

YORK COUNTY PARKS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

York County is establishing a new volunteer program for York County Park(s). A successful volunteer program requires adequate planning, improved volunteer management skills, and enthusiastic support from the County. The information contained in the document has been prepared to serve as a program guide for volunteer services.

York County Park(s) recognizes the value of using volunteers to provide a variety of services for park visitors. York County Park(s) does not have adequate staff members to meet all the needs of the public, and volunteers can take advantage of special skills not otherwise available or in short supply from existing staff members. Volunteers can reduce costs and create a positive attitude toward park activities with members of the general public.

DEFINITION

- a. "Volunteer" shall mean any person who, of his own free will, provides goods or services, without any financial gain, to any agency, instrumentality or political subdivision of the State.
- b. "Regular-service volunteer" shall mean any person engaged in specific voluntary service activities on an ongoing or continuous basis.
- c. "Occasional-service volunteer" shall mean any person who provides a one time or occasional voluntary service

York County Park(s) Guidelines

York County Park(s), for the purpose of this document, considers a volunteer to be any person that provides a service without benefit of wages from the agency. Volunteers may serve in many areas, as long as the service does not put the volunteer in a potentially hazardous situation. They may serve in the program area where they will be instructors or leaders in interpretive or recreational activities. The operational, administrative, and maintenance areas offer opportunities for volunteers to assist with trail work, office work, and other routine park duties.

Minimum age for a volunteer is typically 16 years of age. They must be physically able to perform the assigned work. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have written approval from their parents or guardian. In special circumstances, volunteers under the age of 16 may be utilized with prior approval of the volunteer coordinator. York County Park(s) will accept volunteers without discrimination because of race, religion, color, political affiliation, physical disability, national origin, sex or age; except where sex or age is a bonafide occupational qualification. Efforts will be made to select volunteers who can best provide the specific service in accordance with the park's goals and objectives. All applicable Department of Labor age restrictions relating to the operation of machinery, equipment, or type work must be observed. Volunteers will usually be individuals or members of groups with specific skills and/or interests who will perform a specific function or type of work. The volunteer programs can provide opportunities for individuals to gain experience in certain areas, develop skills or determine their abilities and potential for a career in park-related work.

York County Park(s) will make the necessary effort to recruit qualified volunteers; however, the park will only accept volunteers that meet the qualifications outlined for a specific service.

This procedure is required on ALL volunteers. This includes volunteers working in interpretive or education programs, campground hosts, and any other volunteer.

Park Staff will evaluate potential volunteers on the basis of past work and/or volunteer experience, mental capability, physical ability and willingness to work in a specific environment of the park. The relationship between the volunteer and the park service is extremely important. The following items will be the basis for this relationship:

- (1) The park service expects to receive an acceptable effort and service from the volunteer.
- (2) The park service expects that the volunteer will accept the required responsibilities.
- (3) The park service reserves the right to release undesirable volunteers.
- (4) The volunteer will be given suitable assignments with consideration for personal preference, experience, education, etc.
- (5) The volunteer will be informed about the park service and its Guidelines / procedures.
- (6) The volunteer will receive adequate instruction for the assigned task(s).
- (7) The volunteer will be given adequate, positive supervision.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES AND BENEFITS

Volunteers working in parks must obey the same safety precautions and use the same safety equipment as regular employees.

The volunteer is a visible representative of the county and, therefore, it is necessary that he/she project a positive image. The volunteer must dress in a neat, clean manner appropriate for the type of work to be done. Volunteers cannot dress in a manner that attempts to duplicate the official county uniforms.

Volunteers may use supplies and equipment to meet the needs of the job description. Approval must be secured from park staff for volunteers to use personal equipment or supplies.

Tort liability insurance, for the volunteer's actions, is provided by the county to volunteers to the same extent as is provided to regular employees, as long as the volunteer is working within the limits of the job description.

York County Park(s) provides a minimum coverage for injury resulting from volunteer activities under certain conditions. Volunteers are not covered under laws that provide for workman's compensation.

Volunteers may be housed in campgrounds. Usually, they are not charged, but the park service reserves the right to charge certain fees

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORMS

All volunteers must sign the proper volunteer agreement form unless they are a minor or a member of a volunteer group. A parent or guardian must sign for a minor and an official representative of a volunteer group must sign the required agreement form for volunteer groups. A record is maintained at the park on age, sex, total hours worked and the total number of volunteers.

PARK / CAMPGROUND HOST PROGRAM

York County Park(s) will utilize volunteers to fulfill a Host program at its parks. This program will be a part of the Volunteers in the Parks program and be administered in accordance with those established procedures. The individual park's Park Rangers will serve as the supervisor for their Host. .

Park Rangers, will develop and convey job descriptions and requirements. As a minimum, the requirements will include the following:

1. Major objectives of the job: To serve as a Park Service representative to campers and other park visitors by providing assistance and serving as an information source; assist the park in providing a quality campground / park experience.
2. Major responsibilities: To be available to campers in order to render assistance and provide information; to ensure that the facilities and grounds are maintained in a condition that will ensure camper / visitor satisfaction. The host should be a "model camper" maintaining their campsite as such, and strictly adhering to park rules and regulations.
3. Type of work performed: Provide information to campers and other visitors about the park, its operation and the surrounding area. Provide general assistance to campers. Monitor problems and obtain assistance from park staff. Check facilities for maintenance problems and provide staff with information concerning the problems. Be the primary contact point between staff and campers. Work in program activities, if qualified. Perform light housekeeping activities on grounds and facilities. Perform specialized maintenance activities (based upon training and experience). Assist with administrative duties, to include handling of park monetary funds, as approved by Park Superintendent and only after completion of successful SLED criminal background check.

4. Time commitment and duration of program: The host will provide a minimum of four hours per day, five days per week, actively pursuing the items covered in "Type of Work Performed". In addition, the host must be available to provide assistance on an as-needed basis at any time they are on the park. For the purpose of required hours, the reference is by site (Example: if a husband and wife are hosting, they will not both be required to perform a minimum of 20 hours)

The Host program will begin on a date mutually agreeable to Park Superintendent. There will be no restriction as to the time of year when the program can begin. Some parks may offer a "year-round" program. The host must agree not to be absent from the campground for more than one week during the program period, or the host will be terminated.

Length of Stay for Hosts:

The maximum length of stay for a host to remain at one location will be six months during any twelve-month period. At some parks, this period may be shorter. The length of stay will be determined by the Park Superintendent. However, the agreed-upon length must not exceed six months during any twelve-month period.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For non- resident volunteers, the maximum length of stay may be less than six months due to residential taxation requirements by the County. It will be the park manager's responsibility to contact the County Auditor to determine how long a non-resident volunteer can reside at one location without being susceptible to taxation issues on his / her property. (Example – Horry County is 150 days)

The Host program should not be a means for someone to become a permanent resident of a campground.

5. Type of supervision: The Park Superintendent will be the primary supervisor. In the Superintendent's absence, the Park Ranger staff will assume the supervision.

6. Qualifications required: The host must be in a physical condition that will allow him / her to adequately execute the items covered under "Type of Work Performed." The host must be able to deal tactfully and cordially with the public. The host must agree to the agency performing various background checks as well as Employment Verification (E-Verify).

An Agreement must be prepared for each host per example in the Volunteer in the Parks Program information.

Additional information follows that is pertinent to implementations of this program.

PARK / CAMPGROUND HOST VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Typical Duties:

- Remove trash around campsites when sites are unoccupied.
- Rake sites when sites are unoccupied.
- Maintain/clean restrooms.
- Make list of maintenance needs.
- Know personnel on duty and how to contact them.
- Know phone numbers of all park staff Give information on:
 - ✓ Park facilities and related fees.
 - ✓ Local points of interest.
 - ✓ Nearby parks.
 - ✓ Nearby stores.
 - ✓ Nearby medical assistance.
 - ✓ Provide information on park activities and programs.
 - ✓ Should inform campers or visitors when they are in violation or rules and regulations.

- Other related duties as determined by the Park Superintendent relevant to host's training and experience.

Note: A Host should not take any action beyond an information level when violations are noticed - contact duty ranger to handle these situations.

Use of Campground:

- Site will usually be designated near campground entrance and signed as "Park Host" or "Campground Host." Utilities will be provided at no cost.
- Requirement for moving every 14 days will not be in effect for this individual.
- No permanent or semi-permanent facilities can be constructed on this site. The site will not give the appearance of a year-round resident.

Criteria for Program:

- Position will be posted in park facilities as to availability.
- Individual may be single or married.
- Must not have other employment during the volunteer period.
- Term of program is to be established by the Park Superintendent in accordance with other directives. Agreement may be terminated by either party. Insufficient or unsatisfactory work will be grounds for termination. Absence from the park for more than one week may result in termination of the agreement.
- Hours of work to be set up with the Park Superintendent typically for five days per week and a minimum of four hours per day. Hours per week will be at a minimum of twenty hours.

Insurance:

- Workman's Compensation not available. All volunteers program participants need to evaluate their own health/medical/disability/life
- Insurance policies and needs in order to determine sufficiency of coverage in the event of injury, disability, or death while a program participant.
- Tort liability coverage for the actions of the employee acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities.

Uniform and Appearance:

- Shirts, name tag, cap and / or vest may be provided as funding allows.
- Host's appearance must reflect a positive image to the visitor.

York County
VOLUNTEER IN THE PARKS PROGRAM

PARK

AGREEMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTARY SERVICES

Name: Last, first, middle initial (please print)

Phone

Address: Street, city, state, zip code

Brief description of work to be performed, including minimum time commitment required. (Attach complete job description to this form).

Start Date: _____

End Date: _____

I understand that I will not receive any compensation for the above work and that volunteers are not considered to be county employees for any purpose, and I understand that volunteer service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefits. I also understand that either the park or I may cancel this agreement at any time by notifying the other party.

I hereby volunteer my services as described above, to assist the Park Service of York County in its authorized work.

Signature of Volunteer

Date

Signature of Park Official

Date

TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

Agreement Terminated on _____

Signature of Volunteer

Date

Signature of Park Official

Date

