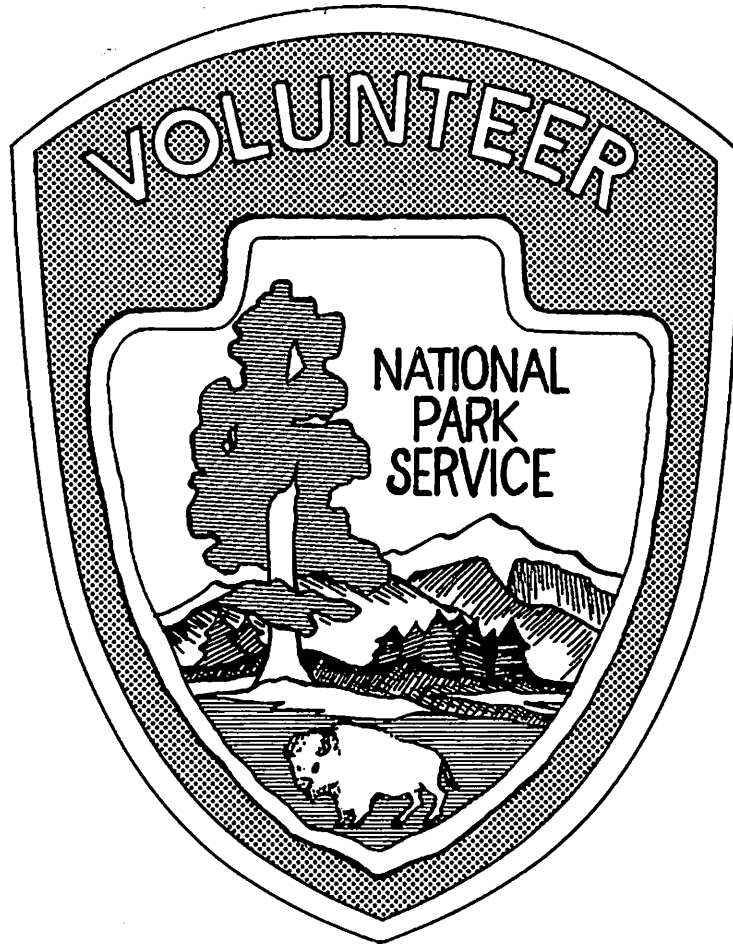


VIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES



JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

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OVERVIEW OF VOLUNTEERING

Who can volunteer? Almost anyone can be a volunteer. A volunteer is anyone who performs work for the National Park Service (NPS) for which he or she receives no pay for the service. Volunteers are recruited and accepted from the public without regard to race, creed, religion, sex, color, national origin, or OPM classification laws, rules and regulations. However, they must be physically and mentally able to perform the work.

An NPS employee can serve as a volunteer within the service 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. Family members and relatives of NPS employees may serve as volunteers.

What Can Volunteers Do?

- Volunteers can do work that would not otherwise get done during a particular fiscal year because of funding or personnel limitations.
- Volunteers can do work that frees paid employees to accomplish work that would not otherwise get done during a particular fiscal year because of funding or personnel limitations.
- Volunteers can do work that does not result in the displacement of any paid employees.

There are a few additional constraints which must be considered when assigning volunteers to work projects.

- A volunteer must never be required to perform any type of work for which he or she is not qualified or has not been adequately trained, does not feel comfortable doing, or does not willingly agree to do.

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

Volunteer Applications and Agreement Forms

The Volunteer Coordinator maintains a file for every volunteer or group of volunteers.

It is important that each volunteer have an application and an agreement form completed. The application provides information on the volunteer's skills, interests, and availability. A copy of the signed agreement will be given to the volunteer for his or her own records before the work is begun. When the work for the park has come to an end, the agreement will be placed in an inactive file and kept for three years.

Adults

The Agreement for Individual Voluntary Services (form 10-85) contains a complete job description and is a record of the beginning and end of volunteer service. In addition, an application must be completed.

Minors

Persons under age 18 must have one of their parents fill out a Parental Approval (form 10-89) in addition to the application and form 10-85.

Groups

Group leaders must fill out an Agreement for Sponsored Voluntary Services (form 10-86) and attach a list of all the participants giving the name, address, age, and signature for each participant. The Volunteer Coordinator signs the form and a copy is returned to the group contact. The group leader must record hours worked on the back of the agreement form and turn the form into the Volunteer Coordinator when the group is finished with their project. For long-term groups, such as the equestrian maintenance and Andromeda Astronomical Society, hours are compiled by the group leader and periodically submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator. JOSAR members sign up individually (form 10-85) and their hours are compiled by a member of JOSAR. Groups may be eligible to receive a fee waiver which is completed by the Volunteer Coordinator and approved by the fee collection supervisor.

Self-identification of Medical Disability

All volunteers, with the exception of those involved with sponsored activities (groups), must complete a Self-identification of Medical Disability form (256).

Volunteer Time Sheets

Hours are an important component of the semi-annual reports that the Volunteer Coordinator submits to the regional office. The funding for the VIP program is partly dependent on volunteer hours. Volunteer Time Sheets should be filled out regularly and submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator. If the work is intermittent, such as one weekend per month or one day per week, the Volunteer Time Sheet can either be submitted when the sheet is completely filled, in or prior to semi-annual reports, which ever comes first. Hours are due for semi-annual volunteer reports on March 31 and September 30.

Reimbursements

Volunteers who are camping out or are parked on pads will be reimbursed for propane costs. To receive a reimbursement, the volunteer must complete the form "Claim for Reimbursement of Volunteer Expenses" (Form 10-67), attach receipts, and turn it all in to the Volunteer Coordinator for approval.

HOUSING

Since housing for volunteers is so limited and the demand for volunteer housing is so high, those volunteers who are provided park housing should work 40 hours per week. Volunteers who have pads with full hookups should work a minimum of 24 hours per week (48 hours per couple). Volunteers on pads or in dry campgrounds are reimbursed for their propane costs.

BENEFITS AND PROTECTION

Volunteers receive the same benefits and protection as NPS employees under the

Federal Employees Compensation Act and the Federal Tort Claims Act, and are considered employees for those purposes only. These two acts provide the following benefits and protection:

Federal Employees Compensation Act - Volunteers are entitled to first aid and medical care for on-the-job injuries, as well as hospital care when necessary. When travel is necessary to receive medical care, transportation may be furnished and/or the travel and incidental expenses associated with it may be reimbursable. When death results from an on-the-job injury, burial and funeral expenses, not to exceed \$800.00, may be paid. In addition, other compensation benefits may be approved by the Office of Workers Compensation Programs on a case-by-case basis.

A volunteer who suffers an on-the-job injury and desires to file a claim for compensation should contact his or her supervisor as soon as possible. The supervisor is responsible for helping the volunteer obtain and complete the proper forms and must certify the authenticity of the claim. The supervisor then submits the claim to the personnel office for processing.

Federal Liability Reform and Tort Compensation Act - This Act provides volunteers protection from job-related lawsuits for actions they took or failed to take within the scope of their work. Volunteers are offered the protection of the Act for personal liability as long as they are acting within the scope of their assigned responsibilities.

Because of the coverage a volunteer receives, it is imperative that each volunteer be properly signed up and operating under a written job description containing specific information on the type of work assigned. This is necessary in case questions arise on whether the volunteer was acting within his or her assigned responsibilities.

Other Benefits:

Volunteers under 62 years of age will receive a park pass for the duration of their work for the park. Volunteers over 62 can obtain a Golden Age Passport, if they do not already have one.

UNIFORM GUIDELINES

All volunteers who have regular public contact should wear a uniform. Volunteers in Parks are authorized to wear the following:

Regular personal clothing that is neat, clean, in good taste, and appropriate to the type of work being done. Volunteers dressed in personal clothing will wear the plastic identification tag or name tag over the left shirt pocket or bodice. Volunteers are not authorized to wear any part of the National Park Service Uniform. Volunteers involved in field or other activities where uniforms are appropriate will wear the following:

- Shirt - khaki, short/long sleeve (issued)
- Trousers or jeans; brown, khaki, or green
- Headgear - Volunteer Cap (issued)
- Parka or jacket - Brown (issued)
- Footwear - boot or shoe, color optional

The SCA employees are authorized to wear the following:

- Shirt - khaki with SCA shoulder patch
- Trousers or jeans - brown
- Footwear - boot or shoe, color optional

USE OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to protect and conserve government property and to use it economically and for official purposes only.

USE OF GOVERNMENT-OWNED VEHICLES

If the duties of the volunteer include the operation of a government-owned vehicle, he or she will be issued a government driver's license (SF-46). For any vehicle other than a passenger car or light truck, the volunteer must be able to show credentials verifying his or her qualifications to operate the vehicle to the satisfaction of the supervisor before

being allowed to operate it. The operation of such a vehicle must also be in the volunteer's job description.

Volunteers shall not willfully use government-owned or leased motor vehicles for other than official purposes, such as to and from a restaurant to eat, for home-to-work transportation, or to run personal errands.

USE OF PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Whenever possible, volunteers should use government-owned equipment and property in their work, rather than using their personal property. However, if the volunteer does use his or her own personal property or equipment for official purposes, and that property is lost, damaged, or destroyed in the process, there is a way that the volunteer may be reimbursed for the loss. In order to be eligible, the volunteer must have been required by the Volunteer Coordinator to furnish his or her own personal property for use in the assigned work. A statement to this effect must be included in the agreement form and must specifically identify and describe the personal property involved and state that the volunteer is required to provide and use the particular equipment as a part of his or her official duties.

TAX DEDUCTIONS

Volunteers may deduct unreimbursed, out-of-pocket expenses directly related to their volunteer service if they itemize deductions. Consult IRS Publication #526, "Charitable Contributions".

RESIGNATION PROCEDURES

A volunteer should notify his or her supervisor in advance of resignation. Upon resignation, all government equipment that was checked out, such as government driver's license, park entrance pass, along with final time sheets, must be returned to the supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.

TERMINATION

A volunteer's supervisor should terminate the agreement if the volunteer repeatedly does not fulfill responsibilities, and attempts to correct the situation have failed. When a problem first appears, the supervisor should bring it to the attention of the volunteer (and the Volunteer Coordinator) and work with the volunteer to find a solution. If problem-solving measures do not improve the situation, and the volunteer cannot be assigned to another project or task without repeat of the problem, he or she should be given notice (unless circumstances warrant immediate termination) that his or her

services will no longer be needed.