



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—Applications are available in an easy, fillable format online [here](#). If you require a form emailed to you, please contact Volunteer Services.

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, training materials, name badges and a uniform piece. For all non-interpreter volunteers, the cost is \$30. For interpreter volunteers, the cost is \$60 (to cover the cost of additional training materials). Waivers are available.

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 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.

Training— For interpreter volunteers, a 48-hour classroom training is offered in the spring (April-May) and the fall (September-October). Each Saturday for six weeks, trainees attend a 9a.m.-5p.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.** Training schedules for volunteers in departments other than interpretation will coordinate their schedule with their direct supervisor.

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— Interpreter 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.

Please keep this page for your records.

Husbandry position shifts can be 2-6 hours per day, depending on specific tasks. 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. 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 and youth 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. This event includes dinner, entertainment and an optional sleepover in the Passages of the Deep tunnels.