Elf Handbook.

Toys Toiletries & Toques

Cowichan Valley Basket Society

Welcome to Toys, Toiletries & Toques!!

(affectionately referred to as TTT!)

TTT has always been powered by community — people showing up, pitching in and doing what they can to make Christmas a little brighter for people throughout the Cowichan Valley. This handbook is our way of sharing what we've learned, defining the different ways elves can help, and making it easier for new people to jump in. **No elf has to do it alone.** Each role has someone helping to lead the way, but the magic happens when we work together. Whether you've been an elf for years or this is your very first campaign, we're so glad you're here. ❤️

A little elfing goes a long way! TTT is only about a six-week commitment each year, but what we accomplish together in those few weeks makes a huge impact across the Cowichan Valley.

Our Story

Toys, Toiletries & Toques began as a simple grassroots effort by a group of local folks who wanted to make sure fewer people in the Cowichan Valley went without at Christmas. More than 15 years later, TTT continues to bring our community together each holiday season to collect toys, toiletries, warm items, experience passes and other donations for local organizations supporting people in need.

Today, TTT operates under the umbrella of the **Cowichan Valley Basket Society**, with a team of volunteer "elves," local businesses, drop-off centres and community partners all playing a part.

As we head into our next chapter, we're focused not only on another successful campaign, but on welcoming the **next generation of elves** who will help carry TTT forward for years to come.

The Elf Code

Our Mission

To bring our community together to make the holidays a little brighter for people in need throughout the Cowichan Valley.

Through donations of toys, toiletries, warm essentials and experiences, we support local organizations helping individuals and families in our community.

Our Vision

A community where everyone feels remembered, supported and cared for during the holiday season.

We hope to continue growing a grassroots tradition of neighbours, businesses and volunteers coming together to help neighbours.

Our Values

Community

We believe in the power of people coming together.

Kindness

Everything starts with caring for one another.

Dignity

We give thoughtfully and respectfully, recognizing that everyone deserves to feel valued.

Inclusivity

TTT is for our whole community, and there is a place for everyone to contribute.

Joy

Christmas magic matters.

We believe giving, receiving and working together should bring a little joy along the way. 🎅❤️

The Elf Jobs

There's a job for every kind of elf!
TTT works because lots of people take care of different pieces of the campaign. Some roles are bigger, some are smaller, and many can be shared between several elves.
These roles aren't meant to be rigid job descriptions. They're simply a way to make sure everything gets done, share what we've learned over the years, and make it easier for new elves to jump in.
No elf has to do it alone. Lead a role, join a team, shadow an experienced elf, or simply lend a hand where you can.

Social Media & Marketing Elf TEAM

Keeps TTT visible and connected throughout the campaign through Facebook, Instagram and community promotion.

What they do:

- Create and share posts, Reels and Stories.
- Coordinate the annual drop-off centre Reel campaign.
- Contact locations, arrange filming and visit participating businesses.
- Film, edit, write captions and schedule content.
- Coordinate collaborative posts and cross-promotion with drop-off centres.
- Capture and share moments from throughout the campaign.
- Help with occasional marketing and PR opportunities.
- This is a team job! Elves can contribute based on what they enjoy — filming, editing, writing, graphics, photography, posting or simply helping gather content.

Drop-Off Centre Coordinator Elf

Keeps our participating drop-off locations organized and connected to the campaign.

What they do:

- Connect with participating drop-off centres.
- Make sure an elf is assigned to each location.
- Send the annual welcome/information email around the week of October 20.
- Introduce each location to their assigned elf.
- Provide campaign and social media materials.
- Remind locations to prepare a clear, visible space for their donation box.
- Act as the main point of contact for drop-off centres.

The Elf Jobs (con't)

Ticket Elf

Helps add a little extra Christmas magic through donated experiences.

What they do:

- Connect with local businesses and organizations for donated experience passes and tickets.
- Coordinate collection of confirmed donations.
- Keep track of the passes received and make sure they're ready for distribution.

Sorting Elf

Makes sure sorting night has the people, place and supplies needed to turn a mountain of donations into organized deliveries.

What they do:

- Confirm our sorting/storage location.
- Recruit and coordinate enough helping hands for sorting night.
- Organize tables, boxes, bags, signage and other supplies.
- Make sure everyone has what they need on sorting night — including snacks, water and, of course, Santa hats!

Delivery Elf

Gets everything from sorting night into the hands of the organizations we support.

What they do:

- Coordinate with recipient organizations and confirm delivery details.
- Arrange transportation, driver and van.
- Coordinate the delivery schedule.
- Accompany deliveries and help make sure everything reaches the right place.
- Capture a few photos along the way for the Social Media Team.

The Elf Jobs (con't)

Secretary Elf

Helps keep all the elves on the same page.

What they do:

- Take and share meeting notes.
- Keep important dates, contacts and campaign information organized.
- Maintain shared records and documents.
- Capture updates and lessons learned so we're not reinventing the sleigh every year. 😉

Techie Elf

Keeps the TTT website current and ready for each year's campaign.

What they do:

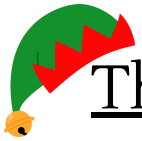
- Review and update the website before the annual campaign.
- Update campaign dates, drop-off locations and other seasonal information.
- Add or remove information as the campaign changes.
- Make sure links and important information are working and accurate.
- Coordinate with the Social Media Team and other elves to keep messaging consistent.
- Make occasional updates throughout the campaign as needed.

Recruitment Elf

Helps us find and welcome the next generation of elves.

What they do:

- Spread the word when TTT needs new elves or helping hands.
- Connect with people interested in getting involved.
- Welcome new volunteers and help them find a place that fits.Match new elves with experienced elves they can help or shadow.
- Help build a strong, sustainable elf team for future campaigns.



The Elf Work Timeline

EARLY OCTOBER

Confirm core elves and identify any roles that still need to be filled.
Begin recruiting new and Next Generation elves.
Confirm returning drop-off centres and identify any new locations.
Contact Brentwood College School to arrange a driver and van for delivery day.
Confirm Speedy Glass for storage and Sorting Night.
Begin contacting businesses and organizations for experience passes.

MID OCTOBER

Assign an elf to each drop-off centre.
Create the theme or concept for the annual Drop-Off Centre Reel Campaign.
Begin organizing campaign materials, donation boxes and signage.

WEEK OF OCTOBER 20

Send the annual drop-off centre email.
Introduce each location to their assigned elf.
Provide drop-off centres with campaign and social media materials.
Ask locations to prepare a clear, visible space for their donation box.
Begin scheduling drop-off centre Reel filming.

LATE OCTOBER

Visit drop-off centres and begin filming promotional Reels.
Confirm donation boxes, signage and materials are ready.
Prepare social media content for campaign launch.
Continue recruiting elves and volunteers.

NOVEMBER 1 — CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

TTT officially launches!
Begin regular Facebook and Instagram promotion.
Continue filming, editing and publishing drop-off centre Reels.
Coordinate collaborative posts with participating locations.
Share Reels, posts, Stories, campaign reminders and community content throughout the month.

The Elf Work Timeline

THROUGHOUT NOVEMBER

Continue collecting and tracking experience passes.
Recruit helping elves for Sorting Night and delivery.
Monitor drop-off centres and provide support as needed.
Share important campaign updates, donation needs and reminders.
Begin confirming Sorting Night volunteer numbers.

MID TO LATE NOVEMBER

Confirm all Sorting Night supplies, including tables, boxes, garbage bags, signage materials, tape, scissors, Sharpies, snacks, water and Santa hats.
Contact recipient organizations and confirm delivery contacts, times and details.
Confirm transportation and delivery-day arrangements.

FINAL WEEK OF THE CAMPAIGN

Push final donation reminders through social media and drop-off centres.
Confirm final collection plans with drop-off locations.
Confirm Sorting Night volunteers.
Confirm delivery schedule and recipient organizations.

NOVEMBER 25 — CAMPAIGN CLOSE

Public donation campaign closes.
Begin final collection of donations from drop-off centres.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26 — SORTING NIGHT

Bring all donations together at Speedy Glass.
Set up sorting stations and organize donations for each recipient organization.
Capture photos and video of the elves in action.
Prepare and load donations for delivery.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27 — DELIVERY DAY

Meet the Brentwood driver and begin deliveries.
Deliver donations to participating community organizations.
Take photos along the way and share them with the Social Media Team.

EARLY DECEMBER — WRAP-UP

Share campaign results, delivery photos and community thank-yous.
Thank drop-off centres, donors, volunteers, community partners and fellow elves.
Hold a short Elf Team debrief: What worked? What should change? What do we need to remember for next year?
Update the handbook, contacts and campaign notes while everything is still fresh.
Then the elves go back to the North Pole until next year. 🎅❤️