Volunteers-In-Parks

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

www.nps.gov/volunteers

You are a Very Important Person

Volunteer with the National Park Service (NPS) and help care for these special places.

Volunteers-In-Parks (VIPs) work side-by-side with National Park Service employees and partners in parks from Maine to Hawaii, from Alaska to Florida, in big cities and small towns, even in remote wilderness areas.

There are more than 390 national parks throughout the United States and its territories. Whether you work behind the scenes or with park visitors, you can make a difference by helping to connect people with their parks.

Become a VIP and put yourself at the heart of the park experience.

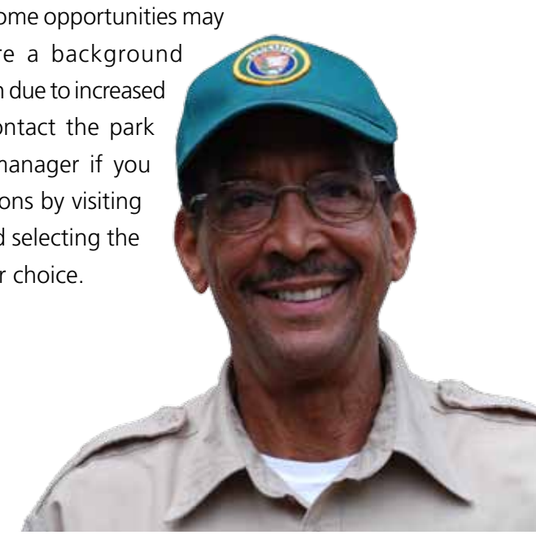
About Volunteers-In-Parks

Who can be a VIP?
Anyone can be a VIP. Individuals, couples, families, students, and organized groups can volunteer. Those under 18 years of age may volunteer with the official, signed permission of a parent or guardian. We welcome Volunteers-In-Parks from all over the United States and the world.

What do VIPs do?
Volunteers-In-Parks play an ever-increasing role in national parks doing a variety of jobs. Here is a sampling of volunteer activities that may interest you:

- Working at an information desk answering visitor questions;
- Presenting living history demonstrations in period costume;
- Building fences, painting buildings, and making cabinets;
- Giving guided nature walks and evening campfire programs;
- Assisting with preservation of museum artifacts;
- Maintaining trails and building boardwalks;
- Designing computer programs or park websites;
- Serving on a bike, horseback, or beach patrol.

These are a few of the many opportunities available that require a wide variety of talents, skills, and abilities. VIP positions can be highly competitive depending on location and type of activity. VIPs should be in good health to successfully carry out their duties and responsibilities. A medical exam may be required for some volunteer positions. Some opportunities may also require a background investigation due to increased security. Contact the park volunteer manager if you have questions by visiting nps.gov and selecting the park of your choice.



How to Become a VIP

"It's a piece of heaven, and I get to work here!"

VIP, Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

Complete the application on the Web
Volunteer program information, opportunities, events, and activities are featured on nps.gov/volunteer. You may also visit volunteer.gov/gov to search the numerous NPS VIP opportunities and to apply on-line. Your electronic application goes directly to the park's volunteer manager. If you are interested in a particular site that is not listed, visit the park's web page at nps.gov for contact information.

Complete the application on this folder
If you do not wish to apply online, complete and mail or fax this application. If you select more than one park, send a copy to each. Be specific in describing your talents, skills, and interests to enable the VIP Manager to better match your skills with the park's needs.

The VIP Manager will review your application
If your application meets the park's needs, you will be contacted for an interview or to discuss further details. A park may find that there is no match with their current needs. You will be notified in either case.

If you are selected
When selected as a VIP, you and your supervisor will discuss and sign an agreement that describes your duties and responsibilities, outlines a tentative work schedule, and includes any additional details of the volunteer arrangement. To meet increased security concerns, some volunteer jobs may require a background investigation. After appropriate training and orientation, you will begin work as a VIP with the National Park Service. You are a Very Important Person.

Working as a VIP
As a VIP you will represent the National Park Service, work in unique settings, preserve this country's natural and cultural legacy, and help visitors discover the resources, meanings, and values found in your national parks.

Based on your job assignment, you may wear an official volunteer uniform. Park housing and reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses may also be available. You will be covered for worker's compensation in the event of an injury while on duty and, in the event of property damage or personal injury, you will be covered for tort claim liability.

Volunteer time can be counted as work experience for future jobs, but does not count towards Federal Civil Service time if you should later become a Federal employee.

Application

OMB 0596-0080 (Expires 08/2010)

Volunteer Application for Natural Resources Agencies

Instructions: Mark ☑ in the appropriate boxes, for other items either print or type responses. If extra space is needed use item 18.

1. Name (Last, First, Middle)	2. Age	3. Telephone Number ( ) -	4. Email Address
5. Street Address (include apartment no., if any)		6. City, State, and Zip Code	

7. Which general volunteer work categories are you most interested in?

☐ Archeology	☐ Historical/ Preservation	☐ Soil/ Watershed
☐ Botany	☐ Pest/Disease Control	☐ Timber/Fire Prevention
☐ Campground Host	☐ Minerals/ Geology	☐ Trail/Campground Maintenance
☐ Construction Maintenance	☐ Natural Resources Planning	☐ Tour Guide/Interpretation
☐ Computers	☐ Office/Clerical	☐ Visitor Information
☐ Conservation Education	☐ Range/Livestock	☐ Other (Please specify)
☐ Fish/Wildlife	☐ Research/Librarian	

8. What qualifications/skills/experience/education do you have that you would like to use in your volunteer work?

☐ Backpacking/Camping	☐ Heavy Equipment Operation	☐ Sign Language
☐ Biology	☐ Horses – Care/ Riding	☐ Supervision
☐ Boat Operation	☐ Landscaping/Reforestation	☐ Other Trade skills (Please specify)
☐ Carpentry	☐ Land Surveying	
☐ Clerical/Office Machines	☐ Livestock/Ranching	
☐ Computer Programming	☐ Map reading	☐ Teaching
☐ Drafting/Graphics	☐ Mountaineering	☐ Working with People
☐ Driver's License	☐ Photography	☐ Writing/Editing
☐ First Aid Certificate	☐ Public Speaking	☐ Other (Please specify)
☐ Hand/Power Tools	☐ Research/Librarian	

9. Based on boxes checked in items 7 and 8, what particular type of volunteer work would you like to do? (Please describe any specific qualifications, skills, experience, or education that apply)

10. Are you a United States Citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If no, additional information may be required)

11. a. Have you volunteered before? ☐ Yes ☐ No
b. If Yes, please briefly describe your volunteer experience.

12. Would you like to supervise other volunteers? ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. What are some of your objectives for working as a volunteer? (Optional)

14. Please specify any physical limitations that may influence your volunteer work activities:

Continued on other side...

Optional Form 301 (Revised 06/2008)
USDA-USDI

The National Park System

Application

OMB 0596-0080 (Expires 08/2010)

15. a. Which months would you be available for volunteer work?

☐ January ☐ February ☐ March ☐ April ☐ May ☐ June
☐ July ☐ August ☐ September ☐ October ☐ November ☐ December

15b. How many hours per week would you be available for volunteer work? Hours

15c. Which days per week would you be available for volunteer work?

☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday ☐ Sunday

16. Specify at least three states or specific locations within a state where you would like to do volunteer work.

17. Specify your lodging requirements:

☐ I will furnish my own lodging (such as tent; camper; own, relative's, or friend's place)
☐ I will require assistance in finding lodging

18. If a volunteer assignment is not available at the location specified in item 15, do you want your application forwarded to another location, or Federal agency, seeking volunteers with your background/interest?

☐ Yes ☐ No (Please specify)

19. This is provided for more detailed responses. Please indicate the item numbers to which these responses apply:

Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0596-0080. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Department of the Interior prohibit discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA and USDI are equal opportunity providers and employers.

Notice to Volunteer

Volunteers are not considered Federal employees for any purposes other than tort claims and injury compensation. Volunteer service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other benefit. However, volunteer service is creditable work experience.

Privacy Act Statement

Collection and use is covered by Privacy Act System of Records OPM/GOVT-1 and USDA/OP-1, and is consistent with the provisions of 5 USC 552a (Privacy Act of 1974), which authorizes acceptance of the information requested on this form. The data will be used to maintain official records of volunteers of the USDA and USDI for the purposes of tort claims and injury compensation. Furnishing this data is voluntary, however if this form is incomplete, enrollment in the program cannot proceed.

20. Signature (Sign in ink)	20. Date

Optional Form 301 (Revised 06/2008)
USDA-USDI

For More Information

"Every day is a learning experience. I've never had a dull day."

VIP, Boston National Historical Park, Massachusetts

Information Summary

- Visit nps.gov/volunteer or volunteer.gov/gov to search for volunteer positions
- Go to nps.gov for park contact information
- Email us at volunteer@nps.gov
- Write us:
  National Park Service
  1849 C Street NW, 2450
  Washington, DC 20240
- Consult your local library for computer access or books, magazines, and other materials on your national parks.
- Contact your local tourism office or volunteer center for information on national parks and volunteering.

International Volunteers

Additional information and procedures on how to become an International VIP are available on the internet at nps.gov/oia/topics/ivip/ivip.