

Guidelines for 2026 Living History at Eisenhower NHS

The following are guidelines for living history participation at Eisenhower National Historic Site (NHS) 2026 WWII Weekend Event on September 18-20. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in dismissal from the event. We appreciate your cooperation in presenting safe and enriching living history programming at Eisenhower National Historic Site.

Personal Behavior and Code of Conduct

1. As a living history participant at the Eisenhower National Historic Site you represent the National Park Service (NPS) as an interpretive volunteer. All participants will sign a 2026 volunteer agreement with the park. You are expected to conduct yourself in a professional and courteous manner when dealing with the public, park staff, and other living history volunteers. Discriminatory or harassing behavior towards staff, other volunteers, or visitors will not be tolerated.
 - a. As volunteers for the National Park Service, all participants must adhere to the National Park Service Anti-Harassment Policy laid out in Directors Orders #16E. A copy of the order can be found here: [Director's Order #16E: National Park Service Anti-Harassment Policy \(amended 3/3/2025\)](#). Anyone found exhibiting harassing behaviors will be asked to leave the event and participation in future events will be restricted.
2. Courtesy to the public is required. Use of colorful language (no matter how authentic) will not be tolerated. The general public includes children. Be sensitive to proper etiquette with different age groups.
3. Living history volunteers are not permitted to sell any items to the public or other living historians while at the historic site. World War II items, including books, must only be sold through our site bookstore at the Gettysburg NMP Museum and Visitor Center. It is NPS policy that only NPS authorized vendors may make sales.
4. Living history volunteers or groups may not conduct fundraising as part of their participation in this event. Group literature or handouts that direct to websites or newsletters that have separate fundraising information are acceptable.
5. Use and possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited on National Park Service property. Those in violation will be asked to leave and will not be allowed to participate in future events.

WWII Weekend Registration, Check In, and Set-Up

1. All participating groups must be approved and invited by the NPS and must meet authenticity guidelines and safety requirements. Groups need to register in advance to ensure their space needs and numbers are properly communicated to the NPS.

2. Once registration is complete, participating group leaders will fill out 2026 volunteer forms for their respective groups. All participating members will sign their group volunteer form upon arrival and check-in for the event.
3. Check in for the event will open at 10 a.m. and close at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, September 18. Check-in will resume at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 19 and conclude at 9:00 a.m. If you cannot check in during these times, contact the park or your group leader in advance.
4. All participants must check-in and sign their volunteer group form prior to the camp opening to the public at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday.
5. Displays may be set up during check-in hours on Friday, Sept 18, and Saturday, Sept 19. The camp must be clear of personal vehicles and camp sites/display areas must be open to the public by 9:00 am on Saturday and 9:00 am on Sunday.

Authenticity Guidelines

1. As interpretive volunteers representing the National Park Service, living history participants are expected to present well researched impressions and displays. Groups are expected to know their material well. Living history participants are expected to interact with the public in an engaging and respectful way.
2. All living history impressions and displays will align with the theme and goals of the event and be coordinated with NPS staff. Participating groups and individuals must apply and be vetted and approved by the NPS to participate in living history events at Eisenhower NHS.
3. NPS staff have the right to refuse participation or not invite groups to participate in future events if impressions are not accurate to the time, group being portrayed, and the event theme.
4. World War II Weekend is not a first-person style living history event. First-person impressions specifically portraying individuals as Dwight Eisenhower, members of the Eisenhower family, or other notable figures from World War II may not be allowed.
5. Event themes and goals will be laid out by the NPS staff at Eisenhower NHS, in consultation with a living history committee, made up of invited volunteers with a track record of excellent living history demonstrations and displays.

2026 Event Theme and Impressions

For the 2026 WWII Weekend, living history impressions and displays will interpret the theme: “The Fight for Liberty: The Revolution to the Great Crusade.” Groups should indicate which category they will focus on and communicate the details of their impression in advance to the NPS. Groups display categories include the following:

1. The Fight for Liberty (US Forces):
 - a. During the Revolution, Americans relied on Allies for support in their fight for independence. In WWII, Americans and Allies fought together to liberate occupied lands from tyranny and fascism. Groups portraying overseas US forces should be depicting campaigns liberating occupied territories. Stateside training or recruiting impressions should highlight how the ideals and imagery of the Revolution were used in recruiting drives.
 - b. U.S. impressions may include U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army Air Force, and U.S. Coast Guard.
2. The Fight for Liberty (Allied Forces):
 - a. Just as in the Revolution, Americans relied on Allies in World War II. Groups depicting Allied nations should highlight campaigns or ways their country's forces worked with or fought alongside Americans during the war.
3. Liberty on the Homefront
 - a. Just as in the Revolution, the fight for liberty in World War II relied on support on the Homefront for the U.S. and its Allies. Homefront groups should interpret and focus on how the fight for liberty impacted civilians in either the U.S. or other Allied nations. Who were the people who supported the Allied war effort? How did they support the war? How did the fight for liberty impact them?
4. Cost of Liberty
 - a. Just as in the Revolution, the fight for liberty 80 years ago had a tremendous human cost. Who were the people who bore that cost? How are they remembered and honored? Groups can interpret specific individuals who fought in liberation campaigns and tell their stories. (Note: this is not a first-person interpretation category).
5. 1776 to 1944: Displays can also highlight the differences in service branches between the Revolution and the Second World War. Examples would be the evolution in American fighting soldiers, sailors, and Marines over 170 years. Examples can also include how the Revolution factored in popular imagery during WWII and was used to support the war effort.

WWII Weekend Camp Sites

1. Living History camp sites will be open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday.
2. Displays should be staffed with participants present and interacting with the public during event hours. If displays are left unattended, or if groups leave the site during event hours, those groups will not be invited back for future events.
3. Camp sites must be free from excessive noise that distracts from programming and event activities. If your group is planning on having sound effects as part of your display, this must be cleared with the NPS first.

4. Do not begin breaking down camp and leaving before the event concludes at 3:00 pm on Sunday. Those wishing to break down camp before the event is over must coordinate with the NPS.
5. In the event of inclement weather, the NPS may approve early breakdown and closure. This approval will only come from NPS staff.
6. Due to limited space in camp, when putting up tents please place tents as close as possible to each other. Cross rope tie-down lines to maximize use of available space.
7. All tracks and vehicles that are 2 ½ ton or larger need a ground guide at all when moving in the encampment.
8. All vehicles need a ground guide with a safety vest and flashlight/chem-light during hours of darkness.
9. Do not place tents, rope ties, tent stakes, or vehicles in roadway lanes.
10. Please keep camp sites free from distracting modern intrusions such as modern coolers and food containers.
11. Digging of any kind or any depth is not permitted in camp. Eisenhower NHS is a NPS site and no digging is allowed without proper NPS guidance.
12. Trash will be contained in the individual camps in appropriate garbage containers/bags.
 - a. Trash Pick Up Times: Saturday and Sunday – 8:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m.
 - b. Please set out garbage bags along Nevins Lane (on the east side of the fence) for quick pick up by NPS Maintenance staff.
13. Quiet hours in camp are between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Weapons Safety

To ensure the safety of participants, visitors, and park staff, the following rules will be followed. Failure to follow these will result in dismissal from the event.

1. This event is interpreting U.S. and Allied servicemembers in World War II. Accordingly, living history participants may have historic weapons with them for the purpose of interpretive displays and exhibits.
2. Living history volunteers are asked to only bring the weapons that are relevant to their display and can reasonably be used for interpretive purposes.
3. Weapons should be unloaded upon arrival at the site for safety inspection. Weapons must remain unloaded throughout the event.
4. NPS historic weapons supervisors will inspect all weapons for safety issues and to ensure they are unloaded before the start of the event. Weapons checks will consist of ensuring the weapon is unloaded and participants do not have any ammunition (live or blanks). Cleared weapons will have small pieces of yarn tied to them that must remain on during event hours.
5. Dummy explosives are to be inspected to ensure they are inert and safe for display and interpretive purposes.

6. Historic weapons staff will provide visual and spot inspections of the camp on Saturday and Sunday morning. Weapons may be inspected by staff at any time during the event to ensure they are unloaded.
7. Outside of event hours, weapons should be secured with the participant in the participant's tent or a central secure space such as a locked vehicle. Weapons may not be left unattended at any time.
8. During event hours, weapons (including replicas) are to be under the physical or immediate control of their owners. Weapons may be used for displays in the following manners:
 - Weapons may be handled in a military manner by living history volunteers. Weapons may be held safely in a volunteer's hands or slung over the shoulder.
 - Weapons may be laid flat on a display table with a living history volunteer standing adjacent to the table. No tables with weapons displays may be left unattended.
 - Never lean any weapon in a vertical position against any object unless you are using a rifle rack. Rifles with stacking swivels are permitted to be stacked in a military manner. If not stacked, weapons should be stored flat.
 - Weapons may not be left unattended. If left unattended, NPS staff may ask that the weapons be stored in a locked vehicle for the duration of the event.
9. Never point your weapon (firearm or edged weapon) at anyone at any time. All weapons will remain unloaded but will be treated as though they are loaded.
10. Participants under the age of 16 may not handle weapons (firearms or edged weapons).
11. Visitors may touch an unloaded weapon so long as the owner maintains physical control of it and it has been cleared and is unloaded.
12. The public is prohibited from handling edged weapons.
 - a. Sharp edged or pointed weapons, such as bayonets, knives, and swords, must be kept sheathed except for demonstration purposes. Even then, they must be kept in a scabbard unless there is at least a seven-foot safety zone between the volunteer, other re-enactors, and visitors.
13. Do not dry fire weapons.
14. No ammunition of any sort (live or blanks) is allowed on-site at any time. Those found to have ammunition will be asked to lock it in their vehicles or remove it from the site.

Vehicles

1. Only pre-approved World War II-era military vehicles will be allowed in the camp and display areas during visitation hours. Camp passes for approved vehicles will be distributed at event check-in. A parking area for modern vehicles will be provided nearby. Any person wishing to break camp during visitation hours will need to walk their gear back to their vehicles or request a historic vehicle to haul their gear to participant parking.

2. Historic vehicles must remain on-site during event hours.
3. All vehicles are to be driven in a safe manner by licensed drivers. No excessive speeds are allowed and posted speed limits must be followed. In camp speed limit is 5 mph. Vehicles are to follow all speed limit signs as posted. Traffic safety rules will be enforced by NPS staff. Failure to do so will result in dismissal or not being invited back to future events.
4. Vehicle use in the camp should be kept to an absolute minimum during event hours. Unnecessary vehicle traffic jeopardizes the safety of staff, participants, and visitors.
5. Vehicles should only carry the number of passengers they were designed to carry.
6. Please use marked roads and camp roads while driving around the site. Do not drive across lawns, grass areas, and pedestrian bridges.
7. Participants may offer rides to visitors in historic vehicles only if they have a historic vehicle pass, agree to abide by all vehicle safety rules, and the driver has a valid driver's license.

Fires

1. Cooking may be done on a stove, and all cooking stoves must be attended while in operation.
2. The NPS will issue a final call on fire danger one week prior to the event. In the event of a favorable forecast and the NPS decision, after event hours campfires may be permitted for cooking and warming. In the event conditions allow for campfires, they must be in raised fire pits placed on a noncombustible surface and away from flammable materials. A fire extinguisher or bucket of water must be immediately accessible to extinguish the fire. Fires shall not be left unattended and must be completely extinguished when done.

Medical Emergency Guidelines

1. During event hours, a first aid station will be set up near the flagpole of the Eisenhower Home. This will be staffed with trained medical personnel.
2. In case of a medical emergency, call 911. Do not wait for a NPS Park Ranger with a radio. NPS staff will hear the emergency dispatch over the radio and respond.
3. National Park Service staff will be equipped with radios and will be on duty each day from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
4. For emergencies or issues that require immediate assistance, please call 911 or the non-emergency line for Adams County Dispatch: (717) 334-8101.