



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Revised May 2017

What is the mission of Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio?

Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio is an ecumenical Christian non-profit organization working in partnership with God's people in need to build modest, decent and affordable homes without interest or profit, thereby witnessing God's love in action.

When and where did Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio begin?

Faith Lytle founded Habitat in her kitchen with a group of committed friends in 1976.

Faith Lytle put Habitat on the map. We started construction of the first Habitat house in the United States on a small parcel of land on Hidalgo Street on San Antonio's near west side in 1976. We have grown to become one of the top 10 largest producing partner affiliates in the country, having built 1,000+ Habitat homes in partnership with hardworking families in need. None of this would have been possible without the determination and vision of this very special woman.

How is Jimmy Carter involved with Habitat for Humanity?

Jimmy Carter is Habitat's most recognized volunteer since 1984. In a different location each year, he and his wife, Rosalynn, lead a major one week building project for Habitat called the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project. He and his wife speak on behalf of Habitat and are some of our strongest supporters.

What is the history of Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio?

Habitat was founded in 1976 by a dedicated citizen named Faith Lytle. We are distinguished as the first U.S. partner affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. As of May 2017, we have built 1,000+ affordable homes in the San Antonio community.

Does Habitat for Humanity give homes away?

No, Habitat is not a charity or a "handout" program but instead effectively empowers families, lifting them out of the hopelessness of poverty and substandard, unsafe housing. Each Habitat homeowner in San Antonio contributes at least 300 hours of "sweat equity" to build their home and those of their neighbors. Habitat homes are sold to homeowners at no profit. Homeowners pay an affordable monthly mortgage payment of approximately \$550 with zero percent interest (includes insurance and taxes). The principal from the mortgage payments comes back into our program to support building more homes.

What is Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio's target area?

Habitat is chartered to serve residents of Bexar County (approx. pop. 1,904,785) and to build within the county perimeters. We serve low to very low-income families whose income is 20-70% of the Area Median Income. For most of our families that means an annual income of approximately \$28,000. Habitat homes are usually built in urban and suburban neighborhoods

where low-cost land is available and our families have expressed interest in living. These areas also have adequate resources for the homeowners such as public transportation, retail stores and businesses, educational and community/social service organizations.

How is Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio funded?

- Proceeds from the Habitat Home Centers help fund Habitat’s general and administrative expenses. Due to their success, 100% of donor contributions go directly to our home building program.
- The building program is funded through partnerships with the faith community, corporations, foundations, community organizations and individuals.
- It costs Habitat approximately \$80,000 to build one Habitat home (not including land or infrastructure). Sponsors are required to fund a minimum of \$60,000 house sponsorship fee and have the opportunity to assist with the building of their particular sponsored Habitat home.

What is the Habitat Home Center?

The Habitat Home Centers are home improvement thrift stores that sell both new and gently used building materials, home/office furniture, décor, and more at discounted prices to the public. Donations to the Home Center help the San Antonio community by diverting reusable goods from the landfill and are tax deductible to the extent eligible by the law.

Also, the Home Centers accept donations of homes to be moved. Construction companies especially appreciate the opportunity to donate usable materials and save landfill fees. Come by and check us out – we’re at 311 Probandt, 5482 Walzem and 8125 Meadow Leaf Dr. The Home Centers are open Monday – Friday (8 am – 6 pm) and Saturday (9 am– 5 pm).

How is Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio able to build affordable homes?

Volunteers! Construction of Habitat homes is made possible through the labor of our homeowners working side by side with approximately 11,000 community volunteers a year. Volunteers help build the homes, raise funds, work in our administrative offices, provide lunch for volunteers at the work site, work at our Home Centers, etc.

Habitat homes are affordable for low-income families because there is no profit included in the sales price and no interest charged on the mortgage.

How many homes has Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio completed?

Since our founding, Habitat has completed the construction of 1,000+ affordable homes in San Antonio. This represents more than \$55 million worth of property added to local tax rolls. In 2017 we are scheduled to build 47 homes.

Does Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio accept government funding?

Habitat is privately funded and does not use government funding for the building of homes. Habitat does accept government funding to assist with the cost of land, infrastructure and site preparation.

Does Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio have employees?

Yes, Habitat employs approximately 97 (full time, part-time and seasonal) staff members who work in our Habitat administrative offices, Home Centers and Construction Department. Additionally, 10-12 high school/college students are employed over the summer under Habitat's Student Leadership Internship Program.

How does Habitat benefit the community?

In addition to the low-income families who become homeowners each year, the San Antonio community realizes substantial benefit from Habitat homes:

- The property tax base increases in blighted areas of the city, and families have more income available to contribute to the growth of the San Antonio economy. Many Habitat homeowners invest their savings from monthly housing costs for additional education and training which will increase their earning potential.
- The Habitat homes catalyze improvement by prompting neighboring homeowners to begin to clean up and beautify their existing properties and buildings, creating more of a community environment in which families will take pride.
- The Texas Association of Homebuilders reported that children of homeowners were more likely to be in school at the age of 17 than children of renters. Similarly, children of homeowners were more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to become pregnant during their teenage years.

Does Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio build homes in other countries?

Yes! Habitat for Humanity International builds homes approximately 90 countries around the world. Through the tithing program, local partner affiliates help support Habitat for Humanity International in their worldwide efforts. Habitat has historically tithed 10% of our unrestricted donations to Habitat's work in other countries. Currently our tithing is designated to Columbia and Honduras.

How does Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio support the homeowners?

Our Family Services Program employs staff who are bilingual in English and Spanish, and who guide interested families through an extensive application and selection process. Applicants who do not qualify are not just turned away; Habitat actively works to assist them in resolving problems that prevent them from homeownership, and/or provides them referral services to other organizations better suited to their individual needs.

Once selected, Habitat families participate in the Family Partner program. This program is designed to further orient the selected families to the details of the building process and educate them about the responsibilities associated with successful home ownership. We emphasize budgeting, family social services, home maintenance training, conflict resolution and life skills.

The Family Services Program is important because it works with our Habitat families throughout their life in a Habitat home. Should any challenges occur in the payment of the homeowner's mortgage, the Family Services Department averts crises by working closely with the family.

How do people apply for Habitat for Humanity homes?

People interested in applying for a Habitat home should call the Habitat office at **(210) 223-5203**.

When does Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio build?

Habitat builds year-round. We do the majority of our building Thursday through Saturday. Many individuals and groups also volunteer on weekdays.

What is the first step to becoming a Habitat volunteer?

Attend one of our volunteer orientations. They are usually the first Tuesday of every month at 6:00 PM and the last Thursday of the month at 12:00 pm at the Habitat Office, located at 311 Probandt, just south of downtown. Please call the office at **(210) 223-5203** to verify the date and time of the meeting you plan to attend.

What are the office hours for Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio?

Habitat maintains an administrative office at 311 Probandt, San Antonio, TX 78204. This office is open to the public Monday through Friday (8:30 am – 4:30 pm). The phone number is (210) 223-5203. The Home Centers are open Monday – Friday (8 am – 6 pm) and Saturday (9 am– 5 pm). The Home Centers are located at 311 Probandt, 5482 Walzem and 8125 Meadow Leaf Dr.