



# MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

## **Welcome to the Long Beach Time Exchange**

The mission of the Long Beach Time Exchange is to build and strengthen relationships within the city of Long Beach by connecting people's unmet needs and untapped resources.

## **We use a system called "time banking"**

The idea is simple. When you provide a service for another member, you earn "time dollars." Time is the unit of measurement, so one hour equals one time dollar. Earned time dollars can be spent throughout the greater community, connected through a web-based software program called hOurworld.

## **We are a caring and interconnected community**

We help each other by sharing our skills, talents, and time. By both giving and receiving, we learn to appreciate the value of each and every member and also come to believe in the value of our own contributions. Instead of separating our community into those who need and those who provide, we recognize that we all have needs and gifts to share.

## CORE VALUES

### Assets

We are all assets. Every individual has something to contribute to the community.

### Redefining Work

Work has to be redefined to start recognizing traditionally undervalued and unpaid work, from raising healthy children and revitalizing neighborhoods to advancing social justice and living sustainably.

### Reciprocity

Helping works better as a two-way street. In a time bank, the question: “How can I help you?” needs to change so we ask: “how can we help each other build the world we want to live in?”

### Social Networks

We believe that a strong community is built upon sinking roots, building trust, and creating networks that are stronger than individuals alone.

### Respect

We must respect where people are in the moment, not where we hope they will be at some future point. If we meet one another where we’re “at,” and respect that position, we can build a network of trust.

## MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

### Online Members

Members who use the internet-based time banking software to facilitate exchanges, using the steps explained above.

### Offline Members

While time exchanges must be logged online, it is not necessary for a person to have a computer or regular internet access to become an LBTE member. We will match you up with someone to help facilitate exchanges.

### Organizational Partners

The LBTE welcomes partnerships with community-based organizations. Organizations can call us to see how to get set up. Organizations should elect a representative to coordinate exchanges on its behalf, and to ensure that participants log all time exchanged.

## GETTING STARTED

Time banking is done through a web-based software program called hOurworld. Visit our website and click “Take a Tour” to be walked through the software, and download the tutorial document for a quick reference guide.

*If you do not have access to a computer with an internet connection, call us to arrange for other accommodations.*

### ***Get online***

After your application is received and approved, you will receive an email with your login and temporary password for hOurworld site.

It will also include a link that will allow you to log in and begin posting offers and shopping the network.

You can then add detail to your profile, including a picture, your biography, and personal preferences and affiliations.

### ***Shop the network***

Login by clicking “Member Login” on the homepage of [www.lbtimeexchange.com](http://www.lbtimeexchange.com). Click “Give and Receive” to see what’s already offered in our network, contact other members to get help with something or pick up a new skill, and find group projects or events to participate in.

**Remember, it’s okay to start off with a negative balance, receiving services before you give any.**

### ***Post your requests and offers***

In general, you should give specific information about what you’re requesting and offering. Be sure to clarify who would cover material costs, such as ingredients or supplies for a project.

### ***Contact other members***

When you see a service you’d like to receive, contact the member via hOurworld or by phone or email (if public) as soon as possible and agree upon a time and date for the transaction to take place. If a member is unresponsive, please contact a time exchange coordinator. If someone contacts you, respond promptly, even if you cannot provide the service requested. Let the person know you cannot help them, and refer them to an LBTE coordinator to find a good match.

### ***Set up an exchange***

If you agree to provide a service, discuss the details (e.g., date, time, materials needed and their cost) and ask how much time the person thinks the service will take. If you are unable to provide the service, let the person know. Finally, agree on a date and time, get accurate directions, and always arrive on time or let the recipient know if you are running late.

### ***Log your time exchange***

Both parties involved in a time exchange should decide which person will log the interaction online. Once in your account, tab “hours”, there you may “add hours”. To deduct hours or update an exchange that has been logged, go to “hours” and click on the “statement” button. (Detailed instructions available online in our “quick guide”).

## **LONG BEACH TIME EXCHANGE POLICIES**

### **Liability**

The Long Beach Time Exchange refers members who state that they are able to perform services.

The LBTE cannot guarantee the performance of anyone who is referred, nor can LBTE or its staff or members be held responsible for any injury to persons or damage to property experienced while involved with the transaction.

LBTE does not provide criminal background checks or screenings on its members. LBTE does not verify member skills, licensing, or representations made by its members. Because LBTE does not provide these checks and is not responsible for member conduct, members must take all necessary precautions in all interactions with other members. Member should not provide financial information to other members.

### **Confidentiality**

All members must protect the privacy and confidentiality of other members. A member can be dismissed from the program for violating this rule. The only exception for sharing information is when a member feels that the health and/or safety of another member is in danger.

### **Time Dollar Value**

One time dollar is earned for each hour of service. Time dollars can be given in 15-minute increments. In general, round up when giving time dollars.

### **Spending Time Dollars**

Prior to setting up a service, exchange partners should come to a mutual agreement on the approximate number of time dollars to be used in the transaction. Negotiate whether or not transportation time counts as part of the exchange.

### **Time Dollar Balance**

Ideally, all members in a time exchange should aim to maintain a neutral balance. However, this is a long-term goal. You may need more help at a certain point in your life, and that's okay. For those who constantly give, it's important to keep in mind that requesting help allows others to earn time dollars while connecting with you.

### **Exchanges with Organizations**

Small organizations are permitted to carry a negative balance as "good employers" who keep the time exchange going, but are also encouraged to reciprocate in a number of ways, from workshops and community events, to providing spaces and in-kind donations to the LBTE. When either providing service as an organization or receiving service from an organization, contact a coordinator to discuss how to determine a fair exchange.

### **Application Review**

The LBTE Steering Committee will meet monthly to review new member applications.

### **Member Feedback**

If you have a positive experience you'd like to share, or a complaint about a specific time-exchange member, or the process itself, please contact us as soon as possible via phone, mail, or email.

## **DO'S AND DON'TS**

### **Please DO:**

Make sure the other person understands what you are going to do before you start doing it.

Contact the other member in advance if you must cancel, whenever possible.

Be patient and open, rather than critical and hurried.

Respect others' religions, beliefs, and political viewpoints.

If you are requesting a service, be sure to pay for any parts, supplies, ingredients, or materials that are used.

If renting, check with the landlord before doing home repairs.

If using your personal car to transport a member, have liability insurance and wear seat belts.

Dial 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency.

Be sure to verify a member's skills, background, and training.

Be sure to disclose your own skill level.

### **Please DON'T:**

Ask for or accept money or tips.

Smoke in a member's home.

Engage in any illegal or illicit activity.

Use the time exchange to sell for-profit services.

Smoke or use drugs in a member's home.

Engage in any illegal, sexual, inappropriate, or illicit activity.

Impersonate any person.

The content of this handbook may change over time as members make suggestions for improvement. Members will be notified of any policy changes as soon as practicable. Your continued membership constitutes your consent and agreement to follow and be bound by any policy changes. Your ideas and comments are important in helping the Long Beach Time Exchange be a creative, meaningful, and rewarding community project.