Guidelines and Policies for Wild Center Volunteers and Interns
THE WILD CENTER MISSION

To ignite an enduring passion for the Adirondacks where people and nature can thrive together and set an example for the world.
The purpose of this manual is to provide The Wild Center volunteers and interns with important information about working conditions and some of the policies affecting their service. It is intended to provide broad internal guidelines and is not to be construed as a contract or other legal document. All Museum volunteers and staff are considered to serve “at will”, which means that either the volunteer or the Museum may end the relationship at any time, with or without notice, and with or without articulating a reason.

No volunteer manual can anticipate every circumstance or question that may arise. The Museum reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policy or portion of this manual as it deems appropriate. These changes will be communicated to you verbally or in writing and via future revisions to the manual.
The Wild Center is an equal opportunity employer for staff and volunteers. Decisions affecting applicants and volunteers will not be based upon an individual’s race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or any other unlawful basis.
More on what that means

**Equal Employment Opportunity**

**Policy Statement** - NHMA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Museum does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of a person's race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, application to or present membership in the uniformed services, veteran status, arrest or conviction record, disability, genetic predisposition or carrier status, sexual orientation, or any other protected class or status. Likewise, the Museum prohibits employees, vendors, suppliers, visitors, and any other non-employee from discriminating against NHMA employees and non-employees based on these protected groups. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment including, but not limited to, recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, demotion, termination, layoff, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, benefits, training, and employer-sponsored activities, including social or recreational programs.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

**Policy Statement** - NHMA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the New York State Human Rights regulation by providing an equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons with disabilities. In addition, the Museum prohibits discrimination and/or harassment based on an individual's disability or a person's relationship or association with a disabled individual.
Policy Statement - NHMA recognizes the rich diversity of its employees and non-employees and the varying cultures, backgrounds, and experiences they each bring to the workplace. It is the policy of NHMA to promote a productive work environment in which all employees and non-employees are treated with fairness, dignity and respect. The Museum will not tolerate harassment or discrimination of any kind in the workplace.

NHMA’s commitment extends beyond simply reducing or preventing discrimination. Diversity means inclusion of all people, regardless of their cultures, backgrounds, and experiences or the responsibilities they may have within the Museum. It is because of each person’s differences that the Museum gains different points of view and new ideas that can improve service to visitors, increase productivity, and save money.

Complaint Procedure and Investigations

Policy Statement - NHMA takes all complaints of discrimination, harassment, misconduct, and sexual harassment seriously. A comprehensive complaint procedure has been developed to address any complaints received from employees and non-employees.
Joining The Wild Center Team
BECOMING A TEAM MEMBER

- Completed application
- Placement/interest conversation or interview
- Placement
- Orientation and Training
- Start
- Continued ‘On the Job’ training and evaluation
Who’s The Boss?

Tracy Thomas, Manager of Visitor Experience, manages the volunteer program. Tracy may be reached at tthomas@wildcenter.org or 518-359-7800 ext 114

An intern’s supervisor depends on the position they are filling. Tawnya Kentile, HR Designee, will go over supervisor roles in your orientation session.
Finding Your Way Around
ENTRANCES

Loading Dock Doors
- Code available from staff
- Can be used anytime staff are in the building

Front Door
- Can be used during open hours

BioBuilding
- For Facilities, Education and Animal Care staff
VOLUNTEER ROOM

- Near loading dock area/break room
- Place to relax, eat, and store items in lockers
- Computer and phone available
  - Museum-wide wifi also provided
- Sign in/out
- Bulletin board for announcements
- Daily schedule on a whiteboard
FRONT DESK
Run by staff
Questions?
Comments?
Need a radio?
Stop by here!
BACK OF HOUSE: Animal Care & Facilities Areas

For the safety of staff and animals -> authorized volunteers/interns only

Volunteers may request a personal tour by contacting the volunteer coordinator
Use designated smoking areas outside the museum located on the entrance path and off the service drive.

- Use cigarette butt collectors.
Procedures to Follow
HOURS (for volunteers)

Please keep track of these!

Sign in/out on time cards in the volunteer room.

*Interns will keep track of time on timesheets provided by their supervisor
SICK DAYS
Take care of yourself!
If you can’t come in, contact:
- Your supervisor
OR
- The volunteer coordinator
DRESS CODE

Shirts

✓ Logo shirt and/or
✓ Logo vest or jacket

(solid colored shirt allowed under short sleeve shirts and vests)

Name Badge

Volunteers: an initial shirt is available at a cost of $10 (can be waived in certain circumstances). Additional items are available at cost. These include polo shirts in long and short sleeve, tech “wicking” shirts, fleece and softshell jackets and vests, and hats.
Pants/Shorts/Skirts
✓ Navy blue, khaki, black
✓ To just above the knee or longer

Shoes
✓ Appropriate for position – see supervisor for details
Other Appearance Notes:

**JEWELRY/ACCESSORIES**
Jewelry worn should be simple and limited in nature. It should not distract from the appearance of the staff member. Accessories such as studded belts, wallet chains, etc. are not allowed.

**MAKEUP AND NAILS**
Nails should be clean, short to medium length. Polish and decoration may be worn on the nails as long as it is appropriate and does not interfere with the staff member’s work.
Makeup will be appropriate for the workplace and not extreme (i.e. excessively bright colors, goth, etc.)

**PIERCINGS**
Earrings should be small to moderate in size. No chains connecting earrings are allowed.
Ear gauges are allowed under 10 mm in size.
1 or 2 small nose studs are allowed under 3 mm—no septum piercings or rings.
A single tongue piercing is allowed if the stud is under 5 mm, the staff member can communicate clearly, and they do not “play” with the tongue ring while at work. Tongue splicing is not allowed.
A single, 16 gauge or smaller wire eyebrow ring is allowed, no studs or bars.
No other visible piercings or body adornments are allowed.

**TATTOOS**
We allow tattoos for staff, however, we don’t want tattoos to be all the visitor sees when they interact with us. No facial tattoos will be allowed. Any inappropriate tattoos must be covered at all times—those include those tattoos that involve swearing, lewd images, or inappropriate behavior.

**HAIR**
Hair should appear neat and clean and be out of the face. Staff with unconventional or distracting hair styles may be asked to cover their hair during public programs/when interacting with visitors.

**FACIAL HAIR**
Neatly trimmed mustaches and beards are allowed.
Soul patches, van dykes, and goatees are allowed but must be well groomed. Handlebar and other “extreme” mustaches are not allowed.
Other radical styles of facial hair are not allowed (dyed extreme colors, beaded, etc.)
“Keep confidential information confidential.”

- Donor information
- Employee personal information
- TWC business plans
- Etc.
Do not accept tips.
If necessary, give tips as a donation to TWC.
Do not harass anyone.

Report any harassment.

All reports will be investigated confidentially.
Don’t bring it on site.

Don’t drink it on site.
Don’t bring it.

Don’t use it.

*Prescription meds are fine.

Advise your supervisor of any ill effects that may affect your duties.
Meal and Break Periods

An intern who is scheduled to work more than six hours in a given day receives a minimum 30 minute meal period in accordance with NY State Law as well as short, periodic breaks during the workday for periods of rest, to obtain beverages or snacks, or for other reasons of a personal nature.

Volunteers can take breaks as needed, if a scheduled break is required due to the nature of their position, their supervisor will arrange this with them.
Business Expenses

**Policy Statement** - NHMA reimburses interns and volunteers for pre-authorized business expenses that are incurred during the performance of their jobs.

All receipts should be retained and submitted with the proper forms for reimbursement.
All records will be kept confidential.

You can review your file with the volunteer coordinator.
Policy Statement - Those in certain positions may be required to drive Museum, rental, or personal vehicles to conduct business on behalf of NHMA. Interns and volunteers who drive on Museum business must operate vehicles in a safe and responsible manner, and in compliance with all applicable motor vehicle and traffic regulations.
BAD WEATHER

Inclement Weather/Emergency Closings

In the rare instance the museum had to close for weather or other conditions, staff and volunteers scheduled for that day would be notified via calls or emails. A message will also be put on the main call in number so that staff may call to hear up to date information.

If conditions prevent you from traveling, or you have concerns about the safety of travel to work, please contact your supervisor. We want staff and volunteers safe, even when the museum remains open!
Visitor Services
Procedures for Volunteers and Interns
VISITOR SERVICES: THE GOOD

“I don’t know” is okay

Help the immediate needs -
Restrooms, water, directions?

Exceed expectations

Smile!
VISITOR SERVICES: THE BAD

Avoid conflict!

Refer visitors to staff/MOD if need be

Avoid being alone with visitors

Report any issues to the coordinator
Educate, Don’t Advocate

On controversial issues:
Put on your uniform, put away your personal opinions.
Volunteer Benefits
Need a reference?

TWC will provide:

- Total hours
- Duties
- Skills required
- Free admission
- 1 admission voucher every 25 hours
- 10% discount at the Cafe
- 20% discount at the Store
- 25% after five years
- Annual lectures, events, etc.
THANK YOU FOR HELPING US MAKE A DIFFERENCE
I have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in this manual.

NAME:

SIGNATURE:

DATE: