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INTRODUCTION

This manual was compiled to assist new associates* with all the many procedures and practices that make up their duties. It is also a reference for current associates to help bring consistency and efficiency. As new technology and systems are added to the running of the thrift store, this document can be modified to reflect them and keep all volunteers up-to-date. Also available are/will be short videos that cover many of the machines used regularly by volunteers, such as the cash register, the credit card machine, the price guns, and the computer.

PRICING

Pricing is crucial to the running of the store. Keeping the shelves and racks filled and clearly labeled keeps the customers coming back.

General Pricing

Most of the items sold are tagged with a colored plastic tag and/or a colored price tag before being put out for sale. The color changes weekly and helps track how long an item has been for sale. After 5 weeks, the items of a certain color sell for half price on Monday through Friday and for 50 cents on Saturday.

The exceptions to the “color of the week” sale are jewelry, furniture, under the counter items, wall hangings, large appliances, lamps, linens, and any items marked with “not subject to ½ price” stickers. Below are details for each area.

Determining price

When pricing items such as small appliances, decorative pieces, household goods, sporting goods, toys, etc. there are several ways to approach it.

- First, check what is already on display. There may be a similar item already on the shelf, and the price can be used as a guideline to set a price.
- If there isn't anything like it already out on the shelves, try looking the item up online. Go to Ebay.com and type in the name of the item in the search box. Then go to advanced search and check the box for sales completed. This will bring up items with a green price displayed. This is the actual price paid. It is important to find the price an item sold for plus shipping fees.

Then, depending on the quality of the item in the store, set price at ½-1/3 the eBay price plus shipping.

- If you are still unsure and/or can't find a price on eBay, you can always ask the store manager to price it for you.

The store manager is responsible for pricing furniture, large appliances, and special electronics. If there is an unpriced furniture item or large appliance that a customer is interested in, please find or contact the store manager about the pricing of that item. If the store manager is not available, take the customer's information so that they can be reached when a price for the item is determined.

It is store policy that once an associate has researched and priced an item, the price should not be marked down by another associate. This is consistent with the store policy of not negotiating prices. If there is an item that seems to be priced unusually high or low, please notify the store manager who will determine if a change is necessary. On the whole, even though there could be disagreement on the pricing of an item, the ½ price color sale catches any items that haven't sold at the original pricing and makes sure that items do not remain in the store for too long of a period of time.

Jewelry

All watches, sterling silver, and jewelry are priced by a pre-designated supervisor approved by the store manager of the affiliated store. Any jewelry brought in as a donation at the Killlearn store needs to be put in the red bucket on the central work table for this supervisor to research a price. Jewelry items donated at the Tharpe Street store should be given to the Tharpe store manager who will pass them on to the jewelry supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for pricing and displaying all jewelry and should be consulted before any pricing changes.

Furniture/Large Appliances

Furniture and large appliances are priced by the store manager. Furniture should have white price tags placed in several places on the piece. If an item does not have a price and a customer is interested, contact the store manager. If he is unavailable, take contact information from the customer so that they can be informed when a price is established.

Linens

Most linens are sold at set prices posted on a large sign in the linen room as well as on a laminated sheet at the register. If a linen seems exceptionally nice, it can be priced with a white tag at a higher price. All of this has been largely done by Laura Waltke, but she would appreciate some help.

Linens never go half price unless approved by the store manager. Linens with stains or small tears can be recycled or marked down and, if kept, should be placed on the Markdown shelves in the rear of linen room. Remember that there are large amounts of donated linens so be careful to place only those of good quality on the shelves.

Clothing

All clothing should be given a plastic tag for the color of the week. There are set prices for different types of clothes. Prices are posted on signs around the store as well as in a handy reference holder at the register.

There are exceptions to these prices based on the quality of the item. New clothing with original tags or high-end brand names are priced as boutique clothes. These items are given a color tag with a specific price and placed on the boutique racks.

Boutique clothing

These are name brands such as Chico's, Talbots, *Polo, Couture, Narcissus, Columbia, BCBG, Calvin Klein Designer, Michael Kors, certain UnderArmor and Nike apparel, higher end FSU apparel, designer or wedding dresses, higher end Abercrombie, Aeropostale, Eddie Bower and Gap*. Items with these types of labels and in good condition are priced as boutique clothing. Boutique clothing also includes any clothing with original sales tags. A price should be attached to the clothing on a cardboard tag, and hung in the boutique section of the store.

Shoes/Hats

Most shoes and hats are \$2. These do not need a price tag put on them. However, if the shoes are in excellent condition or a brand name, they should be marked up with a price tag at \$3+, depending on the condition and brand. New sneakers or boots should be priced much higher. Also, if a hat is especially nice or vintage, it should be priced with a colored price tag for \$3+.

Belts/ties/scarves

Belts and ties are not tagged with plastic tags. Scarves are marked with *color tags* and sell for \$1, unless they are new or of exceptional quality. If they are determined to be of higher quality, they should be tagged higher with a colored price tag on a piece of cardboard that is held on by a colored plastic tag.

Purses

Purses should be marked with colored tags. Purses sell for \$2 unless marked otherwise. If a bag is exceptionally nice, vintage, or boutique, it should be priced higher with a colored price tag on a piece of cardboard that is held on with the colored plastic tag. All name brand purses should be priced higher.

Books/CDs/DVDs

Most books are set prices and do not need price stickers. Hardbacks \$1, paper backs \$0.50, children's' books \$0.50 for paperbacks and \$1 for Hardbacks also. If a book is of an excellent quality, it can be priced more with a price sticker. Large cookbooks should be tagged at \$2 and coffee table books at \$3 or higher.

CDs and DVDs are set prices and do not need price tags. CDs are \$0.50 and DVD's are \$1.

Games/Puzzles

Games should be priced with colored price stickers.

Puzzles should not be put out unless they have been checked. For a puzzle to be marked as checked, it has been assembled and all the pieces are present and in good shape. If they have not been checked, place them in a box or bag marked for the supervisor designated by the store manager. They will be checked and labelled by designated (and dedicated) puzzle checkers. Once a puzzle has been checked to ensure it is complete, write on a tag "Checked and Complete" and mark with colored price tag.

Silver

We have designated associates approved by the store manager who coordinate pricing silver pieces. All silver pieces should be put in a tub marked for the designated associate/s that is kept in the donation center.

Under the Counter Items

These are items that are fragile, expensive, or vintage. They should always be tagged with a white sticker and are not subject to ½ price sales. These are periodically reviewed and should only be moved out from under the counter by the designated associate/s.

Small Appliances

Small appliance prices can be determined from prices of similar items already on the shelves or from eBay searches. The men who are part of the program usually check and test appliances before they come into the store. Occasionally, appliances that are very nice are pulled straight from donations and may not have been tested. Whenever necessary, plug appliances in and check to see that they work. If you are confident that it will work, label the item with a sticker from the drawer that says, “Tested and works” and a price sticker. If the item is of very high quality an additional sticker indicating that the item is not subject to ½ off can be added but this should be used sparingly.

Refunds/Store Credit/Vouchers

Customers are buying items from the store in “as is” condition. There are no returns or refunds for any customers or volunteers except in the few cases listed below.

Refunds are only done with the manager’s approval and only apply to large appliances such as dishwashers, dryers and washer machines that cannot be tested in the store and are returned in under one week from the date of purchase.

Store credit is given out at the manager’s discretion. Typically, this is only in the case of an appliance that was labelled “tested and works” and it didn’t.

Vouchers are given out at the manager’s discretion. They will often have a description on them saying that they can only be used for clothing and necessary basic household items. These vouchers are given to those in need and are for items that are necessities. There are a smaller number of vouchers that do not have these restrictions written on them and were given out as promotions or gifts. Regardless of the type, purchases made with these vouchers are **not** rung up on the cash register. Instead, use a calculator to total the amount and record it

along with other information in the voucher notebook located on the shelves under the register. No tax is added in calculating the value of purchases using vouchers. Follow the directions to fill in the amount, date, and individual for each use of a voucher. Collect the voucher and place it in the pocket of the voucher notebook. The customer does not receive change or credit for any unspent amount of the value of the voucher.

Tax Free Sales/Deliveries

Non-profit organizations are rung up as tax free sales. They are rung up as item number 17 (which is achieved by pushing the dept shift button once and then department number 1/17). They must have a copy of their tax-free status in the back pocket of the notebook on the shelves under the register. Each time they purchase an item or items, volunteers write down the date, non-profit number of the organization, and the total in the tax-free section of the notebook.

All deliveries are rung up as tax free sales. Please also write down the word “delivery” and the date and amount in the same section for any deliveries, but these do not require any special forms as all deliveries are tax free in the state of Florida.

Price negotiation

Volunteers do not negotiate on priced items. Although an associate may not agree with a price marked on an item, they should not change a price when a customer requests it. If the customer won't buy it for the marked price, take down the name and number of the customer and email the information to the store manager and place the item back for sale in the store. Most of the prices are researched and set at a very reasonable rate. Occasionally mistakes occur, but if every volunteer starts negotiating prices with customers, chaos will ensue!! It is better to handle it discretely within store management if there is a consistent problem.

Schedules/Substitutes

The schedule is kept on a calendar located on the work table behind the register. Committing to work a specific shift is vital to the efficient running of the thrift store. It is the responsibility of each volunteer to make sure their shift is covered in the event they are not able to work their scheduled shift.

To find a substitute for your shift, begin with checking with those on the schedule. Switching shifts is often done with other volunteers. You can either try calling individuals on the list or sending an email to the entire group. In the event there is no one available to cover, or you do not have the phone list or email list, contact the store manager of the affiliated store.

RECEIVING DONATIONS

At Killlearn, donations are taken in the donation room next to the main store. Donations should be placed in front of the green line marked on the floor. One of the house residents is available from 9-4 to help unload donations from vehicles and keep the donation area somewhat organized.

Receipts for donations should be filled out by associates with the date of donation and a signature from the associate. The rest of the form should be filled out by the donor.

Large Item Pick-ups:

The Living Harvest accepts only flat screen TVs, not any other type of tv. Also, we charge \$25 per mattress and box spring pick up as we cannot sell these items and we must pay for their disposal.

A truck is available for picking up large donations of furniture from a donor's residence. Write down the name, phone number, address, and description of the item/items to be picked up from the donor and send it via email to the scheduler (this email can be accessed on the computer behind the register by clicking the icon labelled "New Mail"). Tell the donor that the scheduler will call them shortly to arrange a convenient pick up time.

PULLING ITEMS FOR SALE

All donations are sorted at the Tharpe Street store. New items for sale are sent over daily on the store truck. Items that are ready for sale are kept in the donation room **behind** the green donation line. These items are stored on the shelves along the left wall or are hanging from the clothes racks along the right wall. Items in front of the green line have not been sorted and should be left to be taken to the Tharpe Street Store. Please do not sort through these items as this makes the small space we have for donations more disorganized and does not allow us to account for the needs of both stores.

To decide what items should be brought into the store for sale, check for empty sections throughout the store such as appliances, boutique clothing, toys, etc. Then check the shelves and racks in the donation center for those types of items. A rolling clothes rack can be used to bring in clothes. A grocery cart is available for bringing in everything else.

Many times, items need a little cleaning to spruce them up. A sparkling glass sells better than a dusty one. Under the register there are shelves with glass cleaner, general cleaner, rags, and paper towels. For larger items, such as children's plastic toys, there are large sinks in the donation center where things can be rinsed and dried. Silver items are often polished by a supervisor designated by the affiliated store's manager. Do whatever is reasonable to bring out the best in all items that are put out for sale. If the donation center does not have the items needed, send a request via email to the managers using the "New Mail" icon on the computer behind the register to let them know what to send over on the next delivery from the Tharpe St. store.

Holiday items that come out of season and **are of high quality** are stored in boxes in the back room of the furniture store. Place items in the correct marked box. These will be kept to sell when that season comes around again.

DISPLAYING ITEMS

A supervisor designated by the affiliated store manager coordinates displays in the main store/s. This individual arranges seasonal and theme displays as well as helps to rethink the best way to arrange the floor displays. Throughout the week, as items are sold and new ones are set out, look for ways to display in keeping with whatever theme or arrangement is current.

Whenever jewelry under the counter is sold from a stand, the stand should remain under the counter. The jewelry supervisor will fill it next time he/she is in the store. Jewelry display stands are not for sale.

When putting out linens, place items in the appropriate labeled locations and bins in the linen room. Any questions or structural changes should be referred to the supervisor approved by the store manager. Straightening out the linen room would be greatly appreciated as this room quickly becomes disorderly and the supervisor will not be able to constantly monitor its status.

Toys are displayed in the toy room. This is another room that needs frequent checking for order and tidiness.

Large toys, bicycles, strollers, and other suitable items are often displayed outside the front of the store.

DELAYED PICK-UP/DELIVERY

Often a customer will purchase a large piece of furniture but be unable to take it home at the time of purchase. In that case, customers have 5 days to arrange their own pick-up.

Whenever a customer is leaving a purchased item at the store to pick up later, the volunteer needs to fill out a sold receipt and attach it to the items bought. The receipt book is next to the register and has a carbon copy for each slip.

Fill out the top copy with:

- the date of sale
- the name of the item
- the price of the item
- the customer's name and phone number
- when they expect to pick it up
- that it was paid in full
- the signature of the volunteer

On the sales receipt that is given to the customer, record the number from the receipt form. Tear off the top copy and tape it to the purchased item in the store which will leave a carbon copy behind the register in case the original is removed.

There is a truck available for delivering large purchases of furniture. There is a \$50 charge for the service. If a delivery is requested, charge the customer the \$50 fee and record all the information in the receipt book the same as with a delayed pick-up. Be sure to write in that the delivery fee was paid and make sure to use department 17 (push dept shift key once and then 1/17 key) as this is a tax-free sale. Also, please record the word "delivery" and the date in the tax-free section of the notebook on the shelf underneath the register so that we do not end up paying sales tax when we have not collected it.

Then send an email (using the icon for "new mail" on the computer behind the register) to the scheduler with the customer's name and phone number and

request for a delivery. Tell the customer that the scheduler will contact them soon to set up a convenient delivery time.

GENERAL CLEANING

A list of weekly chores is present at each location. Any of these chores can be done and checked off during a shift. Supplies for dusting and cleaning are located under the register, in the bathroom, and in the back-right room of the furniture store. Customers often remark on how nice the store looks. Keeping the store tidy and clean makes for a welcoming and comfortable setting for our customers.

CUSTOMER RELATIONS

There are so many ways to make shopping a pleasure for our customers. Greet them as they walk in, thank them for donations, make sure they know the furniture and linens are next door and the books, CDs, and games are in the back room, mention the color of the week for half price items, point out there is changing room in the back, ask if they would like to start a pile of items on the counter as they continue to browse, point out the free items for kids in the basket near the register, ask if they would like to see anything under the counter, offer to open the door or help them load their car (when possible). When answering the phone say The Living Harvest and give your name as well.

STAFF RELATIONS

The Living Harvest is staffed by paid management, men enrolled in The Living Harvest residence program, regular weekly volunteers, and community service volunteers. Oversight of all these workers is the responsibility of the managers. Concerns that individuals are not following the established procedures for running the store should be brought to the attention of the managers.

OPENING THE STORE AT KILLEARN

Arrive 10-15 minutes before 9:00 to sign in, turn on overhead lights, extra lamps in book room, and overhead lights and fans in furniture/linen room. Reset air-conditioning pads to 74 degrees. Check the bathroom for toilet paper and empty any trash cans. Unlock all the entry doors and set out on sidewalk the easel with the week's discount color for the week and any other items for sale such as

strollers or large floor toys and turn on the Christian music in the store (should be simply double clicking the icon for music on the computer behind the register).

The money in the register should be counted in the morning by the associates who open the store. It should be done with two individuals to provide accountability and is to make sure that the register is starting its day with the designated amount (currently \$100). The bills should be counted by hand and the coins can be put in the change sorter which will sort the coins and calculate the total value. The amount in the register should be written on a piece of paper and signed by both associates who are opening the store.

Monday Opening

Monday's have an additional responsibility on opening the store. Before the store opens, the residents or associates need to go through the store and pull items that were discounted the week before. This leaves lots of gaps that need to be restocked. Take time to peruse the shelves and clothes racks and begin pulling and pricing to fill the gaps. Make sure the price guns and tag guns are loaded with the tagging color for the week and write the correct discount color on the easel outside. Also, it is also helpful to put a sticky note next to the register with the current color.

CLOSING THE STORE AT KILLEARN

At the end of the day, all three rooms must be closed and the cash must be counted.

Donation center

Make sure the back door is shut and locked. Turn out the top two switches in the breaker box to turn off lights. Turn off lights and coffee pot in break room and light in refrigerator. Set air-condition to 80. Close and lock front door.

Furniture/Linens

Make sure back door is closed and locked. Bring in any furniture items set out on side walk. Turn off lights in back room and linen room. Set air-conditioning to 80. Turn off fans at switch on left wall near the front door. Close and lock front door.

Main room

Bring inside any items for sale outside. Tidy up work table. Empty trash out back. Bring in easel. Turn off individual lights in book room. Make sure back door is closed and locked. Set air-conditioning to 80 (remember there are two thermostats by the back office and inside the toy room). Turn off all lights. Clock out on computer. Put donation bowl down out of sight behind counter. Close and lock both front doors.

Counting money

Starting soon, associates who close the store should count the money in the register and the bills in the donation jar (except for the two 1\$ bills that always remain in the bowl). The bills should be counted by hand and the coins should be calculated by the coin sorter to get the total amount in the register. The bills should then be placed in a sealed envelope with the total amount counted, the date, and both associate's signatures written on the envelope. Place the sorted coins back into their drawers in the register and the signed envelope should be placed in the designated drop safe (to be purchased soon).

FAQ

I don't have enough to purchase this item now. Would you please hold it for me?

We do not hold items for customers. They may purchase it and have 5 days to pick it up. Otherwise, all items remain on the floor for sale. There are many reasons for this. The items for sale are wants, not needs. If someone really wants something, they will return to purchase it. There are cases of people who are in special circumstances who would greatly benefit from store items. These people should be referred to the store manager who can determine if they should receive a voucher or store credit.

This item is broken/stained/missing a part. Would you take something off the price?

We do not negotiate prices, even for damaged items. There are people who frequent thrift stores and purposefully damage items to get a better price. If a customer brings up a damaged item, thank them for bringing it to your attention

and take it behind the counter to be dealt with later. Unless of course, they change their mind and still want it at the price marked.

I would like to do community service at your store. What do I need to do?

Take down their name and phone number and send a message using the designated email “new mail” on the computer behind the register to relay the information to the store manager/s.

Do you take tv’s?

We only take flat screen tv’s.

There is a piece of furniture with 2 price tags or no price tags. What is the price?

People sometimes take off price tags, especially in the furniture room where there is often no one on duty. One great resource is Craig’s list. We list much of the furniture on that site, and it can be pulled up on the computer near the register. If that is not helpful, take the person’s name and phone number and offer to have us call them with the price when we are able to verify it.

I am having a garage sale. Can you pick it up?

The Living Harvest does not routinely pick up after garage sales. Pick-ups are scheduled for large pieces of furniture or appliances. If a garage sale says that they do have large items, email the scheduler and make sure to note this was from a garage sale. Note that this does **not** include estate sales which we are happy to get offers from to pick up left over items. Estate sales have given us some very high-quality items in the past and are some of our favorite pick-ups.

*For the purposes of this document, “associate” includes volunteers and interns. Those who are residents of the program or are fulfilling mandatory community service requirements will follow a more comprehensive and restrictive set of guidelines than those defined in this document.