



Office of Resilience  
and Coastal Protection

Volunteer Procedures



## **I. POLICY, PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

### **A. Policy and Purpose**

The purpose of the Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (ORCP) Volunteer Procedure Manual is to guide the ORCP Volunteer Programs for both regular-service and occasional-service volunteers. It is the policy of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to utilize volunteers where appropriate, and to provide programs for their recruitment, screening, training, supervision, and use, assisting in various programs administered by the Department.

ORCP greatly appreciates the contributions of its many volunteers, who play an important role in supporting ORCP programs across the state to ensure the preservation of Florida's valuable coastal resources.

### **B. Scope and Applicability**

This manual applies to all ORCP volunteers. Individual ORCP sites (including Aquatic Preserves, National Estuarine Reserves, Coral Reef Conservation Program, Buffer Preserve, and associated facilities) may have varied volunteer programs and additional local procedures in addition to those found here; volunteers should refer to their site manager or volunteer coordinator for specific local information.

## **II. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS**

For the purpose of administering volunteer service within the ORCP, the following words and terms shall have the meaning indicated:

**A. Volunteer:** Any person who, of their own free will, provides goods or services to the Department with no monetary or material compensation. A person who conveys interest in or otherwise consents to the use of real property pursuant to Chapter 380, F.S., to any state department or agency, or a nonprofit organization, with no monetary or material compensation, is also defined as a volunteer.

**B. Occasional-service Volunteer:** Any person who offers to provide a one-time or occasional voluntary service.

**C. Regular-service Volunteer:** Any person engaged in specific voluntary service activities on an on-going or continuous basis.

**D. Authorized Department Supervisor:** A Department employee authorized to accept the services of volunteers. This includes all SES and SMS management personnel and other employees designated by any of the above-mentioned personnel.

**E. Regulatory Responsibility:** A duty or responsibility, assigned to an individual by management, that involves direct responsibility either for determinations of whether or not a person is in compliance with Department rules, permits or orders, or for determinations or recommendations as to whether any Department permit or order should or should not be issued, modified, suspended, or revoked.

### **III. RECRUITMENT, SCREENING, AND BACKGROUND REQUIREMENTS**

#### **A. Recruitment and Job Descriptions**

Volunteer recruiting shall be the responsibility of an authorized Department Supervisor or designee who will directly supervise the volunteer. Advertisements shall clearly state that volunteer services are being sought by the Department to perform specific activities, as provided in a job description for each volunteer position. The job description shall be summarized in the Volunteer Services Agreement.

#### **B. Screening and Acceptance**

Applicants willing to provide volunteer services shall be accepted or rejected based on the findings of a screening process conducted by an authorized Department supervisor or designee. Screening criteria will be determined on a job-specific basis and limited to matters that determine a volunteer's ability and availability to perform the applied services.

#### **C. Background Check Requirements**

Prior to beginning work for ORCP, volunteers are subject to screening requirements:

1. Regular-service volunteers must adhere to the background screening requirements outlined in [DEP Administrative Directive 422](#).
2. Occasional-service volunteers will sign the ORCP occasional-services volunteer self-attestation.

#### **D. Youth Volunteerism**

The ORCP welcomes and encourages volunteers of all ages. Youth volunteers under the age of 18 must:

1. Obtain parental or guardian permission, provided in the form of a signature on the Volunteer Application and the Volunteer Agreement.
2. Comply with all Federal and State Child Labor Laws regarding hours of service and safety requirements.

### **IV. SERVICE AGREEMENTS AND OPERATIONAL CONDUCT**

#### **A. Volunteer Service Agreement**

An agreement for volunteer services between the volunteer and the Department shall be completed by the volunteer and the recruiting Department employee. Volunteers shall be advised that during the period of service, they are not considered employees of the Department. The agreement must contain, at a minimum:

1. An acknowledgment that services will be provided on a voluntary basis.
2. The dates and hours available for service.
3. A brief description of the volunteer's duties.

## **B. Standards of Conduct and Key Policy Acknowledgement**

Volunteers shall comply with DEP standards of conduct and other applicable Department/Division rules, policies, and practices.

1. While acting as a volunteer, individuals must refrain from unprofessional communication, malicious talk, negative criticism.
2. All regular-service volunteers must sign a copy of [DEP 54-800 Acknowledgement of Key Policies for Non-DEP Employees](#) and refrain from using the volunteer position to secure special privileges, benefits, personal business, or exemptions.
3. Volunteers on duty for the Department may be photographed or videoed and the materials may be used to promote the Department. No further releases are required.
4. ORCP is a steward of public lands. All native plants and animals are protected. Volunteers who discover or witness the endangerment of a resource shall notify the ORCP site manager, staff, or ranger on duty.

## **C. Limits to Authority**

1. Volunteers shall work under the supervision of Department employees.
2. Volunteers shall NOT be assigned any regulatory responsibilities.

## **D. Training and Equipment Operation**

ORCP site managers are responsible for ensuring a safe working environment and for providing information on emergency procedures & emergency phone numbers in the event they are needed. ORCP sites have designated Safety Coordinators who provide safety guidelines, information and training. Volunteers should not perform any duty or job they do not feel comfortable or capable of performing. More information about safety can be found in the [DEP Health and Safety Manual](#).

1. Volunteers shall not be assigned any tasks, duties, or responsibilities for which they have not been properly trained.
2. No volunteer will be allowed to operate equipment for which they have not been properly trained and certified to operate in accordance with DEP Operating procedures. The ORCP site manager is responsible for ensuring training and safety guidelines for the use of ORCP equipment are provided and followed.
3. Volunteers may be used only for assignments related to their background and training. Authorized Department supervisors may institute appropriate training programs for volunteers where such training would assist the volunteers in carrying out assigned duties.
4. Volunteers should be encouraged to ask for clarification or proactively seek understanding of assignments, rules, and policies that I do not understand.
5. Use of Motor Vehicles and Vessels shall be performed in accordance with [DEP Administrative Directive 310 \(Motor Vehicle\)](#) and [DEP Directive 270](#) (Watercraft). Directive 270 includes the use of state-owned canoes and kayaks.
6. Qualified volunteers who may be asked to snorkel or SCUBA dive for DEP must complete specific training and forms described in the [DEP Underwater Operations Manual \(UOM\)](#).
7. Volunteers performing resource management duties must wear appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE) for duties assigned (e.g., closed-toed shoes, eye, and hand protection for exotic removal). ORCP will provide appropriate PPE. Volunteers must also implement all DEP safety standards and report unsafe conditions and job-related injuries immediately to supervisory staff.

## **V. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS**

### **A. Reporting Service Hours**

ORCP requires an accounting of all volunteer contributed service hours. Each organizational unit shall maintain volunteer service time logs, and a summary of these hours shall be recorded and kept at the end of each fiscal year. Recorded time must be kept on official time sheets or logs, indicating the amount of time contributed and type of work conducted.

### **B. Volunteer Files**

Each Division/District shall be responsible for maintaining volunteer files for each volunteer which shall contain all records related to the volunteer's period of service. A copy of the Volunteer Services Agreement shall be maintained by each organizational unit.

### **C. Benefits and Protections**

Volunteers are afforded several protections and benefits:

1. **Liability Protection:** Volunteers are covered by state liability protection as provided in Section 110.504, F.S. and Section 768.28, F.S.
2. **Workers' Compensation:** Volunteers are covered by worker's compensation in accordance with Chapter 440, F.S. Workers' Compensation claims should be initiated through the ORCP site manager.

**No Employee Status:** Volunteers are not considered employees of the State of Florida. No benefits of collective bargaining agreements apply.

**Equipment Use:** Volunteers shall be afforded the use of field equipment, laboratory space, vehicles, and vessels to conduct their volunteer services and studies on behalf of the Department upon approval by the Division/District Director or designee.

## **VI. TERMINATION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE**

Volunteer services may be terminated at the discretion of the Department. Termination may occur under the following conditions:

1. At the conclusion of the agreed-upon period of service.
2. For violation of standards of conduct or other department policy, regulation, or directive.
3. When the volunteer's work is unsatisfactory.
4. When the activity to which the volunteer is assigned is concluded or the volunteer's services are no longer needed.

A volunteer can also terminate their service at any time, with or without cause. Volunteers do not have the right to grieve or appeal a termination decision by DEP.

**Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection  
Volunteer Application**

**Purpose for Volunteering**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Give back to the community<br><input type="checkbox"/> Internship<br><input type="checkbox"/> CSO/Friends Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational requirement<br><input type="checkbox"/> Project for scouting or service group<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
|--|--|

**Applicant Information** (Please submit a separate application for each individual)

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Middle Initial</b>	<b>Last name</b>	<b>Telephone #</b>						
<b>Address (Home)</b>									
<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip Code</b>							
<b>Email Address</b>									
<b>Are you a minor (under 18)?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  If yes, parent or guardian sign here:  <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">X _____</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Print Name</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Signature</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Date</td> </tr> </table>				_____	X _____	_____	Print Name	Signature	Date
_____	X _____	_____							
Print Name	Signature	Date							

**Do you have a valid Driver's License? (Required for some duties)**

- Yes  
 No

**Emergency Contact Information**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Telephone (Best)</b>
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**Availability for Choose an item.**

Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM

**How many hours a week can you volunteer?** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Is your availability flexible?**

- Yes     No

## Background & Experience

### Education, Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Experience:

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Licenses, Certifications:

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Hobbies, Interests:

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Are you willing to supervise other volunteers?

Yes  No

## Experience and Interests

Please check all of the boxes of those skills/duties that you are interested in performing.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant/animal identification  | <input type="checkbox"/> Snorkeling                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration management (controlled burn, exotics removal, trail maintenance, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat or wildlife monitoring/surveying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing/kayaking  | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction/repair                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating  | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer software/administration         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening  | <input type="checkbox"/> Aquarium care                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education/outreach   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                    |

## Background Information

1. Have you ever been asked to vacate a volunteer position?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Have you ever been convicted of a felony or a first-degree misdemeanor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Have you ever pled Nolo Contendere or pled guilty to a felony or a first-degree misdemeanor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Have you ever had adjudication of guilt withheld for a crime which is a felony or first-degree misdemeanor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. If YES to any of the questions above, please explain, what were the charges or convictions and where?	Click or tap here to enter text.

**Note:** A YES answer to these questions will not automatically bar you from volunteering. The nature, job-relatedness, severity and date of the offense in relation to the position for which you are applying are considered. It is the policy of the Department of Environmental Protection that all current and new volunteers may be subject to a security background check including fingerprinting as a condition of volunteering, employment or working for or with the Department.

## Acknowledgement

"I understand that I may be asked to provide date of birth, driver's license number(s) or other proof of identification, and social security number(s) at a later date. I certify that all information contained in this application is true and correct. Further, I authorize the Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection to verify the information provided."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection  
Volunteer Agreement**

As a volunteer for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (ORCP), at \_\_\_\_\_ (ORCP site), I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print volunteer name), agree to abide by all applicable ORCP rules, policies and standards governing volunteers. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to become familiar with the contents of the ORCP Volunteer Procedure Manual. A copy may be provided by the ORCP site manager.

**Volunteer Agreement Standards**

I agree to:

1. Support the ORCP mission and policies when communicating with the public, staff and fellow volunteers.
2. Uphold a high level of professionalism at all times, to include maintaining a courteous and supportive attitude.
3. Only participate in approved assignments and duties as outlined in my volunteer position description.
4. Abstain from using my volunteer position to secure special privileges, benefits, personal business or exemptions for others or myself.
5. Only use state equipment, office space and vehicles as assigned to me for my volunteer position and return all state property issued to me at the end of my service.
6. Implement all safety standards and report job-related injuries immediately to supervisory staff.
7. Report volunteer hours and other information as required by my supervisor.
8. Request clarification of rules and policies that I do not understand.

Volunteers are not considered to be employees of the State of Florida. Volunteers are covered by state liability protection (Section 768.28, F.S.) and by workers' compensation (Chapter 440, F.S.). No other benefits of collective bargaining agreements apply. I understand my volunteer performance will be evaluated. I also understand my service can be terminated by the ORCP, or I can terminate my volunteer status at any time, with or without cause, and I do not have the right to grieve or appeal. I understand that volunteers on duty for the Department may be photographed or videoed and the materials may be used to promote the Department. No further releases are required.

X \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

X \_\_\_\_\_

Program Manager's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

**If volunteer is under 18:** I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name of parent or guardian), understand and agree to the above ORCP volunteer rules, policies and standards governing volunteers and do hereby grant permission for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of applicant), date of birth \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in volunteer activities with the ORCP.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent / Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date