



**YOSEMITE  
CONSERVANCY®**

## **VISITOR INFORMATION ASSISTANT**

### **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

Volunteer Visitor Information Assistants are stationed at high traffic locations in Yosemite Valley, the Mariposa Grove, and Tuolumne Meadows to orient visitors, educate and answer questions about the park, and promote experiencing the Conservancy's programs. Volunteers are expected to work 30 hours per week on a set schedule, typically 6 hours per day (including a one hour break for lunch and, if needed, moving to a new work location)

between 9 am and 5 pm daily. Mariposa Grove volunteers may occasionally work until 6 pm. Mandatory training is provided by Yosemite Conservancy and the National Park Service. Volunteers work for approximately a month. The Visitor Information season is from May through September in Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove, and from mid-June through late September in Tuolumne Meadows.

It is the volunteer's responsibility to ask the team leader for help if the duties and hours of a schedule are not understood. Working a daily schedule affects other volunteers. It is imperative that volunteers follow the schedule of designated times for lunches and breaks, including arriving promptly at the start of the shift and to relieve other volunteers.

Volunteers may exchange days off with each other upon approval by the YC team leader. Obtain agreement from your replacement before communicating with your team leader.

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Volunteers focus on assisting visitors in discovering Yosemite National Park's activities and opportunities. Duties include:

1. Greeting visitors and answering questions on basic park orientation, recreational activities, and cultural and natural history.
2. Promoting the Conservancy by introducing visitors to our projects, programs, and how to be involved with the organization.

**SCOPE OF WORK IN YNP:** Volunteers perform tasks that: (1) might not get done due to NPS funding or personnel limitations; (2) enable paid NPS employees to accomplish work that might not otherwise get done due to NPS funding or personnel limitations; and (3) do not result in the displacement of a paid NPS employee.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

The Conservancy seeks volunteers who are friendly, approachable, and who thoroughly enjoy engaging with visitors. Volunteers should possess knowledge of Yosemite National Park and

Yosemite Conservancy's mission of education and stewardship in the park. At a minimum, applicants should meet the following requirements:

1. Be 19 years of age or older.
2. Be a U.S citizen, permanent resident, or possess an appropriate temporary visa,
3. Have experience and knowledge of Yosemite due to previous visits.
4. Possess a high school or equivalent diploma (college coursework preferred).
5. Be friendly, outgoing, flexible, and professional.
6. Possess excellent customer service skills, the ability to work independently, and commitment to teamwork.
7. Have experience camping and be willing to live in a communal campground.
8. Be willing and able to work while standing for up to 3 hours (with breaks).
9. Be willing and able to work in sunny, rainy, or mildly smoky conditions –though most positions are under some sort of cover and volunteers are not expected to work for extended periods in inclement weather in the uncovered positions.
10. Be able to occasionally lift map boxes weighing approximately 25 pounds.
11. Be able to travel from campgrounds to worksites on foot, bike, or shuttle if car transport is not practical.
12. Be able to perform duties safely and effectively.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

Volunteers are recruited and accepted from the public regardless of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, or sexual orientation. The exception is that volunteers must be at least 19 years old and if a non U.S. citizen must have an appropriate U.S. visa to allow them to volunteer. They must be physically able to perform the designated volunteer work. The Superintendent of the park may request a volunteer to complete a standard Form 256 (self-identification of medical disability) or obtain a medical examination at government expense, if there is a question regarding a volunteer's ability to perform assigned duties.

## **TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

1. Upon acceptance to the program, required training materials from the Conservancy must be read and studied.
2. There is a mandatory training day put on by Yosemite Conservancy on the day following campground check-in.
3. Mentoring is provided for new volunteers and returning volunteers in new locations to ease transition into the program.

## **PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATIONS**

While not a formal process, we do monitor our volunteers' performance to recognize and encourage quality service as well as to correct less than satisfactory service. The following are The Yosemite Conservancy's expectations for volunteers:

1. Adherence to Conservancy policies and procedures and National Park Service regulations and policy.
2. Represent the Yosemite Conservancy and the National Park Service in a professional manner.
3. Positive in attitude and communication regarding the Conservancy and National Park Service and park partners.
4. Proficient in providing visitor information and work towards improving the visitor's experience.
5. Treat visitors with respect and without discrimination regardless of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.
6. Responsible, conscientious, and reliable in performing duties and fulfilling assignments.
7. Perform duties safely.
8. Dedicated to helpful, cooperative working and camping relationships with colleagues.
9. Follow chain of command.
10. Seek and accept the guidance and support from supervisors (Team Leaders, Volunteer Coordinator, and Program Manager).
11. Work as a team with other volunteers and supervisors.
12. Respect access to information, facilities, and equipment.
13. Follow guidelines outlined in training modules (Hanta Virus Prevention, Customer Service, and Harassment)
14. Learn from and participate in mandatory training sessions and meetings.
15. Other than for illness or an emergency, get approval from team leader before deviating from an assigned schedule.
16. Make a good-faith effort to resolve differences or problems with other volunteers.
17. Care for Park resources.
18. Not discuss politics with the visiting public. Yosemite Conservancy is an apolitical organization.
19. Avoid any behavior that detracts from either the visitor's experience or their fellow volunteers' group camping experience.

Almost all Conservancy Volunteers meet these expectations and perform at a high level, resulting in an outstanding benefit to the park's visitors and resources as well as upholding the credibility of the Conservancy, the NPS, and their fellow volunteers. When a volunteer fails to meet performance expectations, doesn't adhere to NPS regulations and/or fails to follow Yosemite Conservancy policies and procedures the preferred solution is to provide supervisory guidance to the volunteer – informing them of their need to change behavior and suggestions as to how. This guidance may come from their team leader or YC Volunteer Program staff. In most cases this is all that is needed to resolve the issue. If, on the other hand, the volunteer is unable or unwilling to follow this corrective guidance and continues with the unsatisfactory performance that volunteer may not be chosen to return for a following season. In some rare cases of particularly egregious behavior, volunteers may be terminated during their volunteer

tour and asked to leave. Although these actions must be taken on occasion, they are not the norm for the program.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A NATIONAL PARK SERVICE VOLUNTEER**

All Yosemite Conservancy Volunteers are also signed up as National Park Service Volunteers in the Parks (V.I.P.s). The philosophy of the VIP Program is to treat volunteers with the attention, support, direction, and recognition paid employees receive. Volunteers have the right to be treated like paid employees and receive a meaningful experience. They are given real responsibility in the area they volunteer and are accountable for meeting park expectations and work standards.

### **Ethical Behavior**

It is important for all volunteers to abide by certain ethical standards, some of which are outlined below.

- Volunteers may not use government property for any personal reasons. This includes using government vehicles for non-official purposes.
- Volunteers may not sell commercial products in a government building. This includes fundraising for outside organizations.
- Volunteers may not receive compensation for any activity that is related to their volunteer duties. This includes anything of monetary value including gifts, gratuities, favors, entertainment, or loans.
- Volunteers may not endorse any commercial establishment over another in an official capacity.
- Volunteers may not discuss personal political views with visitors while on duty. If they do share views off duty, they cannot represent themselves as a park volunteer or in any other official capacity.

Under the VIP program all Volunteers receive the same protection as National Park Service employees under the Federal Compensation Act and Tort Claims Act. By signing the NPS 301A Volunteer Services Agreement, you are protected with Workers Compensation and from personal liability providing your actions are within the scope of assigned duties.