid off, lost hours at work, or tested positive for COVID-19. We are helping connect them with resources in the community to get assistance. Please keep them in your prayers.

Thank you for your patience during this hard time. Remember, this too shall pass. But until then, we want to make sure that Habitat is a safe place for everyone involved.

In faith and service,

Kevin J. Gilmore
Executive Director