

## **Okiciyapi Tipi Habitat For Humanity Volunteer Information and Frequently Asked Questions**

Thank you for expressing interest in our program. Providing such opportunities for those who want to demonstrate love in action is an important part of our ministry. We are always in need of volunteers during our busy spring/summer seasons and hope that you will join us. The number of volunteer groups and individuals we can accommodate at a given time is dependent on several limiting factors. Therefore, it is wise to return your completed application(s) as soon as possible. We schedule groups on a first come, first served basis.

### **What preparation should we do as a group to get ready for this work camp experience?**

We ask that volunteer groups be familiar with the mission of Habitat and suggest that you visit the Habitat International site or contact us directly for more information. We also suggest that you familiarize yourself as much as possible with Lakota history as well as with current issues/events that affect Native Peoples. This information can be best gathered by doing some research at your local library or on the Internet. Preparing in this way will inform you about Habitat and give your group a general idea of what they may encounter during their volunteer experience.

### **What housing and eating arrangements can we expect?**

Okiciyapi Tipi has Volunteer Quarters located in a residential neighborhood of Eagle Butte. There are sleeping areas equipped with mattresses, bunk bed frames, a kitchen, limited eating utensils, bathroom and living/dining room. We do not provide meals or food supplies. Food preparation and purchasing is the responsibility of the volunteer/volunteer group. There are two grocery stores in town that can serve your needs and have a relatively large selection to choose from.

### **Does the Okiciyapi Tipi HFH affiliate charge a fee to volunteers?**

Yes, we do, as do most affiliates. This fee contributes to covering the cost of:

- 1) maintaining the Volunteer Quarters (utilities/maintenance)
- 2) office administration
- 3) administrative costs
- 4) and the majority of it used to fund the cost of construction materials/supplies

These funds greatly assist the affiliate to fulfill its mission of providing safe, decent affordable housing for the many Cheyenne River Lakota families in need.

Okiciyapi Tipi requests your group send \$500.00 (for groups of three (3) or more persons) and all completed volunteer applications at least one month prior to your scheduled arrival. This guarantees/confirms a slot for your group on our schedule. There is no refund if you cancel. This protects the affiliate from having to disappoint another group wishing to come at the same time as another; it also diminishes the level of productivity. However, without funds and volunteer labor, we can't build homes; so we thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter.

### **How many days in the typical work-week/hours per day?**

We can accommodate a group up to one week. We ask that volunteers plan to arrive on the weekend to begin working on the following Monday-Friday, a 5-day work week, departure being on the ensuing Saturday. The day begins at 8 am and ends at 5 pm with a one-hour lunch break on-site (provided by the volunteer/group) to avoid traveling between the quarters and the work site.

### **Is there a specific time that you prefer we arrive/leave?**

As mentioned above, we expect groups to arrive on a Saturday or Sunday & depart on the following Saturday. Due to travel time, we understand it is difficult to give an exact arrival time. We ask only that you give us an estimated time of arrival so someone can be on hand to greet you, provide the orientation session and help get you settled in the Volunteer Quarters. As part of your orientation you will be instructed as to respect we expect you and your group will be giving to the property during your stay and you will be expected to clean it (supplies provided) prior to your departure.

### **How do we get to the Volunteer House upon arrival?**

Once your initial \$500 has been received to confirm your spot on the schedule, the coordinator of your group will receive phone numbers of staff who will meet you on your arrival and give you key to our volunteer quarters.

### **Is there a maximum number of people in a group that you will accept? What is the accepted minimum age of a volunteer? How many adults should accompany a youth group?**

Generally speaking, we can accommodate up to 20 persons at a given time. Exceptions have been made and are based on housing availability and the

length of time your group plans to stay. If your group numbers are in excess of 20, give our office a call and we'll discuss your circumstances.

The youngest we allow on the work site is 14 years of age. There are NO exceptions. We have no insurance coverage for participants below the age of 14. Further, and prior to working at the site, all minors must have submitted a signed waiver of liability completed and signed by a parent or legal guardian. No minor will be allowed to volunteer unless and until this completed waiver is returned to the affiliate office. Use the enclosed waiver form to make as many copies as needed for your group.

We recommend you have one adult to supervise every four (4) youths in your group.

### **What kind of work will we be doing?**

This is one of the most popular questions and, oddly enough, there is no definite answer for it. The elements in this part of the country greatly dictate our construction season as well as the fact that construction moves forward in distinct phases. However, be assured there will be plenty for you and your group to do. We are continually building and rehabbing homes.

### **Is transportation furnished to/from the work site?**

Group transportation to and from the work-site is the responsibility of the volunteer group. We are unable to provide transportation for volunteer groups since we have only a 2-passenger pick-up truck used to transport construction materials.

### **Are adults required to complete a waiver of liability as well?**

Yes, please have it completed and signed before your arrival. The form is also included in this packet. Again, feel free to make as many copies as necessary.

### **Does the Okiciyapi Tipi HFH provide activities?**

The affiliate staff works in collaboration with homeowner families to provide two volunteer dinners each week. The local staff and area residents try to arrange for entertainment of some type; it is usually provided by local residents in the form of storytelling, pow-wow dancing, spiritual ceremonies, visit buffalo, etc.

Beyond this, the volunteer/group is responsible for their own entertainment. We will furnish your group with a listing of local organizations, places and contacts you can reach to schedule your activities. You are encouraged to

ask our office for suggestions and clarification of any questions you may have.

### **What should we bring with us?**

**Construction:** The weather in South Dakota is known for its unpredictability. Even during the summer, it can switch from hot to humid to cold and rainy in a matter of minutes. We, therefore, recommend that you bring clothes that can be work in layers and are suitable for South Dakota's ever fluctuating weather. Waterproof windbreakers are also suggested. For safety reasons, please avoid wearing overly loose jackets, shirts, and pants. Please inform all members of your group that all volunteers are required to wear hard-soled shoes on the work site.

**Personal Items:** Your group will need to bring their own bedding, towels/washcloths, soap, mosquito repellent, and personal toiletries. It is also recommended that you bring a small bottle of dish-washing soap, toilet tissue, and a few sponges for dishes just in case you run out.