



# Volunteer Handbook

Last revised March 2022

## Welcome

Welcome to Team Knoxville! Volunteering with Visit Knoxville gives you access to events you may have never heard of and allows us to show visitors how our city (that's you!) welcomes folks. Knoxville is a great place to live and work, and our volunteers play a significant role in how that good news spreads. We hope your experiences with us carry through to other parts of your life in a positively impactful way. We believe that volunteering makes an impact on our community from the inside out by influencing you as individuals to lead healthy, fulfilled lives.

## About Visit Knoxville

- Visit Knoxville (Knoxville Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc.) is the official CVB for the City of Knoxville and Knox County.
- Our mission is to accelerate sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business to our community.
- Visit Knoxville is charged with the task of developing an image that will position Knoxville and Knox County as a viable destination for meetings and visitors, and in turn, generate tourism dollars that benefit the local economy.
- Visit Knoxville is governed by a Board of outstanding community leaders who willingly commit their time to nurture our efforts to be an economic development driver for the Knoxville/Knox County area.
- To put some faces to names, visit our [Who We Are page](#).

## Supervision and Support

- **Primary Contact:** Hannah Fuller, Sr. Manager of Convention Services. Hannah has been with Visit Knoxville since February 2021 and oversees the Team Knoxville Volunteer program. Contact Hannah for all policies, questions, time recording, etc. unless otherwise noted.
  - [hfuller@knoxville.org](mailto:hfuller@knoxville.org)
  - Office: 865-342-9166
  - Cell: 865-320-3335 (Text is okay too!)
- **Secondary Contact:** Kelli Gibson, Sr. Director of Convention Services. Kelli has been with Visit Knoxville since 2007 and oversees the convention services team. The convention services team has managed the Team Knoxville Volunteer program since Fall 2020 (previously under the visitor services team).
  - [kgibson@knoxville.org](mailto:kgibson@knoxville.org)
  - Office: 865-342-9106
  - Cell: 865-250-0824
- **Opportunities:** All of our volunteer opportunities are posted on the [Volunteer East Tennessee](#) website. Check out opportunities from other organizations if you are looking for more ways to get involved in the community!
  - For **support** on the Volunteer East Tennessee website, find [this article](#) with solutions.



**Philosophy of Volunteerism:** Volunteers extend the reach of our organization to welcome visitors with warmth and hospitality by providing expert recommendations and offering a helping hand to event organizers. Volunteers bring unique perspectives and experience to share with first timers and other Knoxville locals.

## Code of Ethics

**Build Trust & Credibility** - We gain credibility by adhering to our commitments and displaying honesty and integrity.

**Respect for the Individual** - We all deserve an environment where we are treated with dignity and respect. Visit Knoxville is committed to providing an environment

that is free from discrimination of all types and abusive, offensive, or harassing behavior. Any volunteer who feels harassed or discriminated against must report the incident to the Volunteer Manager. Retaliation against an employee/volunteer for reporting a discrimination or harassment claim is illegal and STRICTLY PROHIBITED, even if no harassment or discrimination occurred.

**Create a Culture of Open & Honest Communication** - Everyone should feel comfortable to speak his or her mind, particularly with respect to ethics concerns. We all benefit tremendously when we exercise the power to prevent mistakes or wrongdoing by asking the right questions at the right times.

## **Disciplinary Action Policy**

Disciplinary actions may entail verbal, written, and suspension of any future volunteer opportunities. All of these actions may not be followed in all instances. Visit Knoxville reserves the right to exercise discretion in discipline. Prior warning is not a requirement for suspension.

**Visit Knoxville reserves the right to take any disciplinary action the Company considers appropriate, including suspension, at any time. In addition to those situations discussed elsewhere in this handbook, listed below are some examples where immediate suspension could result. This list is general in nature and is not intended to be all inclusive:**

- Discourtesy to a customer, provider, or the general public resulting in a complaint or loss of good will
- Refusal or failure to follow directions from management
- Breach of confidentiality relating to employer, employee, customer, or provider information
- Altering, damaging, or destroying Company property or records, or another employee's property
- Dishonesty
- Providing false or misleading information to any Company representative or on any Company records, including timecards, expense reimbursement forms, or similar records
- Fighting or engaging in disorderly conduct on the Company's or a customer's premises
- Violations of any of Visit Knoxville's policies
- Conduct or performance issues of a serious nature
- Failure of a drug or alcohol test

## Drug & Alcohol Policy

The past success and future growth of Visit Knoxville is a direct result of our most important asset: Our people. Consequently, Visit Knoxville is concerned about the use of alcohol, illegal drugs or controlled substances as it affects the workplace and has implemented a Drug Testing Policy effective October 1, 2008.

Use of these substances whether on or off the job can adversely affect a volunteer's work performance, efficiency, judgment, safety and health and therefore seriously impair the volunteer's value to Visit Knoxville.

Furthermore, the use of prescription drugs and/or over-the-counter drugs may affect a volunteer's job performance. Any volunteer who is using prescription and/or over-the-counter drugs that may impair the volunteer's ability to safely perform their job, or affect the safety or well-being of others, should not report for work during the time the volunteer is using the medication.

Proper use of prescriptive drugs directly prescribed to the volunteer is exempt from these restrictions so long as the volunteer is complying with physician orders.

Volunteers are prohibited from the following when reporting for work, while on the job, on Company or customer premises or surrounding areas, or in any vehicle used for Company business:

- The unlawful use, possession, transportation, manufacture, sale, dispensation or other distribution of an illegal or controlled substance or drug paraphernalia
- The unauthorized use, possession, transportation, manufacture, sale, dispensation or other distribution of alcohol
- Being under the influence of alcohol or having a detectable amount of an illegal or controlled substance in the blood or urine ("controlled substance" means a drug or other substance as defined in applicable federal laws on drug abuse prevention)

Any volunteer violating these prohibitions will be subject to suspension of future volunteer opportunities. Any volunteer convicted under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring while on the job, on Company or customer premises, or in any vehicle used for Company business must notify the Company no later than 24 hours after such a conviction. A conviction includes any finding of guilt or plea of no contest and/or imposition of a fine, jail sentence or other penalty.

Drug and alcohol testing will be carried out in compliance with any applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Disciplinary action will be taken for drug-related crimes, regardless of whether they happened during working hours or on a volunteer's own time. We recognize that volunteers suffering from alcohol or drug

dependence can be treated. We encourage any volunteer to seek professional care and counseling prior to any violation of this policy.

## Media Relations Policy

Any request for information by the media is to be referred to the Director of Communications & Social Strategies for review. It is then submitted to the President for approval. Volunteers are **NOT** to make any comments either on or off the record to the media.

## Incident Reporting Procedure

Though we may not be exposed to the same degree of risk as volunteers of other industries, we should still recognize that safety risks are present and take steps to reduce the risk of injury or illness. Safety is everyone's responsibility. In order to guarantee that accidents are avoided whenever possible, we expect our volunteers to refrain from horseplay, careless behavior, and negligent actions.

While working, volunteers must observe safety precautions for their safety and for the safety of others. All work areas must be kept clean, and free of clutter and debris. Any hazards or potentially dangerous conditions must be corrected immediately or reported to the Volunteer Manager and/or the Director of Human Resources.

- Volunteers are required to report any and all injuries of volunteers, employees, customers, vendors, etc. which take place on Visit Knoxville property, or on the site of a Visit Knoxville event, no matter how small, to the Volunteer Manager. An **"Incident Report Form"** will need to be filled out and turned into the Director of Human Resources.

## Protections for Volunteers

Visit Knoxville provides Volunteer Accident Insurance for Covered Accidents.

- Covered Accident – means a sudden, unforeseeable, external event that results, directly and independently of all other causes, in an injury or loss and meets all the following conditions:
  - Occurs while the Covered Person is insured under this Policy;
  - Is not contributed to by: disease, sickness, or mental or bodily infirmity;
  - Is not otherwise excluded under the terms of this Policy.

## Federal Volunteer Protection Act

- The federal [Volunteer Protection Act \(VPA\)](#) provides protection to volunteers of nonprofit organizations and governmental entities for harm caused by their acts or omissions on behalf of the organization or entity. The act does

not require that an emergency declaration be in place for its protections to apply.

- VPA applies to an uncompensated volunteer for acts of ordinary negligence committed within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities. If the volunteer's responsibilities are covered by licensure laws, the volunteer must be properly licensed, certified, or authorized by the appropriate authorities as required by the law in the state in which the harm occurred.
- Protection under VPA does not apply if the volunteer engages in willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual(s) harmed by the volunteer. VPA also does not apply if the volunteer causes harm by operating a motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other vehicle for which the state requires its operator to possess an operator's license or maintain insurance.

## Training & Verification of Hours

- **Gotta Know Knoxville** - Visit Knoxville offers Gotta Know Knoxville walking tours April-October. The GKK tour duration is 2 hours and is free (\$20 value) for active volunteers. This tour covers history, attractions, venues, and retail outlets in the Knoxville area. It is a terrific way to learn the basics of Knoxville if you are new to the area or want to know more! GKK is a great place to start if you are volunteering for an upcoming information table. Check out [www.visitknoxville.com/gotta-know-knoxville](http://www.visitknoxville.com/gotta-know-knoxville) for the upcoming dates.
- **Information Tables** – One of the most common volunteer opportunities with Team Knoxville is an information table assistant. Event organizers (e.g., conferences, tournaments, and festivals) bringing their program to Knoxville will occasionally request one for their attendees to visit and learn more about the city. For information about what to expect when volunteering at an information table, visit this [quick guide](#).
- **Verification** – If you need a verification letter of your volunteer hours, please email Hannah Fuller, [hfuller@knoxville.org](mailto:hfuller@knoxville.org), in advance to have it prepared on the day of your shift.

## Perks/Benefits

- Free admission to our Gotta Know Knoxville walking tour (\$20 value)
- Awesome volunteer t-shirt!
- Inside access to Knoxville's premier events
- Exclusive invitation to the annual Volunteer & Visitors Guide Launch Party, where the top volunteer(s) are formally recognized with a gift



## Volunteer Feedback

- **Annual Volunteer Feedback Survey:** At the end of the year, we will include a survey in the monthly newsletter. Last year's survey will remain active until the new survey is developed, and you can submit a response [here](#).

### Complaint Policy:

Visit Knoxville strives to openly communicate with all volunteers. It is Visit Knoxville's policy to attempt to resolve problems that arise during volunteer involvement quickly and fairly.

No complainant will be retaliated against or treated adversely by reason of initiating a complaint. Each Volunteer Manager and volunteer is encouraged to resolve on-the-job complaints informally in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

To initiate a formal complaint, the volunteer must notify the Volunteer Manager by submitting in writing the following information:

- Name
- Title (Volunteer)
- Date and time of incident
- Description in detail of the nature of the complaint
- The names and positions of all persons alleged to be involved in the complaint
- What actions you are requesting be made to deal with your complaint
- Other supporting material
- Date submitted
- Volunteer's signature

A copy of the written complaint must be forwarded to the Volunteer Manager. If the complaint is against the Volunteer Manager, the volunteer may notify the Director of Human Resources directly.

## Additional Resources

- Follow us on social!
  - Team Knoxville Volunteers on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)
  - Visit Knoxville on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#)
  - Visit Knoxville Sports Commission on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)
- Find some Knoxville gear at our [online store](#) or in person at the [Visitors Center](#).
  - Hint: Come by Tuesday-Thursday or Saturday 12pm-1pm for live music at the [Blue Plate Special!](#)