



Prospective Volunteer Information Packet

How to Become a Volunteer

Joining Volunteer Services—You may join the adult volunteer program by submitting an application, interviewing with volunteer services staff, paying a fee for materials, attending an orientation session and completing required training. Waivers are available if the fee is a hardship.

Application—Review the enclosed application carefully. The application must be completed fully and returned within a reasonable time prior to the orientation or training offered.

Interview—Whether attending an orientation or the full interpreter training, you must schedule an interview no later than two weeks prior to the orientation or training. The purpose of the interview is to evaluate your skill and interest levels, determine the best placement for you in the program and to help you become more knowledgeable of the functions of the volunteer program. You are encouraged to ask questions about the program, the Aquarium, or on any aspect that will provide you the information you need to make this commitment.

Registration Fee— Your fee to participate in the volunteer program is due before your first training date. Checks are accepted, payable to Oregon Coast Aquarium, memo: Volunteer Program Fee and mailed or delivered to 2820 SE Ferry Slip Rd. Newport, Oregon, 97365. This fee helps defray the costs of registration, name badges and uniform pieces. For all non-interpreter volunteers, the cost is \$20. For interpreter volunteers, the cost is \$60 (to cover the cost of additional training materials). Waivers are available.

Training— For interpreter volunteers, a 48-hour classroom training is offered in the spring (April-May) and the fall (October-September). Each Saturday for six weeks, trainees attend a 9-5 p.m. class held in the Aquarium's classroom. Marine science educators and animal husbandry staff give talks about the animals, habitat and marine biology of the Oregon coast and the interpretation of animals exhibited at the Aquarium. ***Please contact Volunteer Services for dates of the next training.*** For non-interpreter volunteers, please contact your supervisor in your respective department with regard to a training schedule.

Orientation—Orientation is offered a minimum of twice a year, as the first day of spring and fall trainings, but may be scheduled more often if there is a need. The orientations provide an overview of the Aquarium's history, staff structure and funding, mission of the Aquarium, and a review of policies and procedures. On completion of the orientation, new volunteers are eligible to accept positions as greeters, clerical aides, assisting in Aquarium maintenance or grounds keeping, and other areas, as available.

Volunteer positions—A description of some volunteer positions is enclosed. Volunteers who enter the program by attending an orientation may choose to work in a variety of positions. These include grounds keeping, custodial support, facility maintenance, clerical tasks and greeting visitors in the lobby.

Trainees who complete the full training are then eligible to assume the position of exhibit interpreter, classroom and outreach volunteers and after a period of service and dependent upon availability, husbandry volunteer positions. The interpreter position is a required position because it meets the Aquarium's mission to inform the public about the importance of Oregon's coastal ecology. Once the interpreter training obligation is met volunteers can apply for positions in the classroom, or any of the positions listed above. Not all volunteer positions are available at all times.

Commitment— We are asking you to commit a minimum of one full year to the Aquarium. If you cannot make a year's commitment, then we ask that you commit a minimum of 100 hours within a specified period of time to be established. We realize that this is a major commitment and we want you to consider it carefully. We're happy to answer your questions before you make that decision.

Scheduling— For those volunteers with a one-year commitment, most positions require a 4–4½ hour shift one day per week. A schedule of volunteering once every other week is an option for those who work or attend school full time, travel an extended distance or have extenuating circumstances. Volunteers unable to volunteer year round are required to volunteer 100 hours in a pre-determined period. This may mean volunteering more than one day a week or double shifts to meet the required hours.

Please keep this page for your records.

The day(s) of the week you volunteer is determined by your availability and the Aquarium's needs, but once chosen, the schedule is maintained unless you have reason to request a change.

Dive Volunteers— The volunteer dive program has very specific requirements with specialized training. Contact Volunteer Services to request an information packet about the program and our next Dive Recruiting Day. Email volunteer@aquarium.org for dates and more information.

Youth Volunteers—Youths ages 14-18 who are interested in receiving information on joining the youth volunteer program should contact our Youth Programs Coordinator by emailing volunteer@aquarium.org. There is a separate application process for youth volunteers. If interested in an internship or practicum, please visit www.aquarium.org for more information (the volunteer department does not manage interns or practicum students).

Volunteer Benefits

Admission to the Aquarium—Volunteers have free access to the Aquarium during public hours (with volunteer I.D. badge).

Membership— After 50 hours of volunteer time have been recorded, volunteers are eligible for a free membership. "One Plus One" membership allows the volunteer to bring one guest, adult or child at no additional cost. A "Member" membership includes membership cards for the volunteer, one specified adult and up to six children or grandchildren to age 18. The cards allow them free entrance to the Aquarium, even when they are not accompanied by a volunteer. At a cost of \$40 a volunteer may upgrade to a "Family Plus" This option provides the same benefits as "Member"—one additional adult and up to six children—but also allows the volunteer or the other named adult on the membership to bring up to two guests when visiting the Aquarium. "Family Plus" is free when two members of the same household volunteer together. Memberships will remain in effect as long as the volunteer remains active in the program and maintains 50 hours per year. Lifetime memberships are awarded after 7 years of service.

Passes— For every 100 hours of volunteer time, volunteers receive two passes to the Aquarium. Each pass is good for one, one-time free admission. Dive volunteers receive two passes after 50 hours.

Gift Shop Discount—Volunteers receive a 10% discount on CDs, videos and books, and a 20% discount on all other merchandise at the Aquarium gift shop. *Family or friends who are listed on the membership application and receive membership cards are eligible only for the members' 10% discount on any merchandise.*

Ongoing Training—Volunteers may participate in continuing education—educational programs presented by staff or guest speakers—and will have access to information provided in a variety of formats. Continued education opportunities are scheduled at various times to make them accessible to as many volunteers as possible. There is an extensive volunteer library with books and DVDs on marine animals and habitats for your use.

Newsletter—Volunteers receive a quarterly newsletter, *Upwelling*, that provides them with educational articles and current information on what's happening at the Aquarium. Articles are written by volunteers, staff or reprinted from marine science publications.

Recognition—Recognition of volunteer service is given in a variety of ways throughout the year including hour and year pins, Aquarium passes and culminates at the end of the summer with a large recognition event for all volunteers.

Social Activities—Numerous potlucks and coffees are held in conjunction with evening programs. A summer picnic and a recognition and appreciation party are hosted by the Aquarium who provides the main course, with volunteers and staff contributing salads, side dishes and desserts.

Volunteer Position Descriptions

Exhibits Interpreter: As the primary contact for visitors to the Aquarium, interpreters provide information about animals and exhibits, answer questions and direct visitors through the facility. They are able to observe a variety of Aquarium aspects, meet many members of the staff and use the knowledge they gained during training. This position gives volunteers the chance to raise visitors' awareness of marine animals and their special needs. Forty eight hours of training is required, plus additional mentoring by experienced volunteers.

Greeters: Volunteers are stationed in the lobby to greet arriving visitors and welcome them to the Aquarium. They help admissions staff by getting wheelchairs and strollers, distribute visitor guide maps, inform visitors of times for scheduled events, point out routes to exhibits or direct them to the nearest restroom. Departing visitors ask greeters about hotels, local restaurants, travel routes, and community attractions. This is a position for someone who enjoys initiating conversations and interacting with people.

Groundskeeping Volunteers: Volunteers help groundskeepers maintain the facility by pulling weeds, cutting back blackberry vines and picking up litter in the parking lot. Volunteers may help rake patterns on gravel paths, prune trees or assist with landscaping projects. Learn about native plants and how to grow plants with minimal use of chemicals. Volunteers must be able to work outdoors in all types of weather.

Facility Maintenance: Maintenance volunteers perform general handyman-like repairs or use specialized skills to help with projects that may include carpentry, painting, motor repair, electrical wiring, etc. These are jobs for people who are self-motivated, like to work with their hands or need greater flexibility in their schedule. Volunteers in maintenance may be asked to step in and help with needed projects that overlap into other areas—groundskeeping, exhibit building or breakdown, large cleaning projects, installation of tanks, stringing holiday lights, etc.

Clerical Aides: Clerical volunteers can be assigned to one of several departments that need help with tasks that include photocopying, collating, preparing bulk mailing or filing. Volunteers with computer experience may input articles for Aquarium newsletters, enter data for record keeping, or create and generate reports. Volunteers who enjoy the office setting would like this position.

Education Programs Aides: During the school year, classroom volunteers work with education staff to prepare and present a variety of classroom and auditorium programs for grades kindergarten through high school. Tasks can vary from setting out invertebrate marine animals for children to view or helping children don marine animal costumes. Outreach volunteers travel with an Education staff member to various school locations throughout Oregon and occasionally, northern California and southern Washington, to assist with presentations and programs. Food and lodging are provided by the Aquarium. Volunteers who like working with children and learning more about marine animals will have fun in the Education department. Volunteers must have marine knowledge gained through volunteer interpreter training and have experience working with children before acceptance in these positions.

Animal Husbandry: As support personnel for the animal husbandry department, animal care assistants help staff to maintain our high quality care of Aquarium animals through food preparation, cleaning of exhibits and holding areas, observation and record keeping. This work is very physical and requires agility, strength (including lifting heavy items), endurance, and the ability to tolerate cool temperatures, wet feet and fishy odors. Volunteers have little or no contact with animals, depending upon the species. Positions in the Animal Husbandry department are limited. If interested in an internship or practicum, please visit www.aquarium.org for more information (the volunteer department does not manage interns or practicum students).

Diver: Divers assist with multiple tasks. While in an exhibit—primarily the Passages of the Deep—divers will spend time cleaning acrylic, checking equipment and suctioning debris from the exhibit floor. They may act as a tender; monitoring equipment during a dive and observing other divers as a safety back-up. Divers may assist animal husbandry staff with food prep or observe animals to evaluate health or behavior. Divers must provide their own dive gear and pay the cost of taking an exhibit dive course at an approved shop or on site. This course is PADI approved and contains a component of natural marine science. *A separate application process is required for this position and it is only open to experienced, certified divers.*



Volunteer Program



ADULT VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Fill out form online and email to

volunteer@aquarium.org or

print application and mail to Volunteer Services, Oregon Coast Aquarium, 2820 SE Ferry Slip Road, Newport, OR 97365

Please Print Clearly

Applicant Name: _____

Volunteer Interest (please check): ☐ Interpreter ☐ Greeter ☐ Facilities ☐ Education ☐ Clerical ☐ Groundskeeping
☐ Husbandry (if available): ☐ Aviculturist ☐ Aquarist ☐ Mammals

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Cell Phone: (____) _____ Home Phone: (____) _____

What is the best way to contact you (please check): ☐ Home Phone ☐ Cell Phone ☐ Email

Name of Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Address: _____ City, State & Zip: _____

Physician's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Health Concerns / Medications (anything staff needs to know in an emergency): _____

The following information is requested to develop demographic reports.

Birthday: _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Are you employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, ☐ full time or ☐ part time? If no, are you retired? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Occupation (current or past): _____

Currently a student? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, ☐ full time or ☐ part time? Institution: _____

Highest education level completed: ☐ Grade _____ ☐ High School ☐ Some college

☐ Associate degree ☐ Bachelor's degree ☐ Master's degree ☐ Doctorate

Major: _____

Scheduling Information

Can you commit to volunteer once a week for one year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, can you commit to volunteer once every other week (bi-weekly) for one year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you are unable to volunteer one full year, could you volunteer 100 hours within a set period of time? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no to all of the above, please explain: _____

What schedule would you prefer? One ½ day shift: ☐ Once a week ☐ Once biweekly

What day of the week would you like to volunteer? _____

Uniform T-shirt or Jacket size: S ☐ M ☐ L ☐ XL ☐ 2XL ☐

Volunteer Experience

Select one and no more than three for the following that best defines your reasons for volunteering at the Aquarium.

- ☐ To gain knowledge of marine life.
- ☐ An opportunity to teach visitors about marine animals and habitats.
- ☐ Social interactions with other volunteers and the chance to make new friends.
- ☐ The opportunity to talk to children and young people.
- ☐ Develop skills for resume development and possible future employments.
- ☐ To give back to the community by supporting the Aquarium.
- ☐ Other _____

Have you ever had experience as a volunteer? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe. _____

Please list any skills, hobbies, interests that could contribute to your volunteer experience. _____

By submitting this application, I understand I am agreeing to...

1. Read the Volunteer Information Packet.
2. Meet with a volunteer services staff person who will explain the program and answer my questions.
3. Pay the appropriate registration fee at the first meeting (please see "How to become a Volunteer").
4. Complete a criminal background check.
5. Complete all training required to become an active volunteer.
6. Volunteer for a minimum of one year or for a total of 100 hours within a designated period.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Data entered by: _____ Date: _____