



# **Member Handbook**

**“Creating Community Together”**

# **Welcome!**

Welcome to Bridging the Bayous Timebank! We look forward to you becoming an active member in our community of neighbors helping neighbors. In this guide, you will find information on how to get started and tips on how to have the most rewarding experience.

Prior to providing or receiving timebanking services, please read this handbook. Every effort has been made to keep Bridging the Bayous Timebank a simple, user-friendly program; however, understanding the expectations and guidelines of the program will maximize your experience!

## **Contact Information**

Bridging The Bayous Timebank is administered by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Houma Thibodaux (CCHT). Our hours of operation are 8:30am – 4:30pm. We can be reached by contacting:

Jennifer Gaudet

Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator

1220 Aycock Street, Houma LA 70360

Phone: 985-876-0490

Fax: 985-876-7751

Email: [jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)

Website: <http://www.htdiocese.org/bridging-the-bayous-timebank>

# How We Got Our Start...

By Jennifer Gaudet

Since 2012, I have been searching for ways to secure services for elderly & low-income families – services many of us may take for granted - such as lawn care, tree trimming, minor car or home repairs - but I could never find any community programs available to meet those needs. At the same time, many people were calling my office at Catholic Charities, looking for ways to volunteer without the need to commit to a structured schedule. People were willing to give their time and talents, but had no idea how to go about doing it. After reading an article in AARP Magazine about Timebanking, I realized that I had found the perfect program that could fill both needs!

I began to research the Timebank concept and quickly realized the amount of time & energy needed to launch this type of program would be extremely difficult without the help & support from our community. I knew I couldn't develop this program on my own and I wasn't sure who I could contact with the availability to help me get it off the ground. It wasn't until after the August 2016 flooding event in Baton Rouge that I found the people I knew I could count on.

I became aware of the extraordinary efforts of two special young women, Alexis Folse & Anna Authors, who helped to coordinate the volunteers in the Thibodaux area hotels after the flooding in Baton Rouge. Alexis & Anna successfully mobilized a substantial number of volunteers through the development of the Thibodaux Flood Victims Facebook page. Overnight, countless volunteers stepped forward with donations of food, clothing, personal care items, & money for the families impacted by the flooding.

Inspired by the generosity & selflessness of our community, I posted a question on the Thibodaux Flood Victims Facebook page: "Would anyone like to continue doing this type of wonderful work on a year-round basis?" 103 people responded with an overwhelming **YES!** And, several individuals joined me in establishing the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Board.

# From the Board Chair...

Jennifer Gaudet  
Board Chair/Timebank  
Coordinator

On behalf of Bridging the Bayous Timebank, I'd like to extend my sincere appreciation to the volunteers who have worked tirelessly towards the establishment of this new community program:

Benjamin Bolton	Monica Stock
Colleen Fontenot	Jessica Davies
Robin Sasser	

A special thank you is extended to Dominic Campbell, owner of Flawlessprinting 2, for allowing his graphic designer to develop the beautiful logo used for Bridging the Bayous Timebank, for believing in the Timebanking concept, and for being our first Timebank Member to earn Timebank Hours!

The Bridging the Bayous Timebank Board also extends a warm welcome to those of you who are interested in learning more about timebanking and joining Bridging the Bayous Timebank!

We are happy that you have been curious enough to further explore this program and thoughtful enough to consider what skills, talents, and services you can offer to members of your community.

We thank you for considering assisting with home/yard work, creating laughs, teaching classes, taking classes, and helping newcomers to our community feel welcome!

We encourage you to open your hearts to make friends out of those who were once strangers and become a part of a movement that connects people and strengthens communities.

Bridging the Bayous Timebank will become what we make of it and I look forward to sharing this exciting journey with you!

# Bridging The Bayous Timebank:

## “Creating Community Together”

Bridging The Bayous Timebank consists of a vibrant group of people working together, creating caring and supportive social networks by exchanging the services with people within the community. Through these exchanges of time and talent, members have the opportunity to make friends and get to know their neighbors, while simultaneously building a stronger community. All members are valued for their talents, skills, and time; the program relies on the commitment of its members for its success.

Timebanks build relationships and strengthen communities **ONE HOUR AT A TIME!** Here is how they work: For every hour you spend doing something for someone in your community, you earn one Timebank Hour. You then have a Timebank Hour to spend on someone doing something for you. It's that simple! Yet, it has profound effects on the entire community.



# Bridging The Bayous Timebank:

## Mission

### Statement:

*Through the use of volunteer hours as currency, Bridging the Bayous Timebank members share their time, skills, and talents to create connections, fulfill unmet needs, and strengthen communities.*

### Vision Statement:

*Each of us has unique gifts and abundant talents. By sharing our time, skills, and talents with one another, Bridging the Bayous Timebank provides hope and fosters relationship-building by connecting the skills and talents of its members to the unmet needs of the community.*

## Guiding Principles

We are committed to redefining the concept of community, where ordinary people can work together to meet one another's needs.

We are committed to changing the way society defines power and privilege, moving away from a system that separates the "haves" and the "have-nots" to a network of people who know and care for each other, assuring that we all feel supported, capable, appreciated, and valued.

The relationships established by timebanking go far beyond fulfilling needs. By both providing **AND** receiving, we learn to appreciate the value of every member's talents and abilities, as well as challenge ourselves to accept each other's differences.

As our community grows, Bridging the Bayous Timebank will help create an environment that encourages collaboration not just between members, but also with our neighbors, churches, service agencies, and community institutions.

Bridging the Bayous Timebank will impact change one person at a time; yet, we are aware that we are part of a global Timebank movement and together we are shaping a better world – a legacy for generations to come.

# Bridging The Bayous Timebank is based on...

## *The Five Core Values of Timebanking*

1. **Assets:** We are all assets. Every human being has something of value to contribute. Many people have talents they do not realize or skills they may take for granted that others would like to utilize. We empower people to grow their abilities and learn new skills.
2. **Redefining Work:** Some work is beyond price. Work must be redefined to value whatever it takes to raise healthy children, build strong families, revitalize neighborhoods, make democracy work, advance social justice and make the planet sustainable.
3. **Reciprocity:** Helping works better as a two-way street. The question, "How can I help you?" needs to change so we ask, "How can we help each other build the world we both will live in?" It is a gift to have the ability to help someone. There is no shame in asking for help and allowing someone else to help you; for when we work alongside each other, we become a stronger community.
4. **Social Networks:** We need each other. Networks are stronger than individuals; people helping each other reweave communities of support, strength, and trust. Community is built upon sinking roots, building trust, and creating networks; special relationships grown from this commitment to community.
5. **Respect:** Every human being matters. We must respect where people are in the moment, not where we hope they will be at some future point. Through reciprocity, we respect ourselves and each other. No one is above another and no one is a burden – we are all providers and receivers, teachers and students.

We invite all individuals (ages 18 or over) living within parishes of Lafourche (including Grand Isle), Terrebonne, and up to Morgan City to join and participate in Bridging the Bayous Timebank.

**Minor children under the age of 18 will be allowed to participate under their parent's accounts as long as the parent remains with their minor child while the minor child volunteers in a Bridging the Bayous service exchange.**

We also invite Businesses and Non-Profit organizations to join as a supporting member of Bridging the Bayous Timebank.

How can a Business or Non-Profit Organization participate in Bridging the Bayous Timebank?

1. Any business or non-profit organization that has something to offer the community free of charge (such as meeting rooms, boats for bayou clean-ups, tents for school functions, employees for volunteer work, etc.) can earn hours for every hour their equipment/employees volunteer their time. The hours earned can then be used in one of two ways:
  - a. The hours can be donated to a particular family the business/organization may know that is in need or donated to the Bridging the Bayous Share Bank (that assists elderly or severely disabled Timebank Members), or
  - b. The hours can be used to ask Bridging the Bayous Timebank Members to assist the business/organization with a need they may have (example: assistance with handing out flyers for a sale or help with fundraising activities.)

## **How To Join Bridging the Bayous Timebank:**

To become a member of Bridging the Bayous Timebank, all prospective members must complete the following steps:

1. Fill out Bridging the Bayous Timebank New Member Enrollment Form, which can be found online at: <https://hourworld.org/bank/Join.php?hw=1673>

Note: For anyone wishing to join that does not have an e-mail account and does not wish to set one up, the e-mail address/user name does not have to be a working e-mail address in order to join. It can be an address you create, such as [dannyd@mytimebank.email](mailto:dannyd@mytimebank.email) and would only be used for logging into your account; however, the e-mail created must end in .email (rather than .com) in order to work.

Should you later wish to receive emails from Bridging the Bayous Timebank, obtain an e-mail address and log in to Bridging the Bayous Timebank; on your Home Page, click on Account tab, click on Contact tab, and replace your old e-mail with your new e-mail address in the E-mail 1 box.

2. Complete Safe Environment Training (which includes a criminal background check and a sex offender registry check) at home over the



internet: <http://www.htdiocese.org/se-training> . There are several steps to complete this training:

- a. Print and fill out the Volunteer Ministry Application. Email/Mail/or Fax the completed Volunteer Ministry Application to the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator:

Bridging the Bayous Timebank  
1220 Aycock Street, Houma LA 70360  
Fax: 985-876-7751  
Email: [jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)

- b. Once the Volunteer Ministry Application has been received, it is time to take the Safe Environment Training by returning to the webpage: <http://www.htdiocese.org/se-training> Follow the directions for Step 2. The training will take approximately 1 ½ hours to complete. If you are unable to complete the training in one sitting, the site will allow you to stop, save, and log into it again to finish it. When finished, you will receive a certificate of completion once your background/sex offender registry checks have been completed. This certificate will be sent automatically to the Bridging the Bayous Timebank.
  - c. When all enrollment forms and background checks have been received, they will be reviewed by the Pastoral Center/Bridging the Bayous Coordinator. Individuals with criminal records will not necessarily be denied entry into the program; rather, program acceptance will be determined on a case by case basis. Community members who present risks because of past criminal behavior(s) will be limited in their participation or denied membership.
3. Complete online orientation: <http://www.htdiocese.org/bridging-the-bayous-timebank> . All prospective members **must view** the online program orientation in order to become familiar with how Bridging the Bayous Timebank works.
    - a. After clicking on the orientation link (<http://www.htdiocese.org/bridging-the-bayous-timebank>), the member handbook and program expectations will be reviewed and explained.
    - b. Once orientation is complete, please print and sign the Participant Agreement form and email it to: [jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org) or mail to:

Bridging the Bayous Timebank  
1220 Aycock Street  
Houma LA 70360

## **Acceptance Into The Program**

An applicant's online account will be activated and the applicant will be notified of their acceptance status after all paperwork has been returned, background checks run and orientation has been completed. Once a new member is accepted, he/she will receive a welcome packet via email: for those without computer access, their packet will be mailed. Welcome packets include:

1. Welcome announcement.
2. A link to their Bridging the Bayous Timebank account (<https://hourworld.org/bank/?hw=1673>) which will have access to all offers and requests, as well as:
  - a. Access to their Bridging the Bayous identification badge, which should be worn/carried with you at all times when volunteering or attending Bridging the Bayous functions.
3. A link to a tutorial video (<http://www.htdiocese.org/bridging-the-bayous-timebank>) that will provide instructions on how to access and navigate the Bridging the Bayous web-based software, which allows each member to post offers/requests and keep track of their Timebank hours.
4. Bridging the Bayous Timebank Member Handbook.

New members will automatically receive ten Timebank Hours for joining, filling out the enrollment paperwork needed to begin the Safe Environment training, taking the Safe Environment Training, and viewing the online Bridging the Bayous Orientation. The Bridging the Bayous Coordinator will enter these Timebank Hours into the software for each new member who is approved.

## **Getting Started With The Software**

Bridging the Bayous Timebank's web-based software system (hOurworld) is used for making service offers, posting requests, and recording Timebank Hours. Information within this system is available only to members of Bridging the Bayous Timebank. An online tutorial on the software is available at: <http://www.htdiocese.org/bridging-the-bayous-timebank>

Once your membership has been approved and your account is activated, each member using the website will have immediate access to offers and requests. You can access your online account at <https://hourworld.org/bank/?hw=1673> by clicking on Member Login located in the upper left corner of the screen. Enter the e-mail address you used for your online application and your password.

- a. If you have forgotten your password, just click on Forgotten Your Password? And a new password will be emailed to you.

- b. Your password can also be reset by clicking on the Account tab on your Homepage, clicking on the My Password tab, typing in your new password, and clicking on the Save Password button.

Once you are logged in, a search box will allow you to quickly look for posts, requests, and other members.

## **Explanation of Software Tabs Found Under the Search Box:**

### **1. Home:**

- a. This is where you can post your requests and view the offers/requests from other members.
- b. New members will also be welcomed and viewed on this page.

### **2. Timebank Hours:**

- a. This is where the **RECIEVER** of the services records the Timebank Hours provided to them, the date the service was performed and the type of service provided. Any comments on the work can also be made here. This transaction will withdraw from the **RECEIVERS** account and deposit into the **Providers** account for the time spent volunteering.
  - ✓ Exceptions to this reporting are as follows:
    - Adults and/or their children volunteering at a large organization will record the Timebank Hours, the date and type of service they performed. (The organization must also be a member of Bridging the Bayous Timebank in order for an exchange of time to take place.)

### **3. Account:**

- a. **First 4 Tabs:** Allow you to view all of the requests or offers you have made or allow you to make a request or offer.
- b. **Profile Tab:**
  - ✓ All yellow blanks need to be filled in.
  - ✓ Click on the green section next to Active Member? To make sure the green area reads YES.
  - ✓ If you wish to receive weekly updates on offers/requests, make sure to click on the green area next to Send Weekly Updates? Until it reads YES
    - To stop the weekly updates, click on the green area into it reads NO.
  - ✓ Intertrading is defaulted and cannot be changed.
  - ✓ Don't forget to hit the SAVE at the bottom of the page to save all changes made!

- ✓ Your Bridging the Bayous ID card can be printed by clicking on the Print Your Member ID Card button.
- ✓ Your account password can be changed in this section.

c. **Contact Tab:**

- ✓ Add your phone number, click SAVE. **It is recommended** to keep your phone number private by making sure YES is written in the green section.
  - If you wish to make your phone number available for viewing at any time, click to change the wording to NO.
- ✓ Add your email, click SAVE. **It is recommended** to keep your email private by making sure YES is written in the green section.
  - If you wish to make your email available for viewing at any time, click to change the wording to NO.
- ✓ Underneath the Add New Contact Information, click on address, type your address in the box, click SAVE. **It is recommended** to keep your address private by making sure YES is written in the green section.
  - If you wish to make your address available for viewing at any time, click to change the wording to NO.
- ✓ Any additional contact information you may want to add can be entered in the same way as outlined above.

d. **My Password Tab:**

- ✓ A new password can be generated on this tab; don't forget to click SAVE!

e. **My Statement Tab:**

- ✓ Your statement shows the number of Timebank Hours you have provided to other members, the number of Timebank Hours you have earned, and the current balance of Timebank Hours you have to request a service from someone else; your statements can be printed.

f. **My Attributes Tab:**

- ✓ Please fill in the information requested on this tab as it can help us when applying for grant funding to keep Bridging the Bayous Timebank FREE to its members!

4. **Offers:**

- a. Allows you to search for an offering being made in a certain category.
- b. Allows you to edit the offer you made.

c. Posting an offer:

- ✓ Go to your Homepage, hover over the Offers tab, click Add Offers and look through the categories to see the different services that are listed. Click to place a checkmark on the box next to the service you would like to provide. Click Add To My Offers button found at the top or bottom of the page, set the amount of time you would like the offer to be shown before expiring, set the radius of miles within which you are willing to provide the service, and type in information about the skills you have to provide this service well and click publish.
  - NOTE: The comment section must be filled out or the offer will not save and will be deleted overnight. Examples of an offer:
    - i. **Offer:** I am available to sew on weekdays only. No job is too hard for me! Please respond to this offer or call me at (place your phone number) to let me know what you need to have done.
- ✓ If you do not wish to make your offer shown to the rest of the membership, but want to add it to your profile to publish later, click on publish first and then click on the Save Without Broadcast. The offer will stay on your homepage until you are ready to share with the membership. When ready, go to Edit My Offers and click the publish button.

5. Requests:

- a. Allows you to search for requests being made in a certain category and edit the requests you have made.
  - ✓ To post a request, click on the Home Tab, hover over the Requests tab, click Add Requests and look through the categories to see the different services that are listed. Click to place a checkmark on the box next to the service you would need to request. Click Add To My Requests button found at the top or bottom of the page, set the amount of time you would like the request to be shown before expiring, set the radius of miles within which you are willing to provide Timebank Hours for driving time to the Timebank Member that will respond to you, and type in detailed information about the work you need to have done and click publish.
    - NOTE: The comment section must be filled out or the offer will not save and will be deleted overnight. Examples of a request written in the comments section:

- i. **Request: Diet and Nutrition:** I need to reduce my cholesterol; will you work with me to suggest recipes and help me plan/write down menus 2 or 3 times over the next month?
- ii. **Request: Garden & Yardwork:** I need someone to help me prepare my flowerbed for spring planting by tilling the ground and mixing manure into the dirt.

✓ If you do not wish to make your request shown to the rest of the membership, but want to add it to your profile to publish later, click on publish first and then click on the Save Without Broadcast. The request will stay on your homepage until you are ready to share with the membership. When ready, go to Home page, hover over Requests tab, click on edit My Requests and click the publish button.

#### 6. **Members:**

- a. Allows you to view all of the members of Bridging the Bayous Timebank.
- b. Allows you to sort through the membership to see who lives within a certain mile radius of your home.
- c. Allows you to sort through the membership to view the businesses/organizations that are participating.

#### 7. **Group:**

- a. Allows members to email or post announcements to other members of a certain group.
- b. Allows you to create a new group, project, or event; however, **each new group, project, or event must first receive approval from the Timebank Coordinator.**
- c. Allows you to join a group, project, or event.
- d. Allows you to view the members that belong to that group by clicking on the number next to the group name.

***Reminder: At any time, questions can be emailed to the Timebank Coordinator by clicking on the button located at the bottom of each page.***

#### **Please note the tabs on the left side of the SEARCH box:**

1. **Help:** Allows you to get answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs).
2. **Notices:** Allows you to read any member only news that has been posted.

3. **Sponsors:** Lets you know about local businesses that support us and may include offers from which you may benefit.
4. **Logout:** Allows you to log out of your Bridging the Bayous Timebank account.

Individual or group training on how to use the software can be set up by contacting Jennifer Gaudet, Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator, at 985-876-0490 or email [jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)

In addition, if you do not have a computer or are experiencing problems using the online system, you can sign up for an E-Buddy to assist you. E-Buddies are members of Bridging the Bayous Timebank who earn Timebank Hours helping other members with their accounts. To receive assistance through an E-Buddy, please contact Jennifer Gaudet, Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator at 985-876-0490 or email [jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)

## **Timebank Hour Accounting**

All Bridging the Bayous Timebank Members provide and receive services. An important principle is that all services are equal no matter what service is being provided.

The Timebank Hours earned are backed only by a moral obligation and are not legally binding. We do not guarantee a member will be able to spend the Timebank Hours they have earned obtaining the specific services they want. However, there are many services available and the Timebank is constantly growing and changing as new members join. The more members actively participating in the Timebank, the more likely its members will receive the services they are seeking. In addition, if a member cannot find the service they need, we encourage him/her to contact the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator (876-0490 or email [jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)) to ask if that service could be added to the list of services the Timebank provides. If the service request is accepted, it will be added to the hOurworld software in the list of categories/services Bridging the Bayous Timebank members can participate in. The member is then encouraged to seek out someone who has the talent/skills that are being sought for that particular service and ask him/her to become a member of Bridging the Bayous Timebank.

### **One Hour of Timebank Service = One Timebank Hour**

Example: A member cutting your grass for 1 Timebank Hour is equal to another member working 1 Timebank Hour to operate Microsoft Word.

1. **Earning:** 1 Timebank Hour is deposited into your account for each hour of service you volunteer. In our rural setting, travel time to and from the service location is included in the

transaction. This extra time should be addressed when an exchange is arranged.

2. **Spending:** Earned Timebank Hours are withdrawn from your account for each hour of service received from other members.
3. **Sharing With Others:** Excess earned Timebank Hours may be donated to a Share Bank account to assist elderly/disabled members who are unable to earn their own Timebank Hours. A member may also donate Timebank Hours to another member at any time.
4. **Totaling Timebank Hours:** Timebank Hours are rounded up to a quarter hour for fractions of an hour. Timebank Hours exchanged between members within the course of a day should be totaled, and then rounded and agreed upon.

**For Example:**

52 Minutes of Service = 1 Timebank Hour

1 Hour & 20 Minutes = 1 ½ Timebank Hours

## **Responding To Requests & Offers**

**Since any agreement shall be made by and between the parties involved in the transaction, Bridging the Bayous Timebank cannot guarantee the representations or performance of any participant. Bridging the Bayous Timebank and Catholic Charities Diocese of Houma Thibodaux, whether individually or in a group, will not be held responsible and will not assume any liability for claims, damages, or any other consequences which may arise from this arrangement. Nor are any Timebank Hours guaranteed beyond the members' good faith.**

1. **Respond Quickly:** We encourage members to respond to requests and offers as soon as possible. Please be patient in the event that a member has to reschedule and keep in mind that there may be times when a member's family, work, or personal responsibilities may need to take precedence over their Timebanking commitments.
2. **Be Pleasant & to the Point:** When responding to a request for a service, be prepared to introduce yourself as a member of Bridging the Bayous Timebank. Always ask the person you are calling if they are available to talk. Be clear about what service is needed and how you can help meet that need. If leaving a message or using email, provide an informative (but brief) response, including your name and contact information.



### For Example:

Hello, this is Clyde Guidry; I am responding to your request on Bridging the Bayous Timebank for someone who can assist you in installing your window air conditioner. I am available on Saturday at 10AM to help you; is this a good time for you?

3. **Always Call Back:** It is important to respond to members willing to assist you with your request within 48 hours, even if you are only able to leave a message.
4. **Give Plenty of Notice:** Allow for a sufficient amount of time to arrange an exchange; we recommend at least 2-3 days for small jobs and at least 1 week for larger jobs. Please make every effort to prevent last minute requests, as these situations can create a stressful exchange for members.
5. **Be Patient:** If you are responding to an **offer** and do not receive a response from the member who offered the service within 48 hours, assume that person is busy or is away from home; try posting a request for the same service instead. If you are responding to a **request** and do not hear back from the person who posted the request within 48 hours, assume that person is busy, away from home, or has already received the needed service and has forgotten to delete the request on the website.
6. **Think about materials that may be needed ahead of time:**

In general, the person receiving a service is responsible for supplying the needed materials, equipment, and supplies. However, there are times when it makes sense for the person providing the service to furnish his/her own equipment. Some examples include:

  - ✓ Paint, drop clothes, brushes and tools for a painting project;
  - ✓ Tools for carpentry or yard work;
  - ✓ A washer/dryer and detergent for laundry needs;
  - ✓ An oven, ingredients, and utensils for cooking.

As long as the recipient purchases the materials and the providing member does not mind using his/her own equipment for the exchange, it is acceptable for another member's equipment to be used. If equipment needs to be rented to perform the request, it is the responsibility of the member who posted the request to make the arrangements for the rental. In this way, no money is exchanged between the recipient and the provider. It is also expected that if a member offers to provide a service requiring special materials or equipment, the member knows how to use them.

7. **Be Sure Everything Is Clear:** Before an exchange occurs, be sure that you both understand the details and conditions of the exchange **BEFORE** the exchange takes place:
- ✓ You may ask other members for references, professional licenses, or other verification of their ability to do the job before exchanging services.
  - ✓ Discuss the service in detail before it is performed. Clearly explain your expectations or requirements, thereby allowing the member to determine if he/she can meet your expectations.
  - ✓ Members should not be accompanied by non-member adults or children unless previously discussed and arranged.
  - ✓ It is okay to change your mind about providing or receiving a service; but, always let the member know you have changed your mind.
  - ✓ Members performing a service need to try to follow all directions given to them by the member asking for the service.
  - ✓ Do your best to be open to instructions, guidance and feedback.
  - ✓ Discuss the amount of time you think the job might take (including the Timebank Member's time to get to the service location and back home) and agree upon the estimated time/number of Timebank Hours required for the transaction. Discuss what will happen if the job takes less or more time than anticipated.
  - ✓ Discuss the need for any equipment, materials, and supplies that must be obtained to perform the service. **The member asking for the service is responsible for the provision of all equipment, materials and supplies.**
  - ✓ In some instances, members providing a service may be asked to use their own equipment to perform the service in the event the requesting member does not have access to the equipment needed. Use of a member's equipment should be discussed and agreed upon prior to the service exchange.
  - ✓ When accepting a service assignment, be sure to write down the name, place, date and period of time the assignment is expected to last. Be sure to know the service recipient's name and the he/she has your contact information.
  - ✓ Clarify whether or not the member will be home during the exchange.
  - ✓ Request any additional information you feel is necessary (location of bathroom, emergency phone numbers, potential safety concerns, etc.)
8. **Exchanging:** The member providing the service performs the service exchange within the agreed upon time.
9. **Moving On:** If the responding member determines that he/she is unable to provide the service, he/she must inform the requesting member. In this instance, the requesting member would keep the

service request posted until a member is available to fulfill the service needed.

**10. Reporting Timebank Hours:** It is the responsibility of the **receiving member** to report the Timebank Hours of service provided by another member; however, in the event the receiving member does not have computer/internet access, the **provider** self-reports the Timebank Hours of service.

- ✓ Once the exchange is recorded, both the receiving member and the provider will receive an email outlining the details of the exchange.
- ✓ It is important for members to report time quickly for the successful operation of the Timebank. **Timebank Hours must be reported within 24 hours of when the exchange takes place.**
- ✓ Timebank Hours can be reported in one of two ways:
  - i. Log onto your Bridging the Bayous Timebank account, then click on the Hours Tab on your Homepage: post if you received the service or provided the service; enter the number of Timebank Hours for the service that was provided; post the date the service was provided; post how many members the service was provided to; type in the member's name that provided or received the service; select the category for the type of service provided; select the service that was provided; leave any comments you want to share; click Record Transaction button.
  - ii. For members without computer/internet access, Timebank Hours can also be reported through the mail by mailing to Bridging the Bayous Timebank, 1220 Aycock Street, Houma LA 70360. The transaction sheet should contain the five following items: Provider's Name, Receiver's Name, Description of Service Provided, Date of Service, Number of Timebank Hours provided. Once the Bridging the Bayous Coordinator receives the transaction sheet, the Timebank Hours will be posted electronically. Blank copies of the transaction sheet can be obtained by calling Jennifer Gaudet, Timebank Coordinator at 985-876-0490 or downloading from Bridging the Bayous Webpage (<http://www.htdiocese.org/bridging-the-bayous-timebank>)

**11. Deleting:** Requests/offers should be deleted once the service has been performed, if the service is no longer needed, or if the offer to provide a service is no longer available.

## Examples of Different Exchanges

### 1. One on One Exchanges:

Mary types in a request asking for assistance with having her yard mowed. Don responds to her request with questions. Mary connects with Don and together they discuss how large her yard is and how much time it usually takes to mow it. Mary also explains to Don the equipment she has that he would use to get the job done. Don agrees to do the work. It takes Don 1 hour and 10 minutes to complete the job. After the job is completed, Mary logs into her Bridging the Bayous Timebank account to record Don's time to the nearest quarter hour which would be 1.25 Timebank Hours. Mary clicks on the Hours tab on her Homepage, states she received a service, enters 1.25 hours for the number of Timebank Hours provided, adds the date of service to 1 member (Mary), sets the category as Garden/Yard and the service as Lawn Mowing, and writes a comment on how pleased she was with Don's work. Mary then clicks the Record Transaction button. Mary's account now shows 1.25 Timebank Hours have been withdrawn from her account and Don shows 1.25 Timebank Hours deposited into his account.

### 2. Group Exchanges:

Emily posts an offer for dog sitting services. A young mother (Carla) responds that her father (John) is taking her family on vacation with them for the weekend and the two of them each have a dog that will need to be boarded while they are away. Carla and John are members of Bridging the Bayous Timebank. Prior to the exchange, Emily spoke with both Carla and John about the care of their dogs (how often and how much should they be fed, how much dog food they will be supplying, how much exercise the dogs usually have, what to do if they became ill, etc.) and how long the families expected to be away. In this scenario, they all agreed the hours charged would be 35 hours per dog. They discussed and agreed upon the extra Timebank Hours that might be charged if they were later than they thought coming back home. Although Emily was the **PROVIDER** of the services, Carla and John asked if she would record the Timebank Hours after they came to pick up their dogs since they would be too tired to record the transaction themselves. Emily agreed. Carla and John arrived back in town within the agreed upon time to pick up their animals. Emily logged into her Bridging the Bayous Timebank account, clicked on the Hours tab on her Homepage, stated she provided a service, entered 35 hours for the number of Timebank Hours, selected 2 for the number of members that received her service, typed in Carla and John's names, selected Pets for the category and dog sitting for the

services, and pressed the Record Transaction button. The transaction is automatic, with Carla and John's accounts each showing a withdrawal of 35 Timebank Hours and Emily's account showing a deposit of 70 Timebank Hours. Emily then decided she didn't need all 70 Timebank Hours she earned. She decided to donate 35 Timebank Hours to the Share Bank for the disabled to use. She also donated 10 Timebank Hours to her mother (who is also a Bridging the Bayous Timebank member) so she could get someone to pressure wash her house and trim her azalea bushes. Emily used the same process as described above to record her donated hours as she did when she processed Carla and John's transactions.

## **Getting To Know Other Members**

Finding a person to assist a member with a particular need is similar to what you already do when seeking a repairman to fix your washing machine. Either you already know someone that does good repair work, or you ask your family and friends for recommendations and you check their professional licenses or other credentials; the same is true for Bridging the Bayous Timebank, with some exceptions. The software used to track the Timebank Hours each member earns, also keeps track of the skills offered by each member; therefore, becoming familiar with other members and what skills they have to offer is a good start! We will also help members connect and get to know one another through Bridging the Bayous Timebank events, such as orientation/classes and potluck luncheons/dinners.

## **Timebank Classes**

Bridging the Bayous Timebank will be partnering with area businesses and community organizations that provide free educational classes. Members who attend these classes will earn Timebank Hours for each hour of class time. The business or organization hosting the class will deposit the number of Timebank Hours in each participating member's account or will mail/email transaction sheets to the Timebank Coordinator who will record the transactions for them.

Classes may also be conducted by a Timebank member, who would earn Timebank Hours for providing the class; members who attend these classes would also earn Timebank Hours for each hour of class. Please keep in mind:

1. Before any Timebank member can conduct an educational/informational class, approval needs to be obtained from the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator.

2. Classes offered through Bridging the Bayous Timebank must coincide with the values and mission of the Timebank; this determination will be made by the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator.
3. Requests to conduct classes must be submitted in writing to Jennifer Gaudet, Timebank Coordinator ([jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)), at least one month in advance to ensure adequate time for review/approval, as well as promotion to Timebank members once the class is approved.

The written requests should include the following:

- a. Name, Telephone, and email address of the member making the request;
  - b. Date, time, and location of the class;
  - c. Length of the class;
  - d. Purpose of the class, with a detailed description and course outline;
  - e. Proposed frequency for the class to meet, if applicable;
  - f. Minimum or maximum number of participants the class could hold;
  - g. Written advertisement regarding the class, including registration information, needed materials, etc.
  - h. Feedback form or satisfaction survey that will be used after the class.
4. The member conducting the class will earn Timebank Hours for class preparation time, as well as for each hour the class is held. The member holding the class is responsible for submitting transaction sheets for all Timebank Member attendees; the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator will record the deposits electronically.

## **Member Groups**

Bridging the Bayous Timebank is always looking to involve more members as leaders and participants of Member Groups.

Interest-Based Groups are comprised of Bridging the Bayous Timebank members with a common passion, purpose, or special interest. For instance, members may choose to form a Pets Group, providing specific opportunities for pet lovers, such as hosting free flea baths or other events for pet owners.

All events offered through Member Groups must obtain prior approval from Jennifer Gaudet, Timebank Coordinator ([jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)) by submitting a written request. All written requests should include the following:

- a. Name, Telephone, and email address of the member making the request;
- b. Date, time, and location of the event;
- c. Length of the event;

- d. Purpose of the event, with a detailed description of what will take place during the event;
- e. Proposed frequency for the event (if held on multiple months), if applicable;
- f. Minimum or maximum number of participants the event could accommodate;
- g. Written advertisement regarding the event, including registration information, etc.
- h. Feedback form or satisfaction survey that will be used after the event (if applicable).

## **Time Earned In Leadership Roles**

Members have the opportunity to serve in a variety of leadership roles through Bridging the Bayous Timebank, including being: Board Member, Orientation Leader, Program Ambassador, Welcoming Committee Member, and/or Special Events Coordinator/Planner. Members serving in leadership roles earn Timebank Hours for each hour of service.

## **Guidelines & Expectations: Courtesy, Respect & Ethical Behavior**

Every human being matters and should expect to be treated with courtesy and respect. Below you will find some reminders that will make your time with Bridging the Bayous Timebank more enjoyable:

- Reply to requests within 48 hours;
- Do not misrepresent your abilities.
- Only provide services for which you maintain a current, valid license (in the event that service provision requires licensing). For example, do not provide medical, business, financial or legal advice unless you are certified to do so;
- Behave respectfully and courteously;
- **Fully discuss, understand, and accept the details/conditions of the exchange BEFORE it takes place:**
- Wear your Bridging the Bayous Timebank ID badge when performing exchanges and participating in Bridging the Bayous Timebank activities;
- Dress neatly & appropriately based on the nature of the exchange;
- Respect member' homes, property, valuables and expressed service requests;
- Dress neatly and appropriately based on the nature of the exchange;
- Arrive on time and perform service exchanges in the agreed upon amount of time established (as much as possible);

- Be accepting to the guidance and instructions from the Timebank Member requesting a service;
- Respect the sensitivities of others by not smoking/using alcohol or other drugs while providing/receiving services;
- Respect members' homes, property, valuables, & expressed service requests;
- Keep all private and/or personal information about other members confidential;
- Do not accept money, gifts, or tips from other members;
- Do not overcommit yourself;
- Report Timebank Hours within 24 hours of the service/class being rendered;
- Avoid relationships developed through Bridging the Bayous Timebank for the promotion of for-profit businesses or for the promotion of personal agendas;
- Remember that other members may not share your political and/or religious beliefs;
- Do not share member contact information with non-members;
- Avoid sharing non-Bridging the Bayous Timebank emails with members;
- Value the contributions of all community members;
- Always remember that Bridging the Bayous Timebank does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity, age, or disability.
- View member orientation video and handbook carefully to obtain a better understanding of how the program works;
- Remember that ***Providing and Receiving*** is how each member can help make Bridging the Bayous Timebank successful for years to come.

## **Value Everyone's Time**

Time may not be money, but it is extremely valuable and serves as "currency" for Bridging the Bayous Timebank members; therefore:

- Be prompt when performing a service and call if you are running late;
- If you are more than 15 minutes late for an exchange, either member may cancel/reschedule the exchange;
- If you need to cancel or reschedule an exchange, contact the member immediately.

## **Be Appreciative**

Always remember to thank members for their work! Expressing appreciation to one another is a part of what makes Bridging the Bayous Timebank effective in strengthening our community!



## Risks and Limitations

Bridging the Bayous Timebank transactions are based on a shared value system among its members. Elements of goodwill, good faith, cooperation, and timing have the potential to impact transactions.

Available services are based on the skills, talents, abilities and availability of the current Bridging The Bayous Timebank members. **Some skills require the Timebank Member to be certified/licensed in his/her field. All Bridging the Bayous Timebank Members that have specialized skills must present their certification/license to the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Member before agreeing to perform a specialized service. (Services requiring specialized certification/licensing are posted under the list of services in the Bridging the Bayous website.) The license or certification must also be good to use outside of their normal place of employment if the Bridging the Bayous Member is not Self-Employed.**

There is an element of risk involved in all transactions that occur. Members may be either amateurs or experienced professionals so don't feel shy asking a member for his/her credentials, experience, or references.

**No work/exchange performed through Bridging the Bayous Timebank is guaranteed and there is no receipt for services rendered. In addition, there may be instances in which the work performed does not meet member expectations. It is also possible that a service may take longer to complete than originally estimated. Should this occur, a note can be written in the comments section to alert other members.**

## Access for Individuals with Mobility Challenges

Whenever possible, Bridging the Bayous Timebank member meetings, events, and activities will be scheduled in accessible locations for those with mobility challenges. Accessibility should always be considered by members initiating events/activities.

## Disputes, Complaints and Misunderstandings

If you have a complaint about the behavior of another member or are dissatisfied with a service provided by another member, first discuss the issue constructively and respectfully directly with that member. If you are unable to talk through the dispute or resolve the situation, you may ask for assistance; please see the grievance process below. However, if the complaint involves a possible violation of the law or threatens personal safety, notify local law enforcement personnel; the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Coordinator should also be notified of the circumstances and the

Bridging the Bayous Timebank members involved by emailing the Timebank Coordinator at [jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org).

### **Dispute Process:**

The following steps should be taken in instances when members are unable to resolve conflicts:

1. The member communicates the complaint in writing to the Timebank Coordinator within 2 weeks of the incident.
2. Written complaints must include names of the members involved, dates and a complete, detailed explanation of the issue(s).
3. The Timebank Coordinator will attempt to resolve the issue(s) after listening to all parties involved.
4. If necessary, the Timebank Coordinator will convene a Grievance Committee Meeting to address the issue(s).
5. The decision reached by the Grievance Committee is final and cannot be appealed.

## **Leaving the Program**

Participation in Bridging the Bayous Timebank is voluntary and members can discontinue their membership at any time for any reason; however, members choosing to leave the program are asked to:

1. Contact the Timebank Coordinator, Jennifer Gaudet ([jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org) ; 985-876-0490), to share their opinions regarding Bridging the Bayous Timebank and their reason for choosing to leave the program.
2. Dispose of their Bridging the Bayous Timebank ID badge.
3. Determine how any remaining Timebank Hours should be allocated (e.g. donated to another member, donated to a Share Account, etc.)

The membership status of those who choose to leave the program will be designated as inactive. Inactive members with Timebank Hour balances will be contacted to transfer or donate their Timebank Hours. If the member is leaving for a specific period of time and intends to resume program participation following his/her return, the member account will be designated as inactive; however, the Timebank Hours in the account will be retained for the member's future use.

Members may rejoin the program by notifying the Timebank Coordinator ([jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)); however, if a member has been inactive for over 1 year, he/she will be required to attend another orientation in order to become reactivated.

## **Involuntary Termination**

Failure to abide by the guidelines in the Bridging the Bayous Member Handbook is cause for dismissal from program participation; examples of reasons for involuntary member termination include, but are not limited to:

1. Providing false information on enrollment or screening materials;
2. Using disrespectful or inappropriate language toward members, staff, or volunteers;
3. Sharing confidential member contact information;
4. Making nuisance phone calls to other members;
5. Falsely charging a member for services not received or cheating a member out of Timebank Hours earned.

Members accused of any of the above during their Bridging the Bayous Timebank membership may be designated as inactive until a resolution is determined; at that time, membership will be re-evaluated. Any person terminated involuntarily may reapply after 1 year; however, Bridging the Bayous Timebank reserves its right to deny the membership or may accept the membership with possible restrictions placed on his/her level of program participation.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Are there any volunteer positions that would not count as Timebank Hours?**

1. Timebank Hours can only be earned if the place/person you are volunteering for is also a Timebank Member.
2. Timebank Hours cannot be earned when volunteering in any part of the Mass or Sacramental Ceremony (such as bringing Eucharist to the homebound, Confirmation, First Communion, Marriage, etc.) However, Any church volunteer work outside of the Mass will count (money counters, CCD Teachers/monitors, church decorators, etc.)
3. Service hours earned by students for school or church requirements should not count as Timebank Hours as the children need to be taught to give of themselves without expecting something in return.

### **Are there any categories or activities that are not allowed within the Timebank?**

1. Yes, the following categories/activities will not be allowed within Bridging the Bayous Timebank:
  - a. Childcare
  - b. Any type of Transportation
  - c. Any work involving the use of a ladder
  - d. Electrical or plumbing work

2. Some categories will be limited as to the extent they can be used:
  - a. Any service that normally requires the worker to be certified and licensed in their field will only be allowed if the Timebank Member can present to another Timebank Member their certifications/license.

### **How can I be sure the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Member has the skills and abilities to do the job right?**

If the job needed requires a certain specialized certification or license, ask the Bridging the Bayous Timebank Member to present those certifications/licenses to you.

Ask for references before agreeing to accept their offer of help.

Check any endorsements other Bridging the Bayous Timebank Members have posted on the Member's personal page.

### **Do Timebank Hours expire?**

Timebank Hours earned by active members have no expiration date as long as Bridging the Bayous Timebank is in operation.

### **Am I able to donate/transfer my Timebank Hours to members who need them?**

Bridging the Bayous Timebank members are encouraged to PROVIDE AND RECEIVE to fully appreciate and maximize the effectiveness of the program. However, excess Timebank Hours can be donated/transferred to other members or to the Share Bank. Donations and transfers can be made using normal exchange reporting methods. You may split your donation in any manner that you choose; just be sure to clearly designate your donation.

### **What do I do if someone falsely deposits or withdraws Timebank Hours?**

Although Bridging the Bayous Timebank is built on mutual respect and trust, mistakes do happen. If you believe your account balance is incorrect and you believe Timebank Hours have been falsely deposited or withdrawn, first contact the member you believe made the error. If you are unable to resolve the issue member to member, please contact the Timebank Coordinator in writing: (Jennifer Gaudet: [jgaudet@htdiocese.org](mailto:jgaudet@htdiocese.org)).

### **Can I rely on Bridging the Bayous to meet my emergency needs?**

Bridging the Bayous Timebank is not designed to respond to emergency needs. Member responses to your requests will vary. There may be times when an exchange can take place within 24 hours, while other times it may take 2 weeks (or longer) to coordinate an exchange.

### **How do I communicate changes in my contact information with members?**

Please report any changes to your name, mailing address, phone number, email address, service offers, etc. in your Bridging the Bayous Timebank member account.

### **What if I am unavailable to provide services for a period of time?**

If you will be unable to perform services for several weeks, please edit your profile and add a notation about your lack of availability.

### **What if I don't have time for volunteering? Isn't this just one more thing that's going to eat up my extra time?**

Many of the services people exchange in a Timebank are the types of things they are already doing every day. For example, those of us who have children are already cooking for them, driving them to activities, and helping them with their schoolwork - among other things. Cooking an extra portion of food for someone down the street who is housebound, picking up your neighbor's dog while going out to walk your own, or helping the child down the street with his homework doesn't add work to your day. Or, if you have a dog and take it for a walk every day, why not pick up your neighbor's dog along the way?

People who volunteer for their church can earn Timebank Hours when volunteering as Pastoral Council Members, CCD Teachers, money counters, assisting with Vacation Bible School, etc. However, Timebank Hours cannot be earned while volunteering in any part of the Mass or Sacramental ceremonies (confirmation, bringing Eucharist to the homebound, First Communion, Marriage, etc.)

For professionals like doctors, lawyers and business people, Timebanking is a way to give back to your community without having to go someplace else on someone else's schedule. For example, you can just set aside 10% of your appointment calendar for Timebank members.

Even better, Timebanking helps you gain extra time because down the road. You can spend the Timebank Hours you've earned and

have someone else do something for you that you can't fit into your schedule or simply don't know how to do!

### **Can Businesses join?**

**Yes!** Any business or non-profit organization that has something to offer the community free of charge (such as meeting rooms, boats for bayou clean-ups, tents for school functions, employees for volunteer work, etc.) can earn hours for every hour their equipment/employees volunteer their time. The hours earned can then be used in one of two ways:

- a. The hours can be donated to a particular family the business/organization may know that is in need or donated to the Bridging the Bayous Share Bank (that assists elderly or severely disabled Timebank Members), or
- b. The hours can be used to ask Bridging the Bayous Timebank Members to assist the business/organization with a need they may have (example: assistance with handing out flyers for a sale or help with fundraising activities.)

### **Do my Timebank Hours have a cash value and can I redeem them for cash?**

Timebank Hours have no cash value and are not redeemable for cash.

### **Can you buy, trade, or sell things with Timebank Hours?**

Bridging the Bayous Timebank does not allow any buying, trading, or selling of Timebank Hours in exchange of goods or services. The exchange of Timebank Hours is not considered to be a taxable transaction by the IRS while the buying, selling or trading of goods and services is. There is no equivalency between a Timebank Hour and regular dollar value in an exchange of goods or services.

### **Can people cheat?**

Whenever one person earns Timebank Hours, there is a corresponding withdrawal for the same amount in someone else's account. This makes it pretty easy to know if someone is cheating or not. No one is anonymous in a Timebank, so people don't cheat. Bridging the Bayous Timebank members rely on the trust and shared moral values of its members to be of service to one another.