

## What is a Timebank?

It's neighbors exchanging time to help neighbors. At its most basic level, time banking is simply about spending an hour doing something for somebody in your community. That hour goes into your timebank account as one credit hour. You then have a credit hour to spend on having someone else do something for you. All hours are valued equally. Joining the timebank gives you access to the talents, time, and skills of your neighbors, while giving you an opportunity to help others in meaningful ways. It's a great way to get connected with others in your community.

## Core values of Timebanks

- Everyone is an asset; society's real wealth is its people.
- All work has value; some work is beyond any monetary price.
- Reciprocity: We help each other.
- Social capital: Social networks are necessary.
- Respect for all human beings is important.



## Example of a Timebank exchange

- Joe loves to garden. Kathy needs someone to help in her garden. Joe spends an hour planting plants in Kathy's garden and earns one hour time credit.
- Joe needs someone to feed his dog when he goes away for the weekend. Bob loves pets, and looks after Joe's dog for a total of one hour, which Joe "pays for" with the one hour time credit he earned.

Here are some services members might offer:

- |                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Gardening            | • Sailing lessons         |
| • Computer software    | • Animal care             |
| • Massage              | • Tutoring                |
| • Transportation       | • Pet sitting             |
| • Personal training    | • Job coaching            |
| • Housecleaning        | • Crafts projects.        |
| • Business plan review | • Guitar lessons          |
| • Photography          | • Feldenkrais sessions    |
| • Cooking              | • Attic/Basement cleaning |
| • Snowboarding         | • Letter writing          |
| • Inventory            |                           |
| • Music for an event   |                           |
| • Yard sale assistance |                           |
| • House Repair         |                           |
| • Childcare            |                           |

## Who can join?

Anyone can join. Parent/guardian approval is required for those under 18 years of age.

## Do I have to live in West Seattle to join?

We are initially focusing on people who live or work in West Seattle. If you live outside that area, you are welcome to join; however, the distance may limit your exchanges. There are several time banks in the Puget Sound area, and there might be one closer to where you work or live that you may want to consider.

## Can a business or organization join?

Yes. A business, organization, or agency can join as an organizational member. This creates one account for the organization. One coordinator within the organization will have access to the timebank database and coordinate giving and receiving services on behalf of the organization. Organizations can earn timebank hours by providing meeting rooms, offering classes to other timebank members, or providing volunteers to fill a service request. Organizations can spend time credits by having others help them fill occasional needs (e.g. inventory, yard work, painting, website design, extra staffing for special events, etc.).

## How do I join?

Joining involves attending a timebank orientation at which you:

- complete and/or turn in an application form
- pay the membership fee (see back of brochure)
- present a photo ID

This must be done in person. Once your background check is complete you will become a member and may activate your account in the online system.

## When and where is the next opportunity to join?

We have monthly potlucks and new member orientations every month. We have periodic brown bag lunches, usually every other month. Check our website at [www.wstb.tbanks.org](http://www.wstb.tbanks.org) for current details.

## How much does it cost to join?

- \$75 for a household
- \$40 for individuals
- \$15 for college students
- \$15 for people with income < \$25,000
- \$5 for high school students
- Scholarships are available on a limited, case-by-case basis

## Why is there a membership fee?

Annual membership fees help sustain our timebank. The timebank must pay for set-up and maintenance of the database, background checks, and participation in Timebanks of Puget Sound.

## Will this impact my taxes?

Because there are no contractual obligations related to timebank exchanges, and because everyone's hour is valued the same, there is no monetary equivalent of a "time credit." The IRS has ruled that it is not barter, and is not taxable. That said, we recommend that businesses check with their tax attorney on their specific situation

## Who keeps track of Timebank hours?

Time banking is simplified by an online system that you'll learn to use once you're a member. You'll set up an online profile in the system with your name, contact information, and a selection of tasks you're willing to do. Once you perform a task for someone, you will transfer time bank hours from their account to yours.

## What about safety?

All timebank applicants undergo a basic level of screening. A Washington State criminal background check is conducted through Washington State Patrol, and personal

references are contacted. Applicants who have been in Washington State less than seven years will undergo a nationwide background check. Individuals with criminal records are generally excluded from the timebank, with case-by-case evaluation of minor or decades-old, non-violent offenses. Each timebank member is responsible for determining whether they are comfortable interacting with another member prior to arranging an exchange. We encourage members to personally meet other members in a public location (such as a coffee shop or one of our potlucks) before meeting privately.

## What if I don't have a computer or don't know how to use one?

The Seattle Public Libraries, King County Library System, and West Seattle Senior Center all provide free computer access. They also provide assistance to computer users. If you are not a computer user, another member of the timebank can help you in exchange for time.

## Who do I contact for more information or if I have questions?

You can contact the West Seattle Timebank at [info@wstb.tbanks.org](mailto:info@wstb.tbanks.org).



*West Seattle Timebank is a neighborhood of Timebanks of Puget Sound. Our partners include:*



# West Seattle Timebank

[www.wstb.tbanks.org](http://www.wstb.tbanks.org)

