

# NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Thank you for your interest in scheduling a group volunteer event at Norfolk Botanical Garden (NBG)! Below is detailed information regarding our Volunteer Events for groups. Please read the information carefully before filling out the Volunteer Event Request Form.

## VOLUNTEER GROUP ETIQUETTE

Our Horticulture staff plan their day around the amount of volunteer help they receive. They take time out of their schedules to set up for volunteer groups, such as ordering supplies, prestaging gardening tools, gloves and debris containers in order to maximize the use of volunteer groups. This volunteer event is not an excuse to get out of work, or to choose to do other activities instead of the volunteer task. We ask all members of volunteer groups to commit to working the full time slot chosen by the volunteer group coordinator or point of contact. Failure to do so can prevent individuals or specific groups from volunteering at Norfolk Botanical Garden in the future.

**Short-notice cancellations are considered extremely harmful to our work schedule. If your group cannot commit to a project, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible. 48-hour notice of cancellation is preferred in cases of emergency.**

If any members of the group do not arrive for their scheduled event, up to 30 minutes after the scheduled arrival time, the volunteer event will be cancelled. Some exceptions will be made for groups that call in advance or within the 30-minute window after the scheduled arrival time. Continued lateness for recurring groups will result in dismissal after three incidents.

Please be mindful that volunteers will be within sight and earshot of the guests at all times. We ask volunteer groups exercise a high degree of professionalism as a result.

## THE USUAL PROJECTS

Volunteer groups are typically placed with one of our Horticulturalists and assist with work in our natural areas. **This is an outdoor opportunity that experiences frequent exposure to direct sunlight, high heat, humidity, cold and mild inclement weather such as a light rain.** Tasks such as spreading mulch, pulling weeds, cleaning plant debris such as pinecones or sticks, etc., are the most common opportunities we offer. **This is outdoor, manual labor that requires frequent standing, walking, bending and stooping.** Volunteers may be allowed to use shrub and tree clippers, spades, rakes, wheelbarrows, pitchforks, shovels, etc., depending on the assigned project. Your group may be provided gloves; however, you may bring your own if you prefer.

## HOW IT WORKS

**NBG staff serves to facilitate a volunteer service experience only.** Volunteer groups will be escorted or transported by the Volunteer Coordinator or a designee to their work site where they will meet with an NBG staff member. The NBG staff member will then do a brief general orientation and explain the task. Once the NBG staff member has explained the task, the group will begin the project. During the course of the shift, the NBG staff member may step away to check on other areas, groups or take plant waste and make runs to our dumping site. Because of this, it is imperative that groups be capable of working independently and/or coordinators and chaperones supervise the groups at all times.

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## VOLUNTEER GROUP SIZE AND SHIFTS

**The maximum number of participants in a group volunteer event is 10 per day or per shift between all booked groups.** (For example: a group that chooses Option 1: Full Day shift can consist of 10 volunteers; or we may have a group of 10 during each of the AM and PM shifts; or we may have two groups of 5 during the AM and PM shifts, totaling 10, etc.) You will be notified if your group size exceeds our day/shift maximum and cannot be supported.

### **We offer three shift options:**

#### Option 1) Full Day

10:00 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. with 45-minute lunch break

Accredited Volunteer Time: 4 Hours

This is our most preferred option, giving volunteers a chance to fully acclimate to the environment and task. The group will take a 45-minute lunch break that coincides with the Horticulture staff lunch break from 12:00 p.m. -12:45 p.m. Lunch will not be provided by NBG; volunteers are encouraged to pre-order a boxed lunch from our café, Marigold and Honey, at a 10% discounted rate or bring a bagged lunch from home. Pre-ordered box lunches will be delivered to the volunteer work site. Volunteers are encouraged to picnic near their work site or enjoy a leisurely stroll through the garden during their lunch break. See below for ordering information.

#### Option 2) Morning Shift

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Accredited Volunteer Time: 2 Hours

#### Option 3) Afternoon Shift

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Accredited Volunteer Time: 2 Hours

**Groups of up to 25 can be accepted with two weeks advanced notice. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (757) 441-5830 ext. 327 for availability.**

## SCHOOL GROUPS

**School, club or organization staff and/or parent chaperones must accompany and supervise the students/children at all times.** Projects are selected at an age appropriate level and may include simple tools, such as trowels, rakes, glue, scissors, etc.

School, club or organization groups must obtain permission from the parents of students/children before they participate in a volunteer event at NBG. NBG does not provide permission slips – the school, club or organization must use their own. **It is the responsibility of the sponsoring school, club or organization and site supervisors to maintain emergency contact information for each student/child who participates for use in cases of an emergency.**

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## WEATHER POLICY

NBG reserves the right to cancel volunteer events in situations where the weather is inclement, especially during thunderstorms, on short notice - up to and including the day of the event. Volunteer events may be rescheduled through the Volunteer Coordinator. At this time we are unable to provide indoor opportunities for groups larger than 10 people. Indoor opportunities are available on an as-needed basis and are not a guaranteed alternative to a group volunteer event.

## SIGNING UP

If you are still interested after reading the above information, please fill out the Group Volunteer Request Form and email it to: [volunteer@nbgs.org](mailto:volunteer@nbgs.org). It will be forwarded to our Horticultural Department for consideration/project placement. Once a project has been identified, you will receive a confirmation email.

## PRE-ORDERING BOXED LUNCHESES (OPTION 1 ONLY)

If you wish to pre-order box lunches from Marigold and Honey, please note that in your email when you return the filled out Volunteer Event Request Form. Please also include how many boxed lunches needed and what variety. All boxed lunches come with a side of chips and a chocolate chip cookie. The sandwiches Marigold and Honey offers are:

Smoked Turkey Breast  
Ham & Swiss  
Sunbutter and Jelly

Cost: \$8.06 with discount

## COURT-ORDERED/RELATED COMMUNITY SERVICE

**Norfolk Botanical Garden policy prevents us from honoring court-related or court-ordered community service. For a list of organizations that do, please visit:**

<http://norfolkbotanicalgarden.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/2015-Court-Ordered-Volunteer-Opportunities.pdf>

Again, thank you for your interest in volunteering at Norfolk Botanical Garden!