

Getting Rid of Stuff

By Elizabeth K. Clark

Decluttering is great, but what do you do with all of the junk (oops, stuff) that you don't need anymore? We have an answer for you.

Not only can you get rid of unneeded stuff, but you can be environmentally conscious and socially conscious by contributing to the needs of others while decluttering.

How can you accomplish all that? **Brett Kube**, vice president of business development at [Chicago Furniture Bank](#), contacted Edgewater Village to share information about this nonprofit organization and its sister nonprofit called [Honest Junk](#).

Brett said you can hire Honest Junk to pick up household furnishings such as furniture, mattresses, lamps, kitchenware, artwork, etc. Much of it will go to the Chicago Furniture Bank warehouse to be available for free to those individuals moving into unfurnished spaces but who don't have the funds to purchase furnishings. Chicago Furniture Bank furnishes an average of 17 homes a day from a 100,000-foot warehouse.

The mission of the Chicago Furniture Bank is to "provide dignity, stability and comfort to Chicagoans that face poverty by allowing clients to handpick an entire home's worth of furnishings for free. We believe everyone should be able to sleep in a bed, share a family meal at a kitchen table, and enjoy the comfort of a furnished home."

You can be environmentally friendly in choosing Chicago Furniture Bank knowing that 100% of usable items collected are diverted from landfills and distributed to their charity partners if they're not used by the Chicago Furniture Bank.

What's in it for you in addition to feeling good about your choice? You can get a tax break. The value of all donated items, as well as 80% of the Honest Junk removal fee, are tax deductible. How do you determine the value of your stuff? They have a [Donation Value Guide](#) to help you with that estimate on their website.

With 14 trucks, Honest Junk can typically schedule a pickup within 1-2 days. Honest Junk will pick everything that you have to donate, Brett said. Ideally miscellaneous items should be boxed; however, unboxed donations will be picked up. You don't need to decide what's usable or not, they will haul it all away.

What's the cost? Please refer to the [Honest Junk's scheduling page](#). With a minimum removal fee of \$175, the actual cost will be based on the size of the pickup.

Many of us may have our favorite local charity thrift shops where we can donate unneeded items. However, it's good to know about this unique-to-Chicago option for getting rid of stuff while helping those in need by providing free furniture and household goods.

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