



The Sara Lee Trust

CHARITY RETAIL TRAINING GUIDE

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

January 2020

The Sara Lee Trust, Registered in England and Wales, Charity Number 1055048.

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HELLO AND WELCOME

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with The Sara Lee Trust (SLT) and helping to reach and improve the lives of people living across Hastings and Rother who are affected by cancer and other life threatening illnesses.

Through our charity shops the Trust sells goods that have been kindly donated to us. The money received is used to pay for the care we provide to local people. The Trust currently supports almost 1,000 people in Hastings and Rother each year.

Volunteer support is critical to our charity shop operations. Without your help we simply would not be able to open our shops or stock our shelves. Your efforts and support are very much valued and we hope that you feel an integral part of our friendly team.

This Training Guide will be used as part of your induction process and should be kept as a reference guide to help you carry out your important volunteering role with the Trust. If you would like more information on any of the areas covered please ask your Supervisor.

Welcome to our Team!

Emma Godson, Volunteer Coordinator

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

REFRESHMENTS

All volunteers are welcome to free tea / coffee and biscuits in the staff areas whilst on duty.

COMMUNICATIONS

It is important that volunteers are aware of issues that are relevant to the Trust as a whole, our shops and Donation Centre and to the role that they carry out.

Communication is a two way process and it is important that both volunteers and staff make every effort to communicate with each other. Shop based methods of communication include:

- The Daily Communication Book
- Volunteer newsletter (These will be regularly updated in the team information area)
- Volunteer Meetings (held monthly)
- SLT Newsletter (issued every two months)
- CEO update (issued every two months)

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

It is everyone's responsibility to keep premises clean and tidy at all times. Each shop and the Donation Centre has a vacuum cleaner and other cleaning materials. Please check with your Team Lead before using any cleaning substances for any COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) issues / requirements.

ROTAS AND TIME OFF

The SLT expects volunteers to be committed to the role that they have accepted, but everyone needs time off. Volunteers should inform the Team Lead as soon as they know they will not be able to make an agreed shift. Early notification is appreciated as this will allow cover to be arranged if it is required.

2. RETAIL TRAINING

TRAINING PROGRAMME

In addition to your general induction, all volunteers will receive detailed training on all aspects of charity retail. Dependent on your specific role this will include:

- Customer service
- Use of the till (see below)
 - recording sales
 - errors
 - refunds and exchanges
- Cash handling (see below)
- Overview of Gift Aid
- Use of the iron & steamer
- Use of a tagging gun
- Safe storage of stock and equipment
- Receiving & storing unsorted stock
- Safe sorting of donated items
- Storing and disposing of unsaleable stock
- Safe disposal of waste
- Petty cash claims
- Security & safety

All Charity Retail volunteers will have Moving and Handling training as part of their initial induction programme.

Pricing of donated items is usually undertaken by the Team Lead and therefore is not part of the standard training plan.

AREAS OF INTEREST

If you have any particular knowledge, skills or experience of a specific area (e.g. books, music, jewellery, toys, collectables, etc), we would like you to apply this as far as possible, if this is what you would like to do. Please talk to your Team Lead for more information.

SALES RECORDING

Every sale must be recorded through the till and no item may leave the shop until it is fully paid for; whether the item is purchased by a customer, volunteer or staff member.

Procedure

- Welcome the customer
- Enter every individual purchase on the till using the correct departmental key
- Obtain a sub total and tell the customer the total amount required
- Record the amount tendered through the till and place the money received on the till shelf above the drawer
- Give the customer the change required
- Once the customer has accepted their change, take the money from the till shelf and place it in the till drawer and close the till

ERRORS

To maintain accurate records, errors made when recording a sale should be corrected so that the amount in the till agrees with the end of day till print out (called a Z read).

If an error is made, cancel the transaction if you can by pressing the C or ERROR button. If not, complete the transaction and initial the transaction on the till printout. You can either put this down as an over ring or refund this amount to balance the till. Inform your Team Lead immediately to correct this

REFUNDS

Legally, we cannot refuse to give a refund if a customer has a right to one.

A customer has the right to a refund if:

- The goods were not as they were described
- The goods were not in the condition expected

The law allows for the fact that the customer must expect less from second-hand goods than from new merchandise. It is a matter of judgement as to what the customer could reasonably expect for the price paid.

Procedure

- Explain the policy politely to the customer;
- If a refund is due this must only be made by the Team Lead, Lead Volunteer or Designated Deputy who will:
 - Check the receipt. We cannot refuse a refund if the customer does not have the original receipt but can show in some other way that the item was purchased from us;
 - Annotate the receipt with a written 'REFUND', in pen, cross through the item refunded, return money and the receipt to the customer.

EXCHANGES

If a customer changes their mind about a purchase which is otherwise satisfactory we are able to change it provided;

- **It is returned within two weeks** of purchase with the till receipt;
- It has the original price ticket attached and is in the same condition as when purchased

The customer may exchange for goods of the same or higher value than those returned and pay the difference. However, we will not give a part refund to cover the balance if the value is less. We do not give credit notes.

CASH HANDLING

Payment

The Trust accepts payment by cash or payment can be made by credit/debit card.

Forgeries

Be alert for the possibility of a forged note. Use a detector or pen where possible. A detector pen will identify c80% of forged notes but is not fool proof. As a further safeguard check the feel of the paper, the watermark, metallic thread and quality of the paper. Feel if the written denomination of note is raised. Please read the Bank of England advice:

<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/banknotes/counterfeit-banknotes/how-to-check-your-banknotes>

£50 Notes

Customers should be informed that unfortunately, we cannot accept or give change for £50 notes.

Cashing up

Cashing up is the process of counting the shop sales at the end of every day, replenishing the till float and preparing the sales takings for banking. This includes reconciling the actual cash to the till recordings.

Cashing up must be undertaken in a staff zone and will be led by either the Team Lead or Lead Volunteer, when shop is empty and door locked Two team members are required for cashing up and detailed training will be provided for all those carrying this task out.

VOLUNTEER PURCHASES

All registered volunteers are eligible for a 20% discount on all items for sale on their working day.

Staff members or volunteers cannot put aside donated items that have not been priced. If you would like to purchase an item that has not been priced, please inform the Team Lead of your interest. They will notify you when the item has been priced.

ACCEPTING DONATED GOODS TO SELL

Our Charity Shops are 100% reliant on the goodwill, support and donations of local people. It is essential that all supporters who donate items to the Trust are properly and politely thanked for their kind donations. Where possible Trust information leaflets and thank you cards should be offered to all donors.

There are certain items that we **cannot** accept for sale in the shop and these include:

Furniture and Household Items:

Furniture, mattresses and all soft furnishings that do not have legal fire safety labels

Electrical Items:

Electric blankets

Infra-red electrics

Oil Heaters & gas appliances

Televisions (unless flat screen & working)

Sports and safety items:

Child car seats & buggies

Crash or cycle helmets / riding hats

Other items:

Childrens toys that do not have a CE mark
Weapons, knives, swords, sword stocks, crossbows.
Guns and ammunition (including replica guns).
Duvets and pillows that have been used.
Medication including vitamins.
Prescription spectacles.
Ivory and real fur items.

These should be politely declined and an explanation given that we would have to dispose of these items ourselves at a cost to the Charity. If in doubt, please ask your Team Lead.

All donated items should be stored in the allocated area within the shop until sorting arrangements are agreed by the Supervisor.

COLLECTIONS AND CLEARANCES (of donated goods)

The Trust offers a house collection and clearance service. Should you receive a request please:

1. Thank the customer and say that the Team Lead (SM) will come and see them to discuss their possible donation. Call the SM.
2. In their absence please ask for contact details and a brief description of the items to be donated. Inform the person that our Donation Centre will contact them at the earliest possible opportunity which will be within two working days at the very latest.
3. Record the information on a Collection and Delivery form
4. Pass to Team Lead or lead volunteer to email through to DC

Delivery requests for furniture items purchased from our shops should be processed in the same way i.e. where delivery of an item is requested you should:

- Check the customer lives within our delivery area and that it is a ground floor delivery and will the item fit in their property.
- Process the £10 delivery charge
- Ask for contact details and note a brief description of the items to be delivered along with any other relevant information (e.g. convenient times)
- Inform the customer that our Donation Centre will contact them at the earliest possible opportunity which will be within two working days at the very latest
- Record the information on a Collection & Delivery form
- Pass to the Team Lead to contact the Donation Centre and relay all the information

PETTY CASH

Petty cash is managed by the Team Lead and may be used to purchase items required for the. All purchases / expenses must be agreed in advance by the Team Lead. (TL)

Procedure

- Request approval for the purchase / proposed expense from the TL
- Make purchase / incur expense
- Obtain receipts for all items purchased / costs incurred
- Mark items to be claimed for on receipt (underline or highlight)
- Pass the receipts to your TL for re-imburement
- The TL will enter the amounts and a brief description onto a petty cash voucher

3. SAFETY AND SECURITY

WORKING ALONE

For reasons of health, safety and security; there should be at least two people present on the premises, preferably three at all times. People should not routinely work alone in the shop. If the shop cannot be staffed by at least two people, then the TL or Lead Volunteer should be informed. If it is not possible to arrange satisfactory cover, as a last resort, the shop should be closed for that period. Please ensure to place a sign on the door for customer information.

SHOPLIFTING AND THEFT

Our main objective is to take preventative measures to reduce the opportunity of theft by:

- Greeting and monitoring customers
- Having adequate staffing and wearing ID badges
- Removing potential opportunities for theft through better layouts, use of lockers for personal items, securing high value items and not leaving the till unattended
- Being aware of possible scams such as ticket swapping and shoplifters working together
- Communicating possible theft between shifts (using Communication Book)

If you suspect that someone is shoplifting:

- Do not approach or try to stop the person but inform the TL or Lead Volunteer immediately
- Wait until the shoplifter leaves then write down as much information as possible i.e. height, weight, age, hair and skin colour, clothing, vehicle information if applicable.
- No action that puts shop staff, volunteers, customers or members of the public at risk is to be taken. The safety of the property, cash and premises is ALWAYS secondary to the safety and wellbeing of shop staff, volunteers and members of the public.
- Report the matter and the details as soon as possible (to the Area Manager if the TL is away).

DEALING WITH AGGRESSIVE CUSTOMERS

The risk of incidents involving aggressive customers in our shops is considered to be low. All team members have a responsibility to ensure their own safety and that of their colleagues at work. It is essential, therefore, that all team members are familiar with Trust policies and procedures, equipment and precautions adopted to combat the risk of physical and verbal abuse.

- If you encounter aggression try to **diffuse** the situation
- Communicate **calmly** and appropriately. Be aware of your own body language.
- If the person is getting angry, try to remain calm. Be assertive but do not meet aggression with aggression.
- Avoid entering personal space or touching.
- If the aggression escalates or a physical threat is made – **CALL THE POLICE** and try to vacate the area.

Use exit strategies — have a pre-planned way to excuse yourself from a difficult situation.

Apply diversion techniques to distract them whilst you make your exit.

Use your voice — shout a specific instruction such as “Call the police!”

Use the Personal Safety Alarm available beside the till. Please ask the TL or Lead Volunteer how to use this in an emergency.

Remember, the earlier you spot a potential problem arising the more choices you have to avoid it. If there is an incident in the shop please report it immediately to the TL, Lead Volunteer or Designated Deputy.

SELF DEFENCE

Physical self defence should only ever be used as a last resort with the only purpose being to get away from your attacker. Remember also that if you use excessive force, you could be legally liable for assault.

SECURITY

ACCESS KEYS

Keys are only held by named staff and volunteers unless otherwise authorised by the Area Manager. A register of all authorised key holders is maintained by each Shop Manager. Key holders are responsible for their own keys and must inform the TLs immediately should they lose or misplace their keys. Keys must not be copied or given to any other person, even on a temporary basis.

In the unlikely event that a key holder is not available to open the shop the Area Manager should be contacted, or in her absence the Finance and Admin Officer.

LOCKING UP

The premises should be secured by an approved key holder or lead volunteer (as agreed by the Area Manager):

- Close and lock all windows
- Lock the door to the storeroom
- Turn off radios, lamps etc. at the sockets and unplug
- Ensure office door(s) are locked
- Turn off till and leave empty till drawer open
- Turn off all lights, heaters (unplug) etc.

In accordance with our Lone Working Policy, wherever possible locking up should be undertaken by at least two team members.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS - Any accident, incident or near miss must always be reported to the TL and an accident / incident form will be completed.

Important information for all team members

- **Health and Safety** – All team members should maintain an awareness of health, welfare and safety issues that may affect any team member or customers and report any potential risks or issue.
- **Manual Handling** – Formal training is required for all lifting and handling duties. Please see your Team Lead if you need training or a refresher.
- **Trust Policies and Procedures** – All staff are required to work in accordance with these. The Volunteer Handbook sets out the working guidelines and expectations of our volunteer supporters.
- **COSSH** – Some cleaning materials have the potential to cause harm. Check with your Team Lead before accessing any materials for cleaning or other purposes.
- **Fire Safety** – All team members should be aware of the fire exits and the onsite fire policy. Please ask your Team Lead if you are unsure.
- **Dealing with aggression** – Try to stay calm and call your Team Lead. You and your colleagues safety is the most important issue.
- **First Aid** – Be aware of the location of the First Aid box. If in doubt seek medical advice and attention and inform your Team Lead.
- **Accidents / Incidents** – All incidents or accidents should be recorded in the Accident Book and reported as soon as possible.
- **Managing donated items** – All items received should be processed and priced in a standard way as set out by the Team Lead before being put out for sale. Staff purchases are possible after this but only with Team Lead agreement.
- **Teamwork** – Regular team updates will be posted in the team information area and a team meeting will be held at least every three months. The Trust operates an open door policy so please do raise any matters with your Team Lead between meetings if needed.

All team members are expected to work in a manner that reflects the ethos of the Trust; in a respectful, open and caring way. With each other, customers and staff

If you would like any further information, please speak to your Team Lead.