

VOLUNTEER GUIDE & HANDBOOK



Transforming lives through outdoor recreation

Welcome to Outdoors for All



WELCOME!

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Outdoors for All Foundation. We welcome you as a volunteer member of our team and look forward to working with you in achieving our mission...

To enrich the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities through outdoor recreation

This guide has been designed as a tool to enhance your experience. It provides a basic overview of Outdoors for All and serves as a reference of our expectations, core policies and procedures. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the contents in order to create a successful experience for you, Outdoors for All, and the individuals we serve.

We want to help you maximize your volunteer experience and hope you'll continue working with us for many years to come. As part of our commitment to continually improve our programs, we encourage the sharing of information and new ideas by volunteers and staff.

Outdoors for All is successful because of you – our volunteers. Without your assistance and support we simply could not deliver on our mission and serve the more than 2,000 participants that benefit from our programs.

Thanks for your support. I look forward to seeing you in the outdoors!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed'.

Ed Bronsdon
Executive Director

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following is a listing of our commonly used terms and acronyms at Outdoors for All.

Agency: This term is used in this guide in specific reference to Outdoors for All Foundation.

Custom Events: Customized Outdoors for All recreation activity organized in partnership with other non-profit organizations or community groups.

Dryland Clinic Annual classroom training day required for all WINTER volunteers assisting participants with winter programs.

Lead: The person who a volunteer is to 'report to'. The person could be a volunteer or a staff member.

On-Snow Clinic: Clinics held on the snow for volunteers who want to instruct winter programs.

Participant: A person with a disability to whom the agency is providing services. In essence a 'client'.

SKIHAWKS: On-snow program for participants with disabilities training to compete in Special Olympics.

Staff: This term is used in this guide in specific reference to a paid staff member of Outdoors for All Foundation.



OVERVIEW

Outdoors for All is the leading expert in adaptive recreation in the Pacific Northwest. Our fleet of adaptive equipment is the largest in the area and includes specialized equipment for each of the programs we offer. Our services are primarily focused within Washington state; however, upon request, we do provide services in neighboring states as well.

We are one of the largest nonprofit organizations providing year round instruction in outdoor recreation to individuals, ages 5 and up, with all types of disabilities including physical, cognitive, developmental, and sensory.

Our programs are funded through a variety of resources including private donations (from foundations, corporations, and individuals), participant fees and government grants. Participant fees account for about 35% of our annual budget. Financial grants are available to participants and organizations who need assistance in order to access our programs.

HISTORY

1979: Ski for All was incorporated as a 501(c) (3), nonprofit organization. Thirty-five participants learned to downhill ski Snoqualmie Summit.

1985: Nordic programs were introduced. Served 100 participants. Summer programs were introduced - Served over 300 participants.

2006: Our name changed to Outdoors for All Foundation. Served 2,000 participants.

2007: Relocated our offices to Seattle. Opened Program & Rental Office at Magnuson Park.

We are a nonprofit organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the IRS code. Charitable gifts are deductible as allowed by this code. IRS Number 91-1085999.

Please review our website www.outdoorsforall.org for more information on our programs and how you can help.

We assist more than **2,000 children and adults** with the support of **over 600 volunteers** and a staff of just 12.

Outdoors for All programs include:

- * Camping
- * Canoeing
- * Cross Country Skiing
- * Custom Events
- * Cycling
- * Day Camps
- * Downhill Skiing
- * Hiking
- * Kayaking
- * River Rafting
- * Rock Climbing
- * Snowboarding
- * Snowshoeing
- * Water Skiing



"I absolutely love working with Outdoors for All. I have been a volunteer for 6 years now, I am so thankful for the opportunity to help others improve their quality of life and fulfillment; it really helps me take my life to the next level. I love seeing the faces of our athletes when they accomplish something new or have an awesome day."

-6th year volunteer

Volunteer Opportunities



VOLUNTEER!

There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available at Outdoors for All. Some of the opportunities available throughout the year are listed on the next page. They range from one-time events lasting 2-5 hours, to on-going volunteer commitments lasting several weeks or months depending on the program. Please contact our Outreach Manager to inquire about assisting with any of these roles. If you have a particular interest or skill set that isn't listed which you feel could assist us in delivering our mission, please speak with our Outreach Manager to explore more possibilities.

Volunteers participating in one of our program activities will be paired with participants based on your skills and comfort level. You may be matched up one-to-one with a participant for some activities, like cycling, that may require the most assistance. There are other activities, like hiking, where a one-to-few ratio is more appropriate.

Volunteers under the age of 18 must have the written consent of a parent or guardian before volunteering. The volunteer duties assigned to a minor will comply with all appropriate laws and regulations on child labor. Minimum age for volunteers is 16 (with the only exception being our Cadet Instructor program during the winter season which is ages 13-15 or our Junior Counselor program which is ages 14-15). Contact our Outreach Manager to learn more about volunteer age requirements.

NEW VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

We can always use the support of more volunteers. Please tell your family and friends about us. Get school credit and hours! Contact our Outreach Manager to learn about materials we can provide and how we can help you recruit volunteers.

"As a first year volunteer, working with people with disabilities was a new experience for me. My most memorable moments were in the lodge - eating lunch and seeing how much fun the students were having by kidding each other and joking around. I was also impressed how my student came EVERY week - even in the driving rain! That shows how important Outdoors for All is for the participants."

-Alpine Volunteer

Below is a listing of volunteer opportunities.

Administrative

- * Administrative Expertise - marketing, graphic design, technology and web applications, etc. Tele-commuters welcomed!
- * Office support - filing, typing, data entry

Committees

- * Development/Fundraising
- * Executive
- * Finance
- * Long-Range Planning
- * Marketing
- * Program
- * Technology



Governance

- * Board of Directors

Programs

- * Bus / Van Drivers and Assistants
- * Equipment Management
- * Guides
- * Instructors
- * Lead Volunteers
- * Loading Assistants



Internships

Require a minimum of 120 hours commitment over a 3 month period. Class credit may be earned for internships.

- * Marketing
- * Program Services
- * Recreation
- * Development/Fundraising
- * Technology
- * Therapeutic Recreation
- * Volunteer Management



"The opportunity to give back to the community in helping people with disabilities is so rewarding. It has taken me away from my work and put me into a refreshing situation which charges my batteries and enables me to feel great joy."

-5th year volunteer



Working With Individuals With Disabilities

WORKING WITH PARTICIPANTS

Every person, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, race, religion, creed, or ability, deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. When working with individuals with a disability, it is most important to remember a person is a person first, not a condition or a feature. Any reference to a person's appearance, features, religion, age, gender, ability, etc, is appropriate only when the reference is pertinent to the conversation.

A person's disability may not be obvious to you or the public. Most people with disabilities learn to make adjustments for their differences and live the same type of life as anyone else; just as others have learned to accommodate for their left or right handedness, wearing glasses or contacts. Just because someone has a disability, don't assume he/she needs help.

If you are unsure how to accommodate a particular individual in an activity, ask the individual or their caregiver. They often can provide you the best and most upfront advice to catering to their individual needs. If you still need assistance, find a Lead Volunteers or staff members for guidance on how to proceed.

The more knowledge you have about the disabilities you may encounter, the better you will be able to assess your student's needs and anticipate potential problems. Following is a list of the common disabilities we work with. If you would like more information, contact a staff member for recommended web sites and reference books.

Autism Spectrum

A developmental and behavioral syndrome that results from certain combinations of characteristically autistic traits. People with autism tend to not show any obvious physical symptoms, rather they tend to be weak in their language and social interaction skills. They may also exhibit unusual repetitive motions.

Cerebral Palsy

All types of cerebral palsy are characterized by abnormal muscle tone, posture, reflexes, or motor development or coordination. Classical symptoms include unsteady gait and spasticity. Secondary symptoms can include communication disorders, seizures, hearing and visual impairment, and cognitive and learning disabilities.

Developmental Disabilities

Severe, life-long disabilities attributable to mental and/or physical impairments. Mental retardation is a term for a pattern of persistently slow learning of basic motor and language skill during childhood, and a significantly below-normal global intellectual capacity as an adult.

Down Syndrome

A genetic condition resulting from the presence of an extra chromosome. Individuals tend to have lower than average cognitive abilities. Physically they tend to have shorter limbs and speech impairments.

Hearing Impaired

Complete hearing loss or a decrease in the ability to perceive sound.

Limb Deficiencies or Amputations

The inability to use a limb (arm or leg), or the lack of a limb(s).

Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

A chronic, inflammatory disease that affects the central nervous system. Symptoms can include muscle weakness, visual problems, depression, difficulties with coordination and speech, severe fatigue and pain.

Spina Bifada

A birth defect caused by the incomplete closure of one or more vertebral arches of the spine, resulting in malformations of the spinal cord.

Spinal Cord Injuries

A disturbance of the spinal cord that results in the loss of sensation or mobility. typically caused by trauma or disease.

Visually Impaired

Complete vision loss or a significant limitation of visual capability.

"Last year my student was a 36 year old autistic man, who even from the first week proved himself a competent if limited cross country skier. He was so wooden and unresponsive during that first lesson that I was afraid he was having a terrible time. Then, after lunch it was time for him to board the van that would take him home. As he sat there slightly rocking back and forth, I said "see you next week, Phil". He looked straight at me and a huge smile spread across his face. At that moment I knew Phil had loved every moment of his time skiing."

-Nordic Volunteer



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

While safety always remains our number one priority, please keep these important things in mind as well.

NOTE: Address or Telephone Changes

Volunteers should immediately notify the Outdoors for All Office of any change in their e-mail address, mailing address or telephone number. This enables us to contact you if there is an urgent need to do so.

Be 'Present'

When volunteering you are expected to be fully present. This means you are not under the influence of any alcohol, drugs or other substances, you are alert and able to fulfill your job duties to the satisfaction of participants, other volunteers and staff.

Additionally, we request that you refrain from using your cell phone while you are working with a participant, so you can give them your full attention. Our participants greatly appreciate this.

Be 'Realistic'

While we appreciate enthusiasm, we caution you to offer only as much time as you are sure you can give.

Cancellation of a Volunteer Assignment

We cannot deliver our programs without your help. Please let the Outdoors for All office know as soon as possible if you need to cancel. ***Within 24 hours of the activity, please call 206.838.4995 and leave a message on the hotline.*** The line is checked every morning programs are occurring.

Confidentiality

Remember that Outdoors for All is dealing with medical information that is confidential. Do not provide information to anyone regarding an individuals' medical history or how to contact participants or volunteers unless first approved in writing by staff.

Description of Duties

Volunteers will either be given written job descriptions or provided verbal instructions of their duties depending on the nature of the volunteer job. If you are ever unclear as to your volunteer duties please contact your Lead Volunteer or a staff member.

Illness

Please do not participate in a volunteer activity if you are ill. Call in to the hotline (206.838.4995) as soon as possible, preferably 24 hours in advance.

Information & Orientation Sessions

New volunteers are highly encouraged to attend an agency Information and Orientation session. This will help you learn more about Outdoors for All history, programs, partnerships and how you can support our mission. Please contact the Outreach Manager to find out when the next session will be held.

E-Newsletter

Stay connected! Sign-up for our monthly E-News updates. Our E-Newsletter comes out the first week each month and provides volunteers with upcoming information about Outdoors for All including volunteer opportunities, special events, important dates, success stories and MORE! Make sure to sign up today! Contact the Outreach Manager to make sure Outdoors for All has your current email information. *(Tip: Make sure to save our Outreach Manager's email to your contacts so our emails do not get sent to junk mail).*

Input Wanted

We want to hear your ideas for ways we can enhance and improve our programs and services. You are encouraged to privately share your ideas with volunteer Leads and program staff during break times and/or via phone or e-mail following the event. If you are asked to do something that doesn't seem to make sense to you, we encourage you to question 'why'. Please be advised that in most cases we will not implement changes on the spot. Rather we will take your recommendations under advisement to ensure we thoroughly consider the suggested change.

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"Outdoors for All truly is such an amazing organization - I'm always passing on to others your name and mission, and how amazing Outdoors for All has been for our family. If it wasn't for you and all the amazing volunteers who have worked with our son the past couple of years, he certainly wouldn't have the confidence he does on the snow right now. It's been so much fun for Keith and I to be able to ski with him. The dream of skiing as a family has already come true!"

- Mother of a participant



Core Roles & Responsibilities

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Meals

Volunteers are responsible for providing their own meals during their shifts. Food should NEVER be offered to any client, due to dietary restrictions they may have.

Professional Conduct

Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, caring, and compassionate manner at all times. You should treat others with respect and interact with others as they would like you to interact with them.

Do not attempt to counsel families or act as a social worker. Refer families to the Outdoors for All office so we may put them in touch with professional specialists.

Volunteers should NEVER ask for favors from sponsors, partners, or participants. For instance, if a celebrity is participating in a program, volunteers are not to ask for autographs or pictures. Asking partnering facilities for discount tickets or meal vouchers is also inappropriate.

Punctuality

Participants, other volunteers, and staff are depending on you. Please make every effort to be on time and arrive when expected. If you are running late, please contact your Lead Volunteer or the hotline (206.838.4995) as soon as possible, so they will be aware you are on your way.

"The Mozees arrived at Lake Sammamish unsure of Darci's ability to ride a bike. Due to effects of her Diabetes (Darci is now sight-impaired and an amputee), it had been 10 years since she had last been on a bike. The Outdoors for All staff educated Darci and Andy about the capabilities of a specialized side-by-side tandem cycle, assisted them onto the cycle and set them on their way. Lap after lap and smile after smile, Outdoors for All once again proved outdoor recreation is something for everyone. Darci exclaimed, "...this bike has given me some independence. It feels so great to get outdoors and exercise again."



Record Keeping of your Volunteer Hours

Keeping track of and reporting your volunteer hours is essential. It helps us demonstrate community support as well as prove to government institutions, businesses, foundations and the community of the significant and substantial services provided by our volunteers.

Administrative volunteers will be trained on how to document their hours. Program volunteers' time will be automatically calculated.

Volunteer Company Matching

Those volunteers whose time is matched by an employer, should document their time through their employer policies as well. Outdoors for All staff are available to assist you with employer matching forms if needed.

References

Many employers recognize volunteer work as relevant work-related experience. Upon your request (one-month advance notice preferred), the Outreach Manager or appropriate staff member can provide you with personal references and/or a letter of recommendation regarding your skills.

Smoking

Please refrain from smoking during the activity for which you are volunteering.

And, of course...HAVE FUN!





POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The following section explains Outdoors for All Foundation policies and procedures. It will help you understand how to carry out your duties and give the best service to Outdoors for All participants. **Additional program specific policies and procedures will be explained on site or at specific program training sessions.**

Abuse and Harassment Policy

Volunteers witnessing or experiencing sexual abuse, child abuse, physical or mental abuse, sexual or verbal harassment must report it immediately to Outdoors for All staff or their volunteer Lead immediately. Outdoors for All does not condone and will prosecute any such incidents. If you have questions regarding what constitutes abuse or harassment, please contact our Outreach Manager.

Accident Reports

Any volunteer that is injured while participating in an Outdoors for All event or is working on an Outdoors for All project, should report the accident at once to an agency staff member. An Incident Report Form must be completed and turned in on the day in which the accident occurred. For medical emergencies, contact 911 immediately.

Volunteers working with participants, will receive detailed instructions in their training sessions on how to deal with incidents should they occur while the volunteer is working with a participant.

At-Will Policy

Volunteers serve Outdoors for All at the sole discretion and will of the agency. Volunteers or the agency may end the relationship at any time. The services of a volunteer may be ended by the Outdoors for All staff for reasons including, but not limited to, violation of Outdoors for All Foundation policies and procedures, as noted in this guide. Season passes may also be revoked.

Background Checks

A criminal records background check is required for all individual program volunteer assignments. A volunteer must pass this check to be given an assignment involving participants or dealing with sensitive information. The agency, utilizing a volunteer's original release form, will do background checks on a regular basis for active volunteers.

Driver Requirements

Volunteers who will be driving an agency vehicle, must show proof of a current driver's license and complete our Vehicle Insurance Form. Volunteers are also required to complete our customized driver's training course. Once approved by the Training Director, volunteer drivers will be covered by the agency's vehicle insurance policy when they are driving an agency vehicle during a staff authorized volunteer assignment. At no time are the agency vehicles to be used for personal needs.

Expense Reimbursement

Volunteers may be eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred while volunteering. This may include gasoline purchases for an agency van or the purchase of bottled water for a group, for instance. PRIOR approval from an Outdoors for All staff member must be obtained for any such expenditure.

There are possible areas for tax deductions of non-reimbursed expenses incurred while volunteering. Please consult your tax advisor or the IRS for accurate information. The IRS website is www.irs.gov.

Fraternization

While carrying out your volunteer activities, romantic fraternization of any kind, with other volunteers, staff, agency partners, or participants is strictly prohibited. Romantic fraternization includes, but is not limited to, kissing, inappropriate touching and the use of obscene language.

Insurance

The agency does NOT provide damage or medical insurance for volunteers or participants. Volunteers and participants are responsible for their own medical and vehicle insurance.

Media Contacts / Pictures / Publicity

Do not initiate any press or publicity concerning a specific participant. If media approaches you, please refer them to an on-site staff member .

Publicly displayed photos of participants and/or volunteers are prohibited without a signed publicity release on file with the agency.

Medications

All participants are self medicating. Volunteers can remind participants when to take their medications, however, volunteers and staff are NEVER to administer medication to another individual, not even aspirin.

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Policies & Procedures

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Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of this agency that there will be no discrimination or harassment, at any time, in its programs, activities, volunteering, or employment based on race, color, gender, sexual preference, marital or parental status, religion, national origin, age, mental or physical ability. Questions or concerns related to affirmative action, non-discrimination, or equal opportunity should be directed to the Executive Director or Associate Executive Director.

Outdoors for All Representation

All actions or statements that reflect on, cause obligation to, or financially affect the agency must have prior approval by Outdoors for All staff. These may include, but are not limited to, lobbying government or other organizations, statements to the press, the signing of contracts or assuming financial obligations.

Placement

The agency will try to accommodate the assignment requests of each volunteer, but there may be instances in which the agency will not be able to accommodate such. Both volunteer interests and abilities, and agency needs must be weighed in the process to insure the best match possible.

The agency will strive to notify volunteers of their confirmed volunteer position within two weeks of the event for which their volunteering. Notifications will be made either by mail, telephone or e-mail.

Volunteer Age

Volunteers under the age of 18 must have the written consent of a parent or guardian before volunteering. The volunteer duties assigned to a minor will comply with all appropriate laws and regulations on child labor. Minimum age for volunteers is 16 (only exception being our Cadet Instructor program during the winter season which is ages 13-15. Contact our Outreach Manager to learn more).

Paperwork

All volunteers are required to complete three forms prior to beginning with the agency – the Volunteer Information Form, the Outdoors for All Release of Liability, and the Volunteer Guide Acknowledgement of Receipt.

Safety Measures

The safety and health of volunteers, participants and staff is our primary concern. A safe environment and procedures are both of major concern. If in your volunteering you should encounter defective equipment, an unsafe situation, or observe others working in an unsafe manner, resolve the situation if you can. If you can't, immediately report the problem to a staff member or volunteer Lead. Winter specific: Outdoors for All programs do not support or authorize participants or volunteers to perform aerial maneuvers during our programs.

Volunteers assisting with a program activity will be provided more comprehensive safety guidelines in their program training.

Theft

Theft or pilferage of cash, equipment or merchandise by a client, volunteer or staff is a serious offense and must be reported to the activity supervisor immediately. Theft negatively affects not only the agency's ability to deliver services, but also the trust upon which our agency is based. Theft is cause for immediate dismissal.

Volunteer and Staff Relationships

Volunteers and staff are partners in fulfilling the mission and programs of Outdoors for All Foundation. Each has a complementary role to play.

Volunteers as Leads

A volunteer may act in a supervisory capacity for other volunteers after appropriate training for the position has been completed. For more information on leadership positions please contact us!

"One of my patients had been very resistant to getting out of bed after a bout with pneumonia. After trying a 3 wheel recumbent foot pedaled cycle he said, "I forgot how fun that is. I want to do more of that. When are we going again? ". In fact, he has begun exercising to help him become strong enough to take more than one turn around the park. Not only that, he joined one of our social groups the next day, telling everyone about cycling, getting them excited to try something themselves."

-Health Care Professional



CONTACT INFORMATION

If you can't make your commitment:

While we understand that illness and emergencies occur, we ask that you make every effort to attend the activities for which you register. All of our activities are volunteer dependent. We base how many participants we can accept per activity based on the number of volunteers who register.

Please let the Outdoors for All office know as soon as possible if you need to cancel.

Within 24 hours of the activity, please call 206.838.4995 and leave a message on the hotline.

The line is checked every morning during regularly running program activities.

Standard Contact Information:

Website	www.outdoorsforall.org
Email	info@outdoorsforall.org
Telephone:	206.838.6030 x200
Fax:	206.838.6035

Admin Office Address:

2 Nickerson Street, Suite 101
Seattle, WA 98109

Program & Rental Office Address:

6344 NE 74th St Suite 102 (Building 406)
Seattle WA 98115

Volunteer Contact Information:

VISTA Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@outdoorsforall.org
206.838.6030 x225



THANK YOU!

Thank you once again for volunteering! Without the help from individuals like you, we would not be able to serve our more than 2,000 participants. We want to ensure you'll find your volunteer experience rewarding - we are here to assist you. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact one of us. Thank you and enjoy the experience!

The Outdoors for All Staff

"I first got involved with Outdoors for All because a good friend of mine who is disabled has been telling me about Outdoors for All for a couple of years now. He teaches people with mobility issues how to use a sit-ski to get down the hill. An interesting note is that he was an alpine ski instructor even before he was injured.

I had such a moving experience my first day teaching kids with developmental disabilities how to downhill snow ski. When the day started, I was worried that I would have difficulty communicating, or the kids wouldn't like me and as a result I would not be an effective instructor. Well, neither of those fears came true. By the end of the first day, I was able to communicate effectively and bonded with both of my students quite well. When my students smile after learning something new or making a run, it completely makes my day. Everyone I have met through Outdoors for All has been wonderful to work with or learn from. Outdoors for All is where good things happen everyday!

I hope to be involved with Outdoors for All for several years to come."

-Alpine Volunteer



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