



VOLUNTEER HOST GUIDE 2025



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WELCOME

Welcome to [Washington State Parks](#), thank you for volunteering and being part of the Washington State Park community. We hope you enjoy your volunteer experience and appreciate your contributions and willingness to help provide positive recreational opportunities for all visitors to Washington State Parks.

This guide will provide you the necessary information to help you become a successful park host. In this guide, you will find information on the history of state parks, the duties and responsibilities of hosts, agency policies, how to handle difficult situations, and park rules and regulations.

You will receive additional orientation and materials that are park specific from your supervisor at the park. You will also receive any training necessary for you to safely perform the duties and tasks within the expectations provided to you at the park.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, contact your park supervisor or the Volunteer Program via email at parks.volunteer@parks.wa.gov.

Additional information can also be found on the [Host page](#) of the Washington State Parks website.

State Park Volunteer Program

You are joining a large community of volunteers that support Washington State Parks. Volunteers have been a vital part of caring for state parks and their visitors for many years. State parks volunteers include Park Hosts, Interpretive Hosts, Marine Hosts, Friends Groups, and individual and group volunteers.

The first formal effort to recruit volunteers for State Parks began in 1980 and resulted in 31 volunteers providing 1,426 hours of service to parks. When a full-time volunteer coordinator was hired in 1990, the Volunteer Program began to facilitate volunteer participation in state park programs, ensure appropriate training for volunteers, and maintain records of volunteer contributions. In 2024, volunteers provided over 176,000 hours of service to the State Parks system! We currently have over 600 approved hosts and had over 5000 volunteers in 2024.

State Parks Mission and Vision

Washington's state parks will be cherished destinations with natural, cultural, recreational, artistic, and interpretive experiences that all Washingtonians enjoy, appreciate, and proudly support.

History of State Parks

Washington State Parks and Recreation is governed by a Commission comprised of seven members selected by the Governor. The Commission is responsible for the administration of the Washington State Parks system and certain recreational and resource management programs. The Commission is also responsible for appointing the state park director.

Washington's first state park body was created in 1913. By 1922 the Parks Committee had seven major parks, and 11 smaller parcels located throughout the state. Since then, the park system has grown through private donations, cooperative agreements with federal agencies, set asides for state lands for park purposes, and financial grants. Several state parks benefited from the activities of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930's, and many of the facilities constructed then still exist in parks today. On November 15th, 1915, Larrabee State Park became first state park in the system.

Currently, there are over 140 state parks, 40 marine parks, and 11 historical parks covering over 140,000 acres of land. Visitors can choose from several different options for their camping experience. Cabins, yurts, group camps, and historical homes are among the types of opportunities available for a unique visit to Washington State Parks. If you're just spending the day, you can choose from a variety of recreational opportunities including picnicking, hiking, boating, windsurfing, scuba diving, and rock climbing.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Washington State Parks

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) means that the outdoors is for everyone. We believe that State parks connect *all* Washingtonians to their diverse natural and cultural heritage and that everyone should have access to memorable recreational and educational experiences that enhance their lives. This requires removing barriers of access to the outdoors for historically underserved communities, building sustainable community relationships and ensuring our parks are welcoming and inclusive to all visitors. Our vision is that State Parks workforce and embody the values of inclusion and a commitment to equity. Learn more about DEI at State Parks on our [website](#).

State Parks has an active Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Team composed of staff and community members, including multiple park hosts. This team supports the agency to develop strategic priorities to advance DEI through the State Parks system. The team meets virtually every month and is open to observers at any time. Reach out to dei@parks.wa.gov if you would like to join a PEAR team meeting.

Accessibility at State Parks

State Parks is dedicated to ensuring that outdoor experiences in Washington's natural environments are accessible to all, regardless of abilities. Learn about how we are making Parks accessible on the State Park [website](#). We can also coordinate with a contract vendor to have sign language interpreters available for the hearing impaired. Contact your supervisor for more information.

Host Agreement

The [Host Agreement](#) is required and must be signed by each host. This document provides policies, procedures and the Terms and Conditions of your volunteer service.

Volunteer service is at the discretion of the agency. State parks may, at any time, decide to terminate the park host's volunteer service and there is no grievance or appeal process for this decision.

Volunteer Policies

As a State Parks volunteer, you are a representative of the agency and are expected to abide by the State Parks' policies outlined below.

Pol/Pro #	Policy Title	Effective Date
70-15	Employee Conduct and Ethics	9/18/2006
70-39	Violence in the Workplace	1/23/2008
70-41	Anti-Harassment and Discrimination	1/19/2021
70-44	Criminal Record and Disclosure and Fingerprinting	2/4/2013
70-50	Volunteers	4/11/2014
70-52	Respectful Work Environment	1/19/2021
71-13	No Smoking	11/29/2007
71-14	Employee Health and Safety	Prior to 1/1/2010
71-17	Drug-Free Workplace	Prior to 2/25/2014

70-15 Employee Conduct and Ethics

State Parks place a high priority on quality customer service and accomplish this goal, in part, by building positive relationships with park visitors and staff. The key to the delivery of quality service is the positive attitude, teamwork, and professionalism that individual employees and volunteers are expected to display in carrying out their assignments. Volunteers are expected to follow the same standards outlined in this policy as staff including behavior and appearance, ethical standards, state ethics laws and rules, acceptance of gifts, and use of state resources.

70-39 Violence in the Workplace

State Parks is concerned and committed to the safety and health of employees and volunteers and will take all reasonable measures to foster a safe working environment. State Parks will not tolerate violence, intimidating behavior, or threats of violence in the workplace. All reported incidents will be taken seriously. Any employee or volunteer who threatens, harasses, or abuses someone at the workplace may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Per this policy, volunteers are not allowed to carry firearms while representing State Parks.

70-41 Anti-Harassment and Discrimination

To achieve inclusivity and respect in our work environment, State Parks is committed to fostering an environment where employees and volunteers are treated respectfully and are free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to foster and maintain a welcoming, inclusive, professional, and safe workplace. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. We strongly encourage employees and volunteers who believe they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, or retaliation to report violations to any State Parks supervisor, manager, or human resource personnel.

70-44 Criminal Record and Disclosure and Fingerprinting

State Parks require criminal background checks on volunteers who may have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults; or with people who will be responsible for collecting or disbursing agency cash or processing credit/debit card transactions. Volunteers will be carefully screened prior to approval. Persons who do not consent to a criminal background check or who refuse to be fingerprinted will not be permitted to volunteer for State Parks. Persons who intentionally make false or misleading statements verbally or in writing regarding their criminal history check shall not be permitted to volunteer.

70-50 Volunteers

State Parks encourage individuals, groups, and organizations to provide volunteer services at parks. Volunteers are authorized to work only on projects which do not interfere with the access to or use of public land or facilities by the public. The use of volunteers is to enhance, supplement, and complement the work of paid employees to improve services to the public; volunteers will not displace or supplant agency employees.

70-52 Respectful Work Environment

State Parks are committed to promoting a positive, healthy, and professional work environment in which all people are treated with respect, civility, and dignity. A truly respectful workplace requires cooperation from every individual, including volunteers. Everyone has a responsibility to set a positive example and behave in a manner that will support others and endeavor to not offend or embarrass. Employees and volunteers are expected to: engage others with an open, collaborative, and cooperative approach; value the diversity of others; recognize the dignity of a person through courteous conduct; be open to learning and developing an understanding of differing social and cultural norms; take responsibility for one's actions; and emphasize positivity and commonality when interacting with others.

71-13 No Smoking

State Parks is a smoke-free agency. In compliance with Chapter 70.160 RCW and the Governor's Executive Order 88-06, State Parks does not permit smoking in State Park facilities, buildings, vessels, or vehicles.

71-14 Employee Health and Safety

State Parks is committed to providing all agency employees and volunteers with a safe and healthy workplace. The prevention of occupational injuries and illnesses shall be always given top priority. It is the responsibility of all agency employees and volunteers to comply with all occupational health and safety regulations and agency procedures established by the Employee Health and Safety Program.

71-17 Drug-free Workplace

State Parks is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive environment for its employees, volunteers, and park visitors. The use of drugs including alcohol, illegal drugs, or the unlawful use of prescription drugs prior to or while on duty, undermines the quality of job performance, may endanger co-workers and visitors, and could bring discredit to the agency. Volunteers must report to work unimpaired from the use of alcohol or drugs and are prohibited from the use and possession of drugs and alcohol in

state vehicles, vessels, or in the workplace. All volunteers representing the state should exercise prudence in consuming alcohol. Any violation of this policy may be considered grounds for termination of volunteer service.

PARK HOSTING

Uniforms

As a Park Host, you will be asked to wear a green vest, and a baseball cap, visor, knit or sun hat with the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission logo, which will identify you as a Park Host to visitors. Please wear your vest and hat with pride and respect while you are on duty and recognize that any time you are wearing these identifying articles of clothing, you and your behavior will be connected to Washington State Parks. A name tag (yours to keep) will also be provided to be worn on your vest.

Benefits

With a 30-day commitment (28 hours per week per site/couple) or a 1-to-2-week commitment in a marine park, you will receive: free camping and hook-ups (where available); a "Host" sign for your campsite; and a baseball cap or visor, vest, and nametag.

Insurance Coverage Medical:

State Parks provides medical industrial insurance for volunteers through the Department of Labor and Industries. By submitting your [Timesheet](#), you will receive the cost of medical treatment needed for a service-related injury or illness. You are NOT covered for loss of employment time due to the injury or illness, nor for a lasting disability or death. If you suffer an on-the-job injury, your supervisor will help you obtain and complete the proper forms to submit for processing.

Tort Liability:

As a Park Host, you are acting as an agent of State Parks. Therefore, when you are acting within the accepted limits and scope of your assigned job responsibilities, State Parks can choose to assume responsibility for tort liability claims on your behalf. All situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Of course, any tort claim resulting from criminal activity or gross misconduct on a volunteer's part will not be covered by the agency or state.

Personal Property:

A volunteer's personal belongings are not covered by State Parks. It is advisable that you carry your own insurance to cover damage to personal belongings which may occur because of natural disasters such as storms, ice, fire, flooding, high winds, etc.

Vehicle Insurance:

You will be asked to show proof of vehicle insurance if you use your own vehicle on the job. If special equipment or tools are required to perform your volunteer duties, you will be issued what you need and trained in their use. State Parks equipment is not to be used for your personal use. It also is not recommended that you use your personal equipment to perform your volunteer duties. If you do, State Parks are not responsible for damage, replacement, or repair to such equipment.

Criminal Background Checks

Park Hosts and others staying in the host site are required to have state and federal background checks in accordance with [RCW 79A.05.030\(10\)](#). As a volunteer, you will be acting as an agent of State Parks. Host positions often have access to money or unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. Background checks are good for three years. Updated background checks will be handled internally and do not require fingerprinting again. After initial approval, background checks are required every three years. Hosts shall report any arrests or court ordered sanctions that occur during their volunteer service that may affect their status as an approved host to the Volunteer Program or assigned supervisor or Area Manager within 24 hours or prior to your next scheduled shift, whichever occurs first.

BEING A PARK HOST

As a host, you will represent Washington State Parks by greeting visitors and helping set the tone for a pleasant stay. Hosts assist park staff and perform a range of duties that vary depending on the park and location of the host assignment

Host Duties

Camper registration duties

- Directing campers to vacant sites
- Reminding campers to register at booth or self-registration stations
- Assisting Park staff in redirecting traffic if the camp area is full
- Posting "Camp Area Full" sign
- Selling or letting registration personnel know who needs firewood

- Keeping track of campers and number of nights in park
- Filling out registration sheet
- Pulling old tags off campsite posts
- Under direct supervision, assisting park staff with camper reservations

Light maintenance duties

- Checking and moving sprinklers
- Checking traffic meters
- Opening and/or closing park gates or other facilities
- Putting up and/or taking down flags
- Moving or cleaning up around garbage cans
- Raking or sweeping gravel
- Sweeping cobwebs off buildings
- Straightening site posts
- Keeping bulletin board information up to date
- Hosing down buildings and signs
- Pruning shrubs and trees
- Trimming or weeding grass
- Minor repairs to picnic tables, buildings, ramps and docks
- Checking kitchen facilities; opening shelters; posting Group Reservation signs
- Fixing fences

HOST TYPES

CAMPGROUNDS

Hosts in campgrounds greet campers, answer questions, and perform light maintenance particular to the park. This may include litter pick-up, raking campsites, or lawn mowing. Hosts may assist with other projects based on park needs and the skills and interest of the host.

RETREAT CENTERS

Retreat centers are rustic lodges and cabins, which are used for school field trips and group retreats. Hosts at retreat centers assist visitors with check-in, logistics, and use of facilities. Hosts may also perform light maintenance duties around the facility.

INTERPRETIVE CENTERS

Hosts at interpretive centers, museums and lighthouses may assist park staff with interpretive programs, give tours, work in gift shops, and open and close facilities.

MARINE PARKS

Hosts at marine parks assist boaters as they enter the marine park area, inform them about park facilities and moorage, alert boaters of weather conditions, and let visitors know about unique areas of the park to explore. Unlike other host assignments, hosts at marine parks are required to stay for a minimum of one to two weeks, depending on the location.

Host Expectations

While on assignment, hosts are important public-facing representatives of State Parks. Hosts provide customer service to park visitors, campers, and all members of the public.

Hosts play a crucial role in helping make Washington's state parks system a welcoming place for visitors from across the state, country, and even the world. Therefore, hosts must comply with requirements and expectations outlined in the [Host Agreement](#) and [State Park](#) rules.

Some of the requirements from the Host Agreement are stated below.

Hosts are required to wear the State Parks-provided volunteer vest and name tag while performing your host duties.

Hosts shall conduct themselves in an orderly manner so as not to disrupt other campers, park visitors or park staff.

Personal vehicles must be free of any decal, marking, or sticker displaying or depicting obscenity or obscene content.

Hosts are not permitted to carry firearms or other weapons while on duty or occupying the host site.

While performing host duties, no smoking is permitted and no alcoholic beverages shall be consumed, nor shall the evidence of alcohol previously consumed be evident during host duty hours.

All hosts are expected to maintain clean, orderly campsites.

Hosts may not make alterations, additions, or improvements to the Host Site without prior written approval from the park manager.

Vehicle maintenance work or vehicle washing are prohibited at the Host Site.

Only house pets are permitted, and these pets shall be leashed or under physical restraint at all times and comply with state park pet policies.

Please refer to your Host Agreement and applicable State Parks volunteer policies and reach out to your assigned supervisor if you have any questions.

Host Stay Limits

Host assignments are temporary and not intended as semi-permanent homes for individuals in state park campgrounds or create an expectation of future hosting assignments. Per WAC 352-32-285, "Continuous occupancy of facilities by the same person or persons...shall be limited to thirty consecutive nights, unless otherwise approved by the director or designee."

The intent is to schedule hosts for a minimum of one (1) month. Unlike other hosts, marine hosts are required to commit to a minimum of 1-2 weeks, depending on the location.

The maximum host assignment shall not exceed three (3) months, consecutively, at one park.

After an assignment at a park, hosts must vacate that park for a minimum of two (2) months prior to returning for a host opportunity at that same park.

Hosts may not serve more than six (6) months in the same park management area within one year's time.

Returning hosts may only return to the same park during the same specific window of time up to three (3) years in a row. After that time, hosts must leave and not host at that park for a full year before returning. They are, however, welcome to host at other Washington State Parks during this time. This requirement went into effect January 1, 2022.

HOST DO'S & DON'TS

DO

- Introduce yourself and your role as a volunteer.
- Be a good listener.
- Be polite and friendly, with a desire to be helpful.
- Be positive about the park, staff, and rules.
- Be a good neighbor. Set a good example by obeying the park rules yourself.
- Be familiar with park rules and regulations so you can explain them when asked or when you see a violation. Report it to a ranger.
- Give out accurate information. If you can't answer a question, check with park staff or refer the visitor to the Information Center. (360-902-8844)
- Refer campers with complaints to the park manager or your supervisor.
- Wave as you walk by and SMILE!

DON'T

- Don't enforce rules. Report concerns to your supervisor.
- Don't argue with or scold visitors.
- Don't be harsh, sharp, abrupt, hurried, or impatient.
- Don't offer information unless it is helpful or appropriate to do so in the context of the conversation.
- Keep your tone conversational and friendly rather than "trying to educate" which can be experienced as condescending.
- Respect campers' privacy and don't intrude unless it is necessary.
- Don't be the park bartender-use common sense and discretion when consuming alcohol during off-duty hours. Remember you are representing the park while you are occupying the host site.

THE MORE YOU LEARN

The more you learn, the more confident you'll feel as you perform your host duties and the more helpful you can be to park visitors. Don't expect to know the answer to every question. Tell the visitor you'll try to find the answer and get back to them.

Upon the start of your hosting, be sure to ask your supervisor for the Camp Host Binder. You will find the answers to many questions within this binder. The binder will have a copy of this guide, a park map, and a variety of information about the different programs, services, and facilities State Parks have to offer. If you cannot find an answer in your host binder, check with your supervisor. Please remember to return this binder at the end of your hosting service so it is available for the next host. Copies of brochures may be available for distribution at your park. Check with your supervisor for availability or you may obtain copies by calling the Information Center (360) 902-8844 or Volunteer Programs at (360) 902-8583.

If visitors would like additional information beyond what you can provide (such as campsite availability in other parks), you may refer them to the State Parks Information Center at (360) 902-8844 (or Telephone Relay Service for the hearing impaired: 1-800-833-6388). The Information Center can provide current information about campsite availability, camping rates, or amenities of a specific park.

EVALUATING YOUR HOST EXPERIENCE

As a volunteer host serving in Washington State Parks, you will be asked to evaluate your hosting experience by completing an online survey. This survey gives you the

opportunity to share your experience of park staff and facilities, plus comment on additional training or information needed to assist you in the performance of your duties.

We appreciate your honest assessment of your experience to help us identify the necessary improvements such as providing additional information or training.

In addition, you should request feedback from your supervisor during and at the end of your host stay. Feedback helps identify the impact of your volunteer experience. It recognizes strengths, accomplishments as well as areas that may have room for improvement.

JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAM

The [Junior Ranger program](#) is a fun way for youth and families to explore Washington's state parks. Designed for youth 4 and up, this self-guided program encourages families to discover the natural and cultural wonders of Washington through fun exploration, games, and creative activities.

As a Host, you may be able to facilitate the Junior Ranger Program in a park. Participants explore the role of the park ranger and what a park is and how it can be enjoyed safely. The program encourages the use of parks in ways that can conserve the resources for others to enjoy.

HANDLING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Most visitors enjoy the use of our state parks without committing any serious violations or disturbances, and most people who do violate park rules will respond to a friendly greeting and education or information on the rules. If you observe visitors breaking the rules after informing or presenting them with verbal information or brochures:

DO NOT ATTEMPT to further resolve or correct the problem. Contact your supervisor and proceed in the following manner:

1. **STAY CALM.** Assess the situation carefully to determine if enforcement is needed and notify park staff. Park rangers have police powers and are specially trained to handle such situations.
2. If park rangers are not available and a serious violation or disturbance is occurring, refer to your Emergency Plan (see Emergencies) for the nearest available police, or **call 911**.

3. Please do not ignore obvious rule violations. Minor or small violations can become serious problems. If in doubt, report activities to your supervisor.
4. **Be a good witness.** Take good notes. Jot down date, time, descriptions, campsite and license plate numbers. Report clear, accurate and concise information to the park ranger. Only report the facts.

PARK RULES AND REGULATIONS (WAC 352.32)

The purpose of the rules is to protect our park resources and visitors. As a host, you will be sharing information about rules with the public. It is important that as a representative of State Parks you set a good example by following all the park rules yourself. Generally, people want to know what the rules are and what behavior is acceptable, but they don't always understand why a rule is required or why compliance is important. Listed below are several rules which park visitors sometimes overlook. Following each rule is a brief explanation of why the rule is necessary, and what you can do as a host too to help inform visitors of the rules. For a complete listing of park [Rules and Regulations](#), you can go to the Washington State Park website.

Park Rangers are trained law enforcement officers and authorized to enforce park rules. Hosts will **NOT** enforce rules. The Host's responsibility is to inform and educate park visitors about rules and regulations. If a visitor refuses or continues to break the rules, contact a park ranger who can take additional steps to gain compliance including issuing an infraction, arrest and/or removal from the park.

REMINDER: ALWAYS make sure the verbal and written information you give visitors is up-to-date, accurate, and provided or approved by the park manager. This may prevent any misunderstandings if a situation or violation should occur. Don't ever be hesitant to let visitors know that you are not sure of a rule. Ask your supervisor, and let the visitor know you will get back to them with the answer if possible.

Pets

In Washington State Parks pets are required to be on a leash no longer than eight feet and be under physical control at all times. Owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets. Animal waste is to be placed in a plastic or paper bag and deposited in garbage cans. Pets are not allowed to disturb the peace and tranquility of a park. Livestock animals (chickens, goats) are not permitted. Horses, llamas, sled dogs or similar animals for recreation are allowed only where designated and posted to specifically permit such activity.

Why the rule? Basically, we don't want pets disturbing other campers' sites, chasing, or killing wildlife, chasing cars, motorcycles, bicycles, or other pets. We must protect people from being unexpectedly startled, attacked, or bitten as they walk by; many people are afraid of dogs. Leashing also keeps animals from getting lost or injured. What can you do? Set a good example. Explain the rules and hand out pet brochures as needed. Report violations to park staff. Pets are also not permitted in park vehicles.

Reserving or "Holding" Campsites

Campers must physically occupy a campsite. Friends and neighbors cannot "hold" a site for a camper who has not arrived in the park. Two exceptions are parks on the Reservation System and parks providing multiple sites. Reservation System information can be found in your host binder.

Why the rule? Fairness- everyone has the same opportunity. What can you do? Know whether your park is on the reservation system or the first-come, first-served system. Provide campers with appropriate information. Report campers who continue to save unoccupied sites.

Extra Vehicles/People per Site

Campsite sizes and parking pads vary from park to park. Regardless of site or pad size, only one CAMPING unit (one RV or travel trailer and vehicle) and a maximum of eight people are allowed per site, unless otherwise authorized by the park manager. Tents are limited to the number that will fit appropriately on the site pad. Park managers have the discretion to determine if one extra vehicle will fit appropriately in the site. All other vehicles must be parked in extra vehicle parking areas or parking lots. All extra vehicles are charged if not towed into the park.

Why the rule? Overloading sites causes unnecessary wear and tear on the facilities and resources. In addition, overcrowding results in excess noise, congested roads, and crowded restrooms. What can you do? Inform visitors of the rules in your park (check with your supervisor), and report non-compliance.

Collection of Firewood

Collecting firewood is prohibited within the park area. Occasional exceptions are at designated beach and park areas with excessive down and dead tree materials. Park managers may issue firewood permits for a small fee so park users may use this excess debris.

Why the rule? Generally, dead wood decomposes and enriches the soil. Beach logs are important to stabilize beach and dune areas and provide habitat for small beach animals.

Also, once dead material is gone, visitors tend to collect/cut living trees and shrubs, which can be unsightly and create dangerous hazards. What can you do? Know what the wood collection policy in your park. Let visitors know where and when they can buy firewood. If it appears they are "scrounging" for wood. Report violators to park staff.

Quiet Hours

The quiet hours established for Washington State Parks are 10:00 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. Noise from stereos, TVs, radios, musical instruments, and loudspeakers are not to carry beyond the visitors' campsite or picnic site unless approved by the park manager. Generators can operate only between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Why the rule? To ensure peace and quiet for all visitors and park employees, and to assist in crowd control in some situations.

What can you do? Remind arriving campers of quiet hours. Report any continuing or excessive loud disturbances to the park staff, particularly if they continue after 10:00 p.m. Do not attempt to contact visitors, especially if suspected drinking or drug use is involved. Report generators operating after 9:00 p.m.

Stay Limits- Campers

New camping stay limits went into effect on Aug. 19, 2024. The maximum length of stay shall be no more than 10 nights in one park within a thirty-day period. Total nights stayed not to exceed 90 days per calendar year in all state parks.

Parks will honor reservations for stays that extend beyond 10 nights, or existing reservations over the new 90-night maximum before Aug. 19.

Starting Aug. 19, visitors will not be permitted to make a reservation for more than 10 nights or to make a new reservation that pushes them beyond the 90-night limit.

Sewage and Gray Water Disposal

Visitors must use designated disposal areas or receptacles when dumping refuse and waste from vehicles and recreational vehicles; use only designated areas when cleaning fish or food, washing clothing or other personal or household articles, or when bathing pets; and use only designated areas when washing vehicle or recreational vehicle. Polluting, contaminating, or dumping any type of waste or refuse including human or animal bodily wastes is not allowed in any stream, river, lake, or other water body running through or adjacent to any park area.

Why the rule? Dumping sewage and wastewater can cause unsightly, smelly, unsanitary conditions which can spread disease. What can you do? Know where waste disposal and dump stations are located. If none are located within the park, find out where the

nearest station is so you can inform visitors. Watch for sewage hoses or sink drain hoses lying on the ground and report any discharge to park staff.

Water

The taking of five gallons of water or more from state park areas for personal or commercial use outside state park boundaries is not permitted except for:

1. Those with signed agreements with state parks for water use
2. Registered campers and overnight moorage visitors.
3. Those people who have paid the trailer dump station or watercraft launch fees when filling fresh water holding tanks in RVs or vessels.

Why the rule? The taking of excessive amounts of domestic water is costly to the parks when metered and negatively affects the water supply for park visitors when the park is on a well. What can you do? You can educate people about the rules, which became effective in February 2007. You can notify the park manager of repeat offenders and provide the park manager with a vehicle description, license number, and any pattern of abuse (day of week, time of day)

Solicitation

Only concessionaires authorized and issued a permit through Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission are allowed to sell goods, food, or firewood within a state park area.

Why the rule? This prevents vendors or merchants from selling and peddling any type of goods within a park area, harassing visitors or leaving leaflets dispersed throughout a park area creating a litter problem.

What can you do? Report solicitors immediately to park staff (get vehicle license if possible). Remove posted advertisement materials from restrooms and bulletin boards and give materials to supervisor.

Alcohol

Alcohol is allowed only in designated campgrounds, picnic areas, or licensed concessions. Kegs or containers larger than two gallons are not permitted without prior written park manager approval. All state laws regarding alcohol apply in Washington State Parks.

Why the rule? To prevent uncontrolled alcohol consumption that may result in dangerous situations and disruptive behavior associated with its abuse. What can you do? Ask your supervisor where alcohol is allowed, and where it is not, and if alcohol is a prevalent problem in your park. Ask what you can do to help. Report the following to your supervisor:

- Minors drinking. Do not attempt to take away liquor or ask minors to leave the park if they have been consuming.
- Unpermitted kegs or two or more-gallon containers filled with beer or liquor. Liquor Board license is not acceptable.
- Rowdy behavior or large gatherings consuming alcohol.
- Drunk drivers/boaters. Get the vehicle/vessel description and license number if possible. Remember to set a good example yourself. Keep open containers at your campsite and please don't promote excessive alcohol consumption with neighbors.

Metal Detectors

Use of [metal detectors](#) is allowed after self-registration and under certain conditions. The use and operation of metal detectors, as well as the removal of small contemporary materials, is permitted within selected state parks. Use is only allowed in specified areas during daylight hours; recreational metal detectorists are requested to consult the park map indicating approved areas prior to detecting. These maps are located on the park bulletin boards; use may not interfere with the recreational activities of other park visitors; and metal detecting devices may not emit a sound audible to other park users. Destruction or disturbance of park facilities, natural features, or historical or archaeological resources is not permitted. Items of historical or archaeological significance (remaining from pioneer or Native American activities) cannot be removed. Such items found must be reported to park personnel, and the area should not be disturbed further. Users must properly dispose of found or recovered trash.

Why the rule? Prevents removal or damage to archaeological or historical resources. Prevents disturbance of other recreating visitors. What can you do? Ask your supervisor if metal detectors are allowed in your park where the activity is permitted and what information to give visitors.

Bicycles

[Bicycles](#), tricycles, rollerblades, skateboards, E-bikes, or similar operator-propelled equipment are allowed in state parks but are restricted to roads and trails. Riders are to obey all regulatory signs, and all devices must be operated in a safe manner.

Why the rule? State Park roadways are state highways, and all rules of the road apply to both motorized and non-motorized vehicles. Unsafe practices create hazards and endanger both the operator and park visitors. What can you do? Ask the park manager if your park has any bicycle-use restrictions or if any trails or areas are closed to riding. If available, you may hand out "Bicycling in Washington State Parks" to visitors with bicycles/tricycles. The brochure has excellent bicycle operation safety tips. Report anyone operating any device in an unsafe manner. Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs) and All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) Some parks have a problem with ORVs and ATVs not properly licensed or equipped, and at times operated by unlicensed drivers. Ask your park

manager if this is a problem at your park and what information or help you can provide to educate visitors.

Wildlife

No person shall intentionally feed, attract, or artificially sustain wildlife in state park areas. The feeding of indigenous wildlife is prohibited in all state park areas unless otherwise posted.

Why the rule? Wildlife can become dependent on human food and retreat from their natural habits. Human food is not easily digestible, and they can become sick, and die. Wildlife can also become aggressive when seeking human food. Campers should secure all food and garbage away from wildlife when not at the site.

SAFETY

Your safety is important! Washington State Parks provides Workers Compensation medical coverage for volunteers who receive job-related injuries. Washington State Parks staff hope all volunteers will have pleasant and injury-free experiences. Here are a few tips to keep you safe while volunteering in our parks:

- Know your physical limitations! Discuss with your supervisor any physical limitations you may have prior to starting your hosting duties. Remember the park variables (size, location, facilities, and use) determine duties, and because of these variables, some parks are much more demanding!
- Use your legs, not your back, when lifting objects!
- Don't operate unfamiliar tools or machinery without training.
- Let your supervisor know if you have any health conditions that staff should be aware of in case of an emergency, i.e., medications, allergies, existing medical conditions.
- Let your supervisor know if you are diabetic, epileptic, or have any other medical problem, plus where you keep your medication. It should be readily accessible.
- Ask your supervisor for gloves, eye protectors, or other protective equipment if needed. We have asked that parks not allow Hosts to use chemicals. State law requires that workers be trained in the use and hazards of various chemicals.
- Dress properly for your tasks. Wear sturdy shoes and proper clothing.
- Attend Park safety meetings

Park and Visitor Safety

As Volunteer Hosts, be aware of potential safety hazards to park visitors or staff and report them to your supervisor.

Examples of safety hazards include:

- Down or exposed wires or faulty electrical box

- Hanging limbs in trees
- Broken sprinkler heads
- Holes in trails or lawns
- Damaged tables or firepits with exposed sharp edges, nails, or re-bar
- Toxic plants—poison oak, ivy, or nightshade
- Burned out lights in restrooms
- Foot bridges, railings, docks with loose boards and raised nail heads
- Bee or wasp nests
- Drugs
- Firearms

Natural safety hazards may include:

- Ocean, lake, rivers and beaches that have no lifeguards. Strong currents, tides or floating logs are all potential hazards.
- Cliffs or steep trails and terrain
- Feeding wildlife in parks is strictly prohibited (WAC 352-32-01001). Rattlesnakes are commonplace in Eastern Washington including our state parks.
- Plants producing berries or mushrooms can be very inviting, but do not ingest anything you don't positively know. Refer questioning visitors to the park manager. Ask your supervisor if the park has hand-outs available on existing hazards within your park to give visitors. Report all vandalism to your supervisor immediately!

Additional Safety Information

Dead Battery

If a camper asks, Hosts are not permitted to “jump start” a dead battery from the state’s vehicle. You may let them know that you could provide a jump pack if you are trained and approved by the park manager. Check with the park manager at the beginning of your stay. You are not obligated to “jump start” a visitor’s vehicle using your personal vehicle—this is your decision and at your own risk.

Tools and Equipment

Parks do not lend tools or equipment to visitors. Park managers are responsible for all park property. Some parks may allow Volunteer Hosts to operate park vehicles after completion of a defensive driving course. Be a defensive driver and obey all park speed limits and rules of the road.

EMERGENCIES

Fortunately, emergencies don’t happen every day; but when you’re faced with one, you need to know what to do. As a Volunteer Host, a visitor may contact you first because of

your location and visibility. You should make every attempt to contact the park ranger first, or if life threatening, call 911 and make sure the park ranger is then notified of the emergency!

The most common types of emergencies in a park are:

- Health or injury/accident
- Disturbances
- Fire (recreational vehicle, building or facility, or forest fire)
- Lost child

To help you determine who and what number to contact in the event of an emergency, Emergency contact numbers should be available in your host binder as well as on bulletin boards, outside the office, and in registration areas. The park manager should also provide you with a copy of the park's emergency plan.

Helpful Tips Before an Emergency Occurs

- Become familiar with your park. Know where specific sites, facilities, and park staff residences are located. Know where the best reception area is for your cell phone. Check with your supervisor on what type of communications will be maintained between the Host and park ranger, i.e., radios, cell phones, or regular check-in with park staff.
- If you are first-aid certified, keep a first-aid kit on hand. You are not obligated to perform first aid or CPR; this is your decision. Remember - Do not administer any type of drugs or provide first-aid beyond the limits of your training or certification!
- If you have an opportunity between hosting commitments in the parks, you may want to enroll in a first aid and CPR course. Check with your supervisor or the local fire department about class availability.
- Ask your supervisor where fire extinguishers, fire caches and first-aid kits are located throughout the park. Staff may request your assistance in bringing these to an emergency scene.
- Always keep a notepad and pen/pencil handy to jot down information. Remember, your safety always comes first.

When an emergency happens:

- STAY CALM—Assess the situation quickly but rationally.
- Contact the park manager, park ranger, or other park staff. Send a bystander, if necessary, to get park personnel.
- Call 911.
- Administer first-aid or CPR ONLY if you are trained and certified and if you choose to do so.
- Never administer any medication to other people.

If Park Staff Is Not Available

If you have any doubt as to the extent of injury or serious illness, CALL 911. Send a bystander, if necessary, to make the call if you cannot leave the scene. Make sure they know the PARK, SITE NUMBER OR AREA, and TYPE OF EMERGENCY.

EXAMPLE: You! Go call 911, _____ State Park, site number 14, there is a possible heart attack...

Disturbances

- Contact the Sheriff and Park Manager/Ranger if there is domestic fighting, thefts, assaults, minors drinking, evidence of drug use, or rowdy behavior. **DO NOT ATTEMPT** to solve the problem yourself! You are not responsible for settling disputes or getting involved in dangerous situations. DO GET license plate numbers and descriptions, if possible, WITHOUT endangering yourself. **REMEMBER - DOMESTIC FIGHTING IS POTENTIALLY THE MOST DANGEROUS SITUATION YOU CAN ENCOUNTER!**
- Direct Law Enforcement to the area. Advise the officer if you noticed drugs, alcohol, weapons, or dogs in the site.
- Let Law Enforcement know if park staff have been notified.

Fire

1. Quickly (but calmly) assess the situation.
2. Contact the Fire Department for RV, facility, or brush/forest fires. The Department of Natural Resources should also be contacted in brush or forest fires. Give accurate location and type of fire.
3. Contact the Park Manager/Ranger.
4. Use caution around RV fires. Keep campers away from propane tanks that may explode.

Lost Child

1. Get an accurate description of the child including name, sex, hair, eye and skin color, height, weight, age, color clothing, and unusual moles, freckles, etc.
2. Ask where and when last seen and if alone or with another person.
3. Contact park staff.
4. Offer searching parents and friends a map of the camp area. Suggest checking play areas, fishing docks, swim beaches, hiking trails and remind them to double check or leave a family member at their campsite in case the child returns.

5. If the child is still missing after a thorough search of the campsite and park (about 30-60 minutes), contact the local sheriff's office and report your information and location. You may want to contact them sooner if the child is very young, last seen at nearby hazards (cliffs, beaches, lake), or darkness is approaching. (Discuss with your park supervisor your specific role before an incident occurs.)
6. Report any foul play at once to law enforcement officials. Follow any instructions they may give to you.
7. Stay in contact with park staff.

In All Situations

1. If outside assistance has been called MAKE SURE someone is at the front gate (and at key locations if in large area) to provide directions to the emergency site.
2. Send a bystander if you are unavailable. Remind them to give clear directions and site number. Ask for volunteers to maintain traffic flow or keep crowds back.
3. Get accurate information and notes to report back to your supervisor. Note names, addresses, phone numbers, identification, vehicle licenses, type of injuries, or damage. Your information will be needed to assist the park staff in filling out an accident report, incident report, or witness statement.
4. After an emergency, if possible, clean up debris or block it off. Please remember to make every attempt to contact park staff, no matter how minor an injury/accident/incident may appear.

Critical Incident Stress Management

The agency has a Critical Incident Intervention Program which addresses the effects of emotional trauma experienced at the workplace. [Policy/Procedure 70-28](#) applies to all employees of the agency, whether full-time, part-time, temporary, or volunteer. A trained Peer Support Team member will be available for staff in the event of a traumatic event. Report any potential traumatic event to your supervisor.