



GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

STATE PARKS & HISTORIC SITES

WELCOME

TO THE
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Welcome and Thank-you for your interest in the Volunteer Program sponsored by the Parks, Recreation and historic Sites Division of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This packet is provided as a general orientation to the program and our policies within Georgia State Parks.

The beauty of this state, and the diversity of its cultural and natural resources has, over the years, attracted visitors in untold millions to the state's parks and historic sites to learn, to stretch, to relax, to explore, to appreciate...and to find themselves by losing themselves in a world of grandeur and wonder. Through this Volunteer Program we expect to be able to extend these benefits to many more Georgians and their guests, and to enrich their visits with more and better services and facilities.

The Volunteer Program is a fun and educational opportunity for you to get involved. By enriching the lives of others, you enrich your own. It will be an experience you will remember for years to come. A task somewhere is waiting to be done; a child somewhere is waiting to learn; a trail somewhere is waiting to be built.

Georgia's parks and historic sites offer varied opportunities for volunteers to enrich their lives while enriching the lives of others. We hope this is a program that you cannot resist. Without volunteers, like you, Georgia and other parks nationwide would not be able to serve and impress visitors young and old alike with the wonders of nature.

Thank you for dedicating your time, energy and talents to our Parks.

Sincerely,

Nyleta Wallace, Volunteer Coordinator

MISSION STATEMENT

Volunteers in the Georgia State Park System help visitors to enjoy the natural beauty, ecological features, and recreational resources our state parks offer. Volunteers help our department respond to, contribute to, and support the Parks mission to provide outdoor recreational opportunities in a safe and healthy environment, and to provide environmental education opportunities that promote stewardship of the state's natural heritage.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

To provide state parks and historic sites with knowledgeable and responsible volunteers to assist in providing visitor services, clerical assistance, interpretive skills, or educational leadership, and to enhance the recreational experience of others by maintaining or improving the grounds and facilities that they use.

BENEFITS OF HOSTING FOR GEORGIA STATE PARKS

- ✓ 5-day Camping Certificate
- ✓ Choice of shirt
- ✓ Choice of hat/visor
- ✓ Token of Appreciation (2011=Aluminum Water Bottle)
- ✓ Free RV Campsite and if available water, sewer, electricity hook-up in exchange for 24-40 hours served weekly
- ✓ A beautiful park setting to live, work and thrive in for 2-6 months per year.

BENEFITS OF BEING A COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AT GEORGIA STATE PARKS

- ✓ T-shirt (for those volunteering 100 hours annually)
- ✓ Token of Appreciation (2011=Aluminum Water Bottle)
- ✓ Working with wonderful staff in the park atmosphere
- ✓ Meeting new people from around the world that are exploring the bounty of Georgia State Parks

Coming soon...

ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEE

As soon as website application edits are in effect, you will be prompted to pay a mandatory annual registration fee of \$15 per person. This fee covers the cost of processing your application, the fee associated with the excess accident medical insurance and excess personal liability insurance for you and processing the criminal background check. Excess insurance provides protection in excess of any other personal collectible insurance and is a requirement of volunteers. Upon receipt of your annual registration, you will receive a 5-day Camping Certificate (valued at \$125) that can be used at any Georgia State Park.

****Until the above change is in effect, the parks will continue to process the \$5 per person fee for excess accident and liability insurance when you arrive for your volunteer assignment.****

VOLUNTEER FUNCTIONS

Specific duties and responsibilities at each park will vary to meet the needs of that particular site and to match the interests and talents of the persons who apply. The site manager is responsible for developing the Volunteer Program for the individual site, and for interviewing and selecting the volunteers to work with that program.

- A. Orientation and Information**-Volunteers may provide information to park and historic site visitors, update bulletin boards, lead interpretive tours, or explain rules and procedures to park and historic site visitors. They may offer information on upcoming programs, relate the history of the park or historic site, or explain how the visitor can best use and protect the site's resources.
- B. Light Maintenance**-Volunteers may assist with litter pick-up around a park, help clean up a shoreline, construct a trail, re-stain picnic tables, repair bicycles, apply protective coating to artifacts, cut grass, and prepare wildflower beds or any number of other maintenance tasks waiting to be done. Light maintenance jobs are limited only by lack of imagination.
- C. Park Programming**-Volunteer possessing special knowledge of history or natural science may be asked to assist with interpretive programming. Special organizational and promotional talents may be needed for special events, and persons experienced in working with children may be asked to help with Junior Ranger or other youth programs.
- D. Collection of Fees and Sales**-Volunteers may be assigned to register participants and collect fees, assist with implementation of the Georgia ParkPass program, or sell tickets and merchandise.

CAMPGROUND, MAINTENANCE OR TRAIN HOST

General Responsibilities:

- Provide information and explain rules and regulations to visitors
- Assist visitors with services available
- Collection of fees from visitors (as long as it is in compliance with authorized procedures)
- Distribute maps and brochures to visitors
- Perform light maintenance work around the campground such as picking up litter, cleaning and stocking restroom facilities
- Perform emergency repairs
- Perform emergency assistance for visitors such as unlocking gate in emergency situation, and keeping first aid kit on hand for minor cuts and abrasions
- Help reduce litter and vandalism (mainly by their presence)
- Gather information on use of facilities
- Keep park staff informed of any problems
- Work in the visitors center and retail centers
- Perform other duties as appropriate

Special Terms and Conditions

- The Campground Host shall maintain any assigned campsite in a clean and sanitary condition at all times. Outside structures and facilities will not be permitted (including portable hot tubs or pools). No dog pens, horse corrals, poultry cages, or similar facilities for pets or for the raising of animals will be allowed. Permission may be granted on a case by case basis by the Park Manager for house pets only. Pets shall be kept under physical restraint at all times. Upon completion of the volunteer service the Campground Host's camping equipment must be removed and the campsite area must be left clean and in good repair.
- The Campground Host shall maintain nightly availability at the campground for a minimum of 4 nights per week, to include many (if not most) weekends and holidays. The schedule will be determined by the Park Manager working with the Campground Host. By the nature of the position, Hosts will often find themselves working independently of supervisory personnel, particularly during evening hours.
- Campground Hosts will be scheduled for at least 24 hours of service time per week for a minimum of eight weeks and many not exceed 24 weeks per year. Couples may divide the 24 hours of service time per week between the two people.
- Campground Hosts work various duties per park need and schedule. As some parks are busier than others, hosts may work 24-40 hours per week.
- Campground Hosts will hand out information pamphlets, copies of park rules and regulations, or other general information items to other campers as they enter the campground. They may assist campers in locating a campsite, answer questions by visitors, or issue plastic trash bags. Tact, diplomacy, and courtesy shall be exercised at all times in dealing with other campers and the public.
- Campground Hosts will report all disturbances to park staff. They shall not attempt to discipline or apprehend any park violators.
- Campground Hosts are encouraged and expected to keep written reports of complaints and criticism of park facilities, report situations that could affect the health and safety of visitors, and report any maintenance items that need attention. They should maintain other written records as requested by the Park Manager.
- Campground Hosts shall not have firearms in their possession while on the park.
- All Campground Hosts should conduct themselves in an orderly manner so as not to disrupt other campers or the visiting public. No alcoholic beverages shall be consumed while performing Campground Host functions; nor shall the evidence of alcohol previously consumed be evident during the Host's scheduled service time.
- The Park Manager should be contacted and given advance notice of absence or illness.
- The Park Manager of each park may include special Campground Host functions necessary to effectively operate individual campgrounds.
- Overnight visits with the Campground Host by dependents, relatives, and friends is discouraged but may be permitted by the Park Manager on a case by case basis. An assigned campsite is specifically for use of the named Campground Host only.
- Applications will be asked to sign a "Medical Information Release" to be sent to their health providers in order that the manager may better match assignments to applicant abilities and limitations.

GOLF COURSE HOST

Volunteer Description

To help the staff at our golf course enhance the experience for our guests who utilize the golfing facilities.

Requirements:

- Ability to work with people in a team environment
- Ability to provide excellent customer service
- Some experience working in a volunteer capacity
- Good physical condition needed for course management duties, including possible lifting, maintenance, cleaning, ladder work, etc.
- Maintain committed schedule for host slot allotted
- Some experience working with groups
- Plus the requirements of all Georgia State Park and Historic Sites Volunteers

Time Required: 24-40 hours per week; may vary from course to course depending on need.

Supervision: Required daily contact with the course assigned supervisor

Duties: The duties of the golf host may vary from course to course. The day usually begins around 7:00am. In an effort to fully disclose what responsibilities you may be required to perform, the following is a list of duties.

Around the Driving Range:

- Run Ball Picker to retrieve range balls. Gather all balls from areas picker cannot reach
- Wash all range balls and fill ball machine
- Move ropes to new teeing area as scheduled
- Add sand (top dressing) to teeing area. Fill all divots.
- Pick up trash and broken tees from range area
- Retrieve all baskets and stow near ball machine
- Assist with clubhouse cleaning—sweeping, dusting, mopping, vacuuming
- Assist with cleaning on bathrooms, toilets, etc
- Restock coolers and inventory as needed
- Report major concerns to appropriate staff
- Pick up limbs and debris around course
- Assist with leaf removal
- Assist with maintaining landscaped areas
- Assist with seasonal projects
- Assist with cart maintenance and cleaning
- May be asked to paint outside or inside areas
- May be asked to use some machinery, in the performance of duties, after orientation and training

Patrol Golf Course for Trash:

- Empty trash receptacles on course and driving range
- Empty trash receptacles around clubhouse
- Check parking lot, driveways and curbs for trash

Patrol Golf Course and Clubhouse for Routine

Maintenance:

- Fill all divots with sand—tee boxes and fairways
- Check, fill if needed, sand bottles at stations or on carts
- Check greens and repair ball marks
- Fill and maintain ball washers
- Clean cart paths
- Paint hazard stakes
- Straighten Stakes and tighten ropes
- Clean and maintain bathrooms to standard defined in orientation
- Rake sand traps or bunkers if needed
- Check water stations, clean and refill with water/ice as needed
- Groom areas around hole markers/signage
- Groom areas around clubhouse i.e. shrubbery, walkways, grounds

Customer Service:

- May serve as Marshall or Starter to assist players with daily rules of play and control of pace of play
- Caution golfers when rules broken
- Performs all courtesies of golf when performing duties around golfers
- Assists with some programming, teaching, tournaments, outings, cookouts, and other events that may be conducted at course
- May be asked to answer phones or assist with customer service in clubhouse
- May be asked to set up at Par 3 location to gather information from golfers i.e. Name, email address, etc. for marketing
- May be asked to move directional traffic control signs
- May be asked to help secure guests and course in cases of emergencies
- May be asked to help with other responsibilities on the general park if needed

Once you have been approved to Host.... Volunteer Hosting Policy Information

Please read the following volunteer policy information PRIOR to your arrival at your host park/course/site.

- Please review your confirmation email and park calendar and make sure the acceptance dates are the dates that you can report to duty. If there is a conflict, please contact the volunteer coordinator immediately. If during your time of duty you must take leave of absence or you must shorten your duty due to an emergency, immediately contact the park management and then the volunteer coordinator. If you have signed up for a hosting slot and you cannot make the arrangement, please contact the volunteer coordinator immediately for cancellation.
- Make sure that you are in the volunteer database and that all of your information is correct and complete. You are entered automatically in the database if you filled out your volunteer application online. If you did not fill out an application online, please make sure that you have turned in a written application to the park manager and/or the volunteer coordinator.
- If items are available--New incoming hosts receive the following items in a welcome package from the Park once their duty begins: choice of shirt(s), hat/visor, water bottle, name tag. The volunteer will have already received a 5-day camping pass from the Volunteer Coordinator. These passes are given **once** per year. Returning hosts receive the passes **once** per year and can receive replacement items as needed. Hosts **do not** receive packages or passes at each park, course or site in which they have multiple host slots per year. As we are working on transitioning this process, *please let the Volunteer Coordinator know if you have not received your 5-day camping pass upon completion of your assignment. This process will be much more seamless once our website application edits have gone into effect.
- Assignment hours vary park to park and in some cases, season to season at each park, course or site. Please make sure that your designated hours as agreed upon with the park management are an hour requirement that you CAN fulfill.
- Extra accident and liability insurance is required and is available through Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites division at the fee of \$5.00 per volunteer. It is mandatory that all volunteers purchase the insurance, once the website edits are in effect this will be part of the online registration. Until that time, this will need to be paid once you are at the park.
- Volunteers may purchase ONE half-price meal per shift worked. When a volunteer is NOT on duty, any meal is full priced.
- The Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites division does not provide free lodging for volunteers. The Campground Host agreement is that hosts are given a free campsite with available hookups in exchange for the work they give to the park per their host assignment.
- To apply for future hosting positions, regardless of how long in the program, a host must go online and complete a request application.
- If you are a golf host, please contact park for the golfing privilege policy. If you are a campground host, please speak directly to site manager regarding golfing privileges, if available.

PLEASE CONTINUE ON TO OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM GUIDELINES...

GEORGIA STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITES VOLUNTEER PROGRAM GUIDELINES

REVISED NOVEMBER 8, 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Georgia Division of Parks and Recreation would like to express appreciation to the Office of Volunteer Services, Department of Human Resources; the National Forests in Georgia; and the National Park Service for their contributions to the development of this program. Portions of these guidelines were adapted from the National Park Service's Volunteers in Parks Guidelines and Florida Park Services and North Carolina Department of Natural Resources Volunteers In Parks Guideline.

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SECTION I

1.0 DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Throughout the history of the Georgia state park system, citizens have played an important role in the growth and development of our state parks system. As the system continues to expand, we continue to strive to deliver the highest standard of public service available from any division in state government. But this growth, coupled with budgetary constraints, means we cannot alone accomplish all of our goals in terms of visitor service, environmental education and natural resource protection.

Citizen input and participation are more important than ever before in the history of the division. With the support of concerned and dedicated volunteers, we can provide the standard of service that the public has a right to expect from the Georgia Division of Parks and Recreation. Through the use of the many special skills of volunteers we will not only make the best use of our resources, but will also form valuable partnerships that will increase our base of public support and allow the public to become more fully vested in our state parks.

Volunteers have established a proud tradition in parks across our nation. Many parks and the services being provided, owe their very existence to the efforts of volunteers. Through the establishment of the Volunteer Program in the Georgia state parks system, we uphold this tradition, which is vital to our effectiveness, efficiency, and which is so much a part of our national and state heritage.

~Becky Kelly, Director Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites

2.0 MISSION STATEMENT

Volunteers in the Georgia State Park System help visitors to enjoy the natural beauty, ecological features, and recreational resources our state parks offer. Volunteers help our department respond to, contribute to, and support the Parks mission to provide outdoor recreational opportunities in a safe and healthy environment, and to provide environmental education opportunities that promote stewardship of the state's natural heritage.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The Georgia Division of Parks and Recreation Volunteer Program was created to provide better services to the public, increase opportunities for citizen involvement, and allow for better stewardship of our natural resources.

Volunteers are a crucial component to our workforce. The major objective of the program is to utilize voluntary help in such a way that it is mutually beneficial to both the state parks and the participants.

Volunteers are accepted without regard to race, creed, religion, age, color, national origin, or handicap.

Volunteers are selected to participate in the program because they can fill an identified need. They are usually individuals or members of groups with specific skills and/or interests who will perform a specific function or type of work.

The implementation of the Volunteer Program will occur in each park. Using the following guidelines as a basis, the Site Manager or designated employee(s) develops and operates a volunteer program that fits the conditions and needs of that particular park. Each park program is a local operation. Recruiting, selection, training, recognition, and the many other aspects of a volunteer program are handled on-site.

4.0 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

4.1 Director

The Director, through the Chief of Operations, sets program policy and standards.

4.2 Chief of Operations

The Chief of Operations administers the program and ensures compliance with guidelines.

4.3 Assistant Chief of Operations

The Assistant Chief of Operations oversees the Volunteer Program, Natural and Cultural Resource Management within the State, ensures compliance with guidelines and makes recommendations to Chief of Operations regarding program changes.

4.4 Resource Manager

Directly supervises the Volunteer Coordinator.

4.5 GSPHS Volunteer Coordinator

- Develops guidelines and policies
- Provides technical assistance to the field
- Monitors the database to ensure compliance by parks
- Assists parks in recruiting volunteers and coordinating volunteer activities when needed
- Works with Site Managers to resolve problems
- Monitors the program for training needs and compliance with guidelines
- Answers public inquiries about program and directs interested volunteers to parks in their area of interest
- Makes budget recommendations with regard to the Volunteer Program
- Evaluates the program and makes recommendations to Division Management for changes needed
- Makes recommendations for General Management Plans as needed
- Updates guidelines as needed
- Maintains contacts with outside organizations in the field of volunteerism
- Processes volunteer applications, mail 5 day camping pass to cleared volunteers
- Run background checks on volunteers for every 3 years volunteer is in the system
- File insurance claims as necessary

4.6 Site Manager

The Site Manager administers the program within the park, ensures compliance with guidelines, evaluates the program and volunteer, and makes recommendations to the Volunteer Coordinator.

4.7 Site Level Volunteer Manager

- Each park will have a collateral duty Volunteer Manager. The Site Manager may delegate the responsibility to a member of the staff. In the case of a small park or an inexperienced staff, the Site Manager may choose to serve as the Volunteer Manager.
- Responsibility for the Volunteer Program will be in addition to other job responsibilities. Duties of the Volunteer Manager will be specified in that individual's Work Plan like other job responsibilities.
- The percentage of time to be spent on duties of the Volunteer Manager will be determined by the Site Manager based on employee's other job responsibilities and the needs of the Volunteer Program in that park.
- The Volunteer Manager is responsible for the efficient operation of the program. The Volunteer Manager ensures that the program meets the needs of the park as well as those of the volunteer. The duties of the Volunteer Manager are listed below.
 - Assist the staff in assessing needs and identifying work that can be accomplished by volunteers

- Prepare job descriptions
- Train staff members in proper management of volunteers
- Recruit volunteers
- Interview and assign dates to pending volunteer applicants submitted through system website
- Maintain and update the volunteer time line of hosting opportunities
- Coordinate volunteer orientation and training
- Maintain contact with Site Manager and Volunteer Coordinator to ensure that program procedures are followed
- Handle correspondence relating to the program
- Submit reports as necessary to the Volunteer Coordinator. Keep staff current on ideas and procedures for utilizing volunteers

4.8 Supervisor

- Every volunteer must have a designated supervisor. Although the Volunteer Manager is responsible for the overall coordination of the park's Volunteer Program, he or she usually does not directly supervise all the volunteers. Volunteers are generally supervised by the staff member responsible for the work the volunteers are performing. Where appropriate, a volunteer may act as a supervisor of other volunteers, provided that the supervisory volunteer is under the direct supervision of a paid staff member. The staff member who directly supervises a volunteer is responsible for the following:
 - Training and orientation
 - Supervision
 - Monitoring and evaluating the volunteer's performance
 - Maintaining close contact with the Volunteer Manager to ensure that the work is in accord with overall objectives

5.0 VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS

5.1 Who May Volunteer?

Almost anyone may participate in the Volunteer Program. A volunteer is anyone who performs work for the Division of Parks and Recreation for which he or she receives no pay from the Division. The volunteer may receive pay, work credit, academic credit, or other compensation from sources outside the Division of Parks and Recreation. **Off-duty Division employees* (see 5.2) and their family members may be volunteers. Students doing required course work, and individuals from the private sector whose employer is donating their services to the Division while still keeping them on their payroll (i.e., personnel from the local camera shop giving evening programs on photography) are also considered volunteers. Volunteers are recruited and accepted from the public without regard to race, creed, religion, age, sex, color, or national origin.

- Community Volunteers- Help on a day-to-day basis at a Park as they are available. Our community volunteers help with leading hikes, helping with maintenance, assisting with the visitor or retail center, guide new visitors to park activities and locations.
- Campground Hosts- Stay in their personal RV at designated free Host Site for 2-6 months in exchange for a minimum of 24 hours of volunteer work. See 5.6 for further details. Same guidelines apply for all Maintenance, Train and Golf Hosts.
- Group Volunteers-Civic, church, scouting, universities and other groups that come out for a day or a collection of days to work together collectively to accomplish a project for the Parks.

5.2 Employees and Family Members as Volunteers

Off-Duty Division employees may serve as a volunteer with the Division as long as the duties he or she performs as a volunteer are not the same type of duties for which he or she is paid. For example, an administrative assistant in the Site Manager's office may volunteer to give an interpretive program in the park on her own time as a volunteer, but may not volunteer to do administrative/clerical work for the Park Manager. Nor can Park Managers suggest employees do programs on a voluntary basis at their park. The employee must make the decision without coercion.

Off-Duty Park Staff may volunteer at another park if they are so inclined. Off-Duty Atlanta office and regional staff may volunteer in the parks.

Family members and relatives of Division employees may serve as volunteers as long as the Division representative signing the Agreement for Voluntary Services is not an immediate family member.

5.3 What Can Volunteers Do?

Volunteers may be utilized in any and all parts of the park management system with the exception of law enforcement. All levels and types of skills may be utilized. Any type of work may be performed as long as it is work that:

Would not otherwise be completed during a particular fiscal year because of funding or personnel limitations.

OR

Allows paid employees to accomplish work that would not otherwise be completed during a particular fiscal year because of funding or personnel limitations.

For example, a park might recruit volunteers to construct a trail, organize and catalog the photo file, conduct research on an endangered species, repair picnic tables, or paint and install signs in the campground--all work that needs to be accomplished but has been cut out by reduced funding and personnel limitations. Parks might recruit volunteers to help translate park documents, materials and signs, and provide translation services to help parks communicate with non-English speaking visitors. Another example might be a park that recruits a retired couple with an RV to temporarily (minimum 2 months, maximum 6 months) live and work in the campground as campground hosts; registering campers, giving out information, checking the campground and bathhouses, and doing minor maintenance. This would free a ranger to perform other necessary duties that otherwise might not be completed.

Parks should consider utilizing volunteer assistance as one means of accomplishing park management goals, but should also recognize that volunteers are not always free. They should only be utilized in situations where their participation is cost-effective.

There are a few constraints which must be considered when assigning volunteers to work projects. No volunteer should be required to perform any type of work that he or she does not feel comfortable doing or does not willingly agree to do. Nor can volunteers work in the role of law enforcement for the park.

Volunteers who are assigned to operate machinery or equipment (such as chainsaws, power tools, specialized equipment, etc.) must receive training and demonstrate their proficiency in the operation of that equipment to the satisfaction of the responsible supervisor. All applicable age restrictions relating to the operation of machinery or equipment must be observed. Volunteers must observe the same safety precautions and use the same safety equipment as park staff.

Volunteers may assist in the visitor protection functions of the park such as acting as park radio dispatcher on weekends and at other times when the office assistant or other staff are not available; acting as campground host providing a deterrent to vandalism and theft in the campground by their presence; or assisting in search and rescue efforts. Volunteers must not be assigned duties that would place them in a life-threatening situation, even as an observer (i.e. serving as backup on patrol). Volunteers do not issue citations or carry firearms.

Volunteers should not be assigned to hazardous work. When the task or equipment to be used indicates the need for operational and/or safety training, the volunteer will not be allowed to perform the job until all training is completed, the supervisor knows the volunteer's work capability, and the volunteer understands the job and its hazards. Consult the Volunteer Coordinator or Assistant Chief of Operations with any questions about whether a volunteer should be assigned a specific duty. It is illegal for persons under the age of 18 to perform

certain jobs. If further assistance is needed in determining appropriate activities for minors, contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

The staff member that oversees volunteer projects at the park level, Volunteer Manager, shall be responsible for ensuring that youth groups are not assigned jobs that are hazardous or equipment that is illegal for youths to operate. The Volunteer Manager of the site and/or the Volunteer Coordinator shall also ensure that youth groups are supervised by an adequate number of adults.

5.4 Use of State-Owned Vehicles

Volunteers who have a valid driver's license may operate Division-owned vehicles when it is a part of their assigned work and is so stated in their job description provided they have successfully completed all agency requirements, i.e., defensive driver training.

State Vehicle Liability Insurance

Volunteers may be authorized to drive state vehicles as a part of their assigned duties. Property damage or personal injury liability claims from a third party arising out of a vehicle insurance program at no cost to the volunteer if the driver is authorized to drive the state vehicle and the accident occurred during the performance of assigned duties.

5.5 Volunteers Handling State Funds

Volunteers may collect fees only in strict compliance with procedures authorized by the State Auditor's Office for collection of fees and only upon the specific approval of such duties by the Site Manager.

5.6 Definitions and Duties

a) Hosts

The Campground Host program utilizes volunteers who can furnish their own lodging (camper, RV, or motor home). The volunteer(s) must commit to a specific amount of time to serve as resident Campground Hosts in State Parks and Recreation Area campgrounds. The minimum required time is 2 months; the maximum should be 6 months consecutively at one site. Though a host may have reached the limitation of 6 months at one site, they are still able to host at other Georgia State Park(s) keeping within the 2-6 month requirement. Ideally, a Campground Host would serve throughout the peak camping season. However, in cases where a potential Host would be available for only a six-week and no other Host is available, the Site Manager will decide whether to allow shorter or longer commitments. Individuals, couples, or even families may serve as Hosts. Retired couples often find it an ideal way to spend a few months.

Duties of the Campground/Train/Golf/Maintenance Host may include the following:

- Provide information and explain rules and regulations to visitors
- Assist visitors with services available
- Collection of fees from visitors (as long as it is in compliance with authorized procedures)
- Distribute maps and brochures to visitors
- Perform light maintenance work around the campground such as picking up litter, cleaning and stocking restroom facilities
- Perform emergency repairs
- Perform emergency assistance for visitors such as unlocking gate in emergency situation, and keeping first aid kit on hand for minor cuts and abrasions
- Help reduce litter and vandalism (mainly by their presence)
- Gather information on use of facilities
- Keep park staff informed of any problems
- Work in the visitors center and retail centers
- Perform other duties as appropriate

Hosts are provided a free campsite near the main entryway to the campground or other central location so that they may be easily identified and available to visitors. The normal camping time limit is waived, the host minimum time commitment is 2 months and the maximum at one Park is 6 months. If available, utility hookups may be furnished at no cost. Hosts work under a specific agreement and job description just like any other volunteer. They must receive sufficient orientation and training to enable them to adequately perform their job. Hosts should work under the supervision of the employee who has direct responsibility for the site in which they are located. This position requires working weekends, holidays and evening hours.

b) Community Volunteers

Community Volunteers help on a day-to-day basis at a Park as they are available. Some community volunteers elect to come in once a week, some choose once a month and some choose once a year. They work with the park staff to determine the need and coordinate their involvement. Some of the programs our community volunteers help with include leading hikes, helping with maintenance, assisting with the visitor or retail center, guide new visitors to park activities and locations and the list goes on. If you have a particular talent that you want to share with the park, be sure to include it on your application and let the staff know. If appropriate, we will find a way to utilize volunteer talents to increase program opportunities for the public.

c) Group Volunteers

Group Volunteers can include Civic, church, scouting, universities and other groups that come out for a day or a collection of days to work together collectively to accomplish a project for the Parks. Group volunteer work days can increase team morale and spirit of servitude. Groups can volunteer together for a pre-arranged volunteer work day at one of our parks or a tailor made project can be created for you depending upon your group's schedule and availability. The Volunteer Coordinator in Atlanta would be happy to assist with this option.

6.0 PROTECTION

Volunteers who are involved in the host programs or who work at the site on a regular basis and without direct supervision by Park staff must be currently registered in the DNR system.

*When determining if a volunteer should be registered in the DNR system with a background check, use this checklist to help make that determination.

- ✓ Does this person volunteer at the park at least once per month or 20 hours a year?
- ✓ Does this person interact with the public/visitors/customers without *direct* supervision by Park Staff?
- ✓ Are there opportunities that this person would be alone with a visitor/customer while performing role as volunteer?

If **any** of the answers are "yes", then the volunteer *must be* registered online. If the **all** answers are "no" the volunteer can pay the excess liability coverage (good for 1 year) at the site and commence to volunteer for the day/period.

6.1 Background Check

As required by the state of Georgia beginning June 2011, on a regular basis we will be running a criminal background check on our registered volunteers. We at the Department of Natural Resources and Georgia State Park and Historic Sites value the safety and experience of everyone that visits our parks and sites. The patrons and visitors that come to our park expect to be served in a safe environment. To help to ensure their safety, and the safety of our volunteers and staff, we now run criminal background checks on all staff and volunteers. Thank you for your understanding!

6.2 Excess Liability Coverage

Excess insurance provides the following coverage:

- a. Excess Accident Medical Insurance:**

Pays up to \$50,000 for medical treatment of the Volunteer, hospitalization and licensed nursing care required as a result of a Volunteer-related accident. Accidental death and dismemberment coverage is included. Certain limitations apply.

b. Excess Personal Liability Insurance:

Protects the Volunteer from personal injury or property damage claims arising out of the performance of the Volunteer's duties.

Excluded from the coverage are claims arising from 1) use of a vehicle, 2) rendering or failure to render medical services, and 3) any claim arising out of either sexual abuse or a licentious, immoral or sexual act.

In order for volunteers to receive this protection, it is imperative that they be properly enrolled and operating under written job descriptions containing specific information on the type of work they are assigned to do. This is necessary in case questions arise on whether a volunteer was acting within the scope of his or her assigned duties.

No Workers' Compensation Provided

Volunteers are not employees of DNR or the State of Georgia. Their volunteered services are accepted by DNR as a donation or gift to the State of Georgia. The structuring of the Volunteer Program is to make the acceptance of donated services as beneficial to the users of the State's facilities as possible, and to enhance the quality of the visitor's experience. Similarly, the assignment of hours of service and of duties is to allocate opportunities among the Volunteer corps and is not meant to exercise control or direction over the Volunteers. Injuries a Volunteer may suffer, including death or dismemberment, while participating in the Volunteer Program are not covered by Workers' Compensation.

State Vehicle Liability Insurance

Volunteers may be authorized to drive state vehicles as a part of their assigned duties. Property damage or personal injury liability claims from a third party arising out of a vehicle insurance program at no cost to the volunteer if the driver is authorized to drive the state vehicle and the accident occurred during the performance of assigned duties.

6.3 Use of Volunteer's Personal Equipment

Volunteers must use state-owned equipment and property in their work, rather than their own personal property. There are no provisions to reimburse volunteers for personal equipment or property that is lost, damaged or destroyed. With regard to personal clothing and equipment used by reenactment groups, Site Managers may, at their discretion, grant permission for their use. The State, however, assumes no liability for the damage or loss of these items.

6.4 Safety

It is the responsibility of Georgia State Parks to ensure a safe working environment. The park provides training and safety guidelines for use of park equipment. Shop rules are to be followed. All equipment must be cared for and maintained. Follow park rules and regulations pertaining to equipment. If you are unfamiliar with the equipment or methods of use, ask for instructions.

The Park Service recognizes that volunteers are sometimes assigned duties that expose the volunteer to blood borne pathogens (bodily fluids) and other potentially infectious materials. Accordingly, the park will assist in reducing the risks and exposure for the volunteer who is performing such duties with potential exposure. For instance, if the volunteer is responsible for cleaning the comfort station, be sure to wear gloves and use the appropriate cleaning agents to sanitize the area. Become oriented with these procedures and policies by speaking to the volunteer supervisor.

Volunteers performing resource management duties are to wear appropriate personal protection for duties assigned. An example includes hand and eye protection if the volunteer is doing exotic removal. It is also a good idea to have insect repellent, sunscreen and water available as you are working in Georgia.

Park staff will provide information on emergency procedures, emergency phone numbers and first aid. Volunteers are not expected to perform any duty or job they do not feel capable of performing.

6.5 Volunteer injuries/accidents

- Use the following guidelines when dealing with a volunteer injury or accident
- Administer first-aid treatment, call 911, if necessary
- Complete an immediate assessment of why the accident/injury occurred and take action to insure there is no reoccurrence.
- Fill out an accident/incident report form
- Gather information needed for report form [Volunteer Universal Claims Form](#)
- All injuries must be reported to your immediate supervisor (within 48 hours), even if the volunteer did not want to receive medical treatment.
- Send a copy of the accident/incident form and Universal Claims Form to Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteer Coordinator should forward a copy to the Assistant Chief of Operations. If necessary, further investigation may take place.

7.0 UNIFORMS

7.1 Identification

There should be a clear and visible distinction between paid employees and volunteers, and volunteers must not be dressed in a manner that may duplicate the appearance of the State Park uniform. Volunteers should be easily recognized as State Park volunteers by the visiting public for several reasons. Park visitors should be aware that the volunteers are not State Park employees, nor are they community service workers. The presence of volunteers may also draw the interest of park visitors to inquire about other volunteer opportunities.

The method for identifying non-regular community volunteers to the public for non-regular volunteers will be a stick-on pre-printed label that reads —"Volunteer" and has the GA State Parks logo on it. Long-term volunteers should have a volunteer pin/name tag worn on the right front chest of their shirt.

The Division will attempt to obtain shirts from outdoor clothing and gear companies to be provided to volunteers who meet certain criteria. The shirts will have —Volunteer and the GA State Parks logo on it. Volunteers may wear these t-shirts as well as their name tag once they have received one by meeting the required criteria.

7.2 Clothing (street or outdoor type)

The volunteer may elect to wear either volunteer shirt or hat/visor with regular street clothes. Regardless, the volunteer nametag should always be worn. Some parks may require certain clothing for safety reasons, such as closed-toe shoes or long pants when working outdoors. Gloves may be provided or required for certain jobs.

7.3 Historical Period Clothing

Volunteers involved in historic reenactment programs are not required to wear the stick-on volunteer label; however, an effort should be made to let the public know that volunteers are involved in that particular activity.

7.4 Sources of Supply

The stick-on and pin volunteer label is available from the Volunteer Coordinator. If the Division is able to obtain shirts from outdoor clothing and gear companies, those will also be available from the Volunteer Coordinator. [Supply request](#) can be found on Staff Resources: Volunteer Forms. Volunteers may also wear other items which can be approved by the Site Manager.

8.0 HOUSING VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers may be lodged in State Park facilities and will not, as a matter of policy, be charged rent.

Site Managers should use prudence in assigning rent-free quarters to volunteers to assure fairness to state employees who are required to pay rental rates. Criteria for such assignments should be as follows:

It must be clearly understood that the unit being considered for volunteer occupancy is not needed at the time for employee housing or other park needs. The volunteer assigned to the quarters must contribute sufficient hours or make a significant contribution to the park to justify free housing in the park.

Listed below are some examples of lodging volunteers in State Park facilities.

- Parks might allow volunteers groups such as scouts or another organized group to camp for a free night or weekend if they were working on a significant project while they camped.
- Ft. McAllister offers housing for students who are volunteering for an internship for the summer. They work alongside and have the same duties as other hired seasonal in addition to any projects required by their school.
- Watson Mill Bridge State Park has an equestrian campground site for a campground host. The hookups and site are free to the host in exchange for hosting a minimum of 24 hours per week.
- Site Managers are encouraged to utilize otherwise unoccupied, decent, safe, and sanitary quarters to house volunteers whenever appropriate. In doing so, parks will be able to utilize volunteers from outside the local commuting area. This should result in an increase in the number of highly skilled volunteers parks are able to attract and an increase in the amount of high priority work accomplished.
- Rental Agreements as determined necessary on a case-by-case basis

9.0 RECOGNITION EVENTS

As part of their budget and/or in conjunction with Friends partnership and support Parks host recognition events for the volunteers in the park. Another option to reduce costs but increase participation, motivation and morale of staff and volunteer is to host pot-luck events at the site. Park staff are encouraged to seek the participation of support groups, local merchants, or other private sources for additional goods or services to carry out these events. Each park may want to have an annual recognition event for volunteers. Cookouts and other informal gatherings are nice ways to get staff, volunteers, and their families together for recognition. Local merchants, community leaders, and support groups may be invited to participate. This is a good way to interest potential volunteers and get the community involved.

**Staff See Section II: 13.19 for more suggestions on retaining and recognizing volunteers.*

10.0 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Orientation

Orientation to the Volunteer Program for new volunteers will begin once the volunteer completes a Volunteer Application and the Volunteer Agreement Confirmation. Orientation to the Park includes basic training, policy discussion and position description. The scheduling and frequency of orientation will vary from park to park, in general it takes place within the first week of assignment. Supervision can range from park management to a ranger to a volunteer supervisor. The Park Manager or Volunteer Manager of the site will communicate the volunteer work hours, duties and responsibilities. The Park Manager is ultimately responsible for that park's program.

Training

Volunteer training is ongoing. As a volunteer spends more time at a park, his/her duties can change or the volunteer will take on more responsibility. Park management provide ongoing training for general interests and specific duties. Park management will communicate training schedules. Express to park management your interest in areas that you would like additional training.

Park Management

The Park service is dedicated to its volunteers. The agency encourages teamwork between employees and volunteers. Park management is ultimately responsible for the park's volunteer program. The Park Manager's responsibility includes the program's compliance with the Division of Recreation and Parks philosophy and policy.

11.0 RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

Various forms are used in the Division's volunteer program for record keeping and reporting. The forms have been listed below, along with instructions. These forms are available in the [Staff Resources](#) section of the www.gastateparks.org website. Efforts to consolidate these forms will be made, and any changes will be found on the website.

[Volunteer Welcome Packet](#) - Located in Staff Resources Volunteer Form link on website

Including general job descriptions must be written for each volunteer position. It is helpful when advertising for the position, or answering inquiries. It is a necessary tool when interviewing a prospective volunteer. The job description must be attached to the Volunteer Application & Services Agreement.

[Volunteer Application](#) –Located in Staff Resources Volunteer Form link on website

The Volunteer Application should be submitted online at www.gastateparks.org/volunteer, if at all possible. If the prospective volunteer does not have access to the internet and cannot complete it using the park's computer, the paper version of the application can be submitted to the Atlanta office where it will be entered into the website data tracking system. The application form is designed to gather pertinent information about a potential volunteer's background, areas of interest, and skills. It can be used to screen applicants, to develop a file of potential volunteers for future needs, or to refer volunteers to other areas. An application should be completed by each prospective volunteer and by individuals representing a group of volunteers. The application process includes the payment and processing of the Insurance Excess Liability Coverage and the Criminal Background Check.

[Volunteer Evaluation](#)— Located in Staff Resources Volunteer Form link on website

(for long term volunteers) This form serves as an aid in evaluating volunteers. It affords an opportunity for the volunteer to receive feedback on his or her performance. Volunteers should be evaluated by their supervisor after the first month or six weeks. They should receive an evaluation when the volunteer or Division terminates his or her services and at least annually for continuing volunteers.

[Volunteer Injury/Accident Report and Universal Claims Form](#)— Located in Staff Resources link on website

This form is used when an injury occurs to a park volunteer. Copies must be sent to the Volunteer Coordinator. Leave any fields of unknown codes blank; we will fill those in at the Atlanta office as necessary.

[Record of Volunteer Hours Worked](#)—Located in Staff Resources link on website

This form provides a record of hours as well as assignments for volunteers who participate in more than one activity. It is important that each park develop a system for recording the number of hours each volunteer works. If your site doesn't have staff available to enter this on a regular basis, feel free to direct your volunteers to track their own hours and report it using this online form. Volunteers are motivated by receiving recognition to the time they have dedicated as well as the quality of the work they have performed. Tracking hours enables us to recognize those that come back month after month or year after year.

[Volunteer's Evaluation of Assignment](#) - (for long term volunteers)— Located in Staff Resources link on website

Each volunteer should be given an opportunity to evaluate the volunteer program and his or her assignment. This form should be completed by the volunteer at the same time as their evaluation. The purpose of this form is to help parks improve their volunteer programs.

[Parental Approval Form](#)—Look for it soon on the Staff Resources Volunteer Section of website

A Parental Approval Form must be signed by the parent or guardian of all volunteers under the age of 18 and attached to the Volunteer Services Agreement form

[Group Project Collection Form](#) – SOON to be Located in Staff Resources link on website

To collect the names, projects and hours of volunteers that come in for a 1-day or special large project on your site. Keep a copy for your files and send a copy to the Volunteer Coordinator in Atlanta.

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS & COMMENTS

During your time volunteering for Georgia State Parks if there are questions or concerns about park personnel, park systems or procedures, or general comments please address those with the Assistant Site Manager or Site Manager. If it is prior to or after an assignment or if you do not feel comfortable with speaking directly with park personnel, feel free to contact Nyleta Wallace, Volunteer Coordinator. Nyleta will be able to assess best course of action and who should be notified.

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for Georgia State Parks!

Nyleta Wallace
Volunteer Coordinator

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