



# Volunteer Program Policies, Procedures, and Agreement

REVISED 12/25

This document provides an overview of volunteer program expectations at the Morrison Natural History Museum (MNHM). All volunteers must read, understand, initial, and sign; signifying their understanding and agreement. If you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the volunteer program or the expectations outlined in this document, please contact museum staff.

## 2026 MNHM Staff

Contact information, roles, and general schedule/location as they pertain to the volunteer program:

- Museum Education Coordinator - Mary Ann Bonnell
  - Role: Manages daily museum operations and volunteer program.
  - mary.ann@mnhm.org
  - 303-859-8911
  - Th - M (office)
- Deputy Director - Sarah Miller
  - Role: Manages daily museum operations.
  - s.miller@mnhm.org
  - 303-885-6454
  - M - F (office/remote/field)
- Museum Director & Curator - Matthew T. Mossbrucker
  - Role: Manages museum and staff.
  - director@mnhm.org
  - 720-693-1964
  - M- F (remote/office/field/offsite)
- Museum Educator - Doug Hartshorn
  - Role: Manages daily museum operations as delegated by Deputy Director.
  - doug.hartshorn@mnhm.org
  - 303-697-1873
  - T & W (office)

MNHM Hours: Daily, 10AM - 5PM

The museum is closed on New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day

**Volunteer: Keep this page for your reference.**

## I. Volunteer Purpose

- A. Volunteering is a mutually beneficial relationship between MNHM and the volunteer.
  - 1. Museum staff expend time and resources to train and provide access that is otherwise unavailable to the general public.
  - 2. Volunteers gain new skills and insight while donating their time and talent as a service to benefit the mission of the museum.
- B. The primary purpose of volunteers is to support the Museum's mission in some capacity as defined by volunteer roles.
- C. Most volunteer roles require public interaction. Most volunteers must be comfortable engaging with diverse groups of museum visitors.

\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

## II. General Policies

- A. Town of Morrison (ToM) employment policies
  - 1. DEIA Statement
    - a) MNHM is a diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible institution where all staff and volunteers, whatever their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education or disability, feel valued and respected. We are committed to a nondiscriminatory approach and provide equal opportunity in all of our programs and activities. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and ensure that all who are curious have access to our shared natural history.
  - 2. Equal Opportunity Statement
    - a) Selection of individuals for the MNHM's volunteer program is not influenced or affected by race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation or identification, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law or good taste.
  - 3. Volunteering does not lead to compensated employment.
  - 4. Volunteers are not considered employees of the ToM/MNHM for any purpose.
    - a) No health, accident, or workers' compensation benefits are provided.
    - b) Volunteers assume all risks of their personal behavior.
      - (1) Volunteers who elect to participate in activities assume all risk.
      - (2) Possible risks may include, but are not limited to: slips, trips, and falls; working with live animals, working with various powered and non-powered tools, grounds and field work including exposure to weather, insects, wildlife, and dust; fossil preparation including the handling of large boulders, exposure to rock particles, dust, and tools.
      - (3) Volunteers are responsible for utilizing appropriate, provided PPE for their roles including but not limited to nitrile gloves,

surgical masks, HVAC system, eye protection, hearing protection, sunscreen, work gloves, and insect repellent.

(4) Volunteers have the right to refuse direction if they feel the activity is outside of their physical limitations or personal safety.

c) Volunteers who perform duties within the scope of assigned responsibilities are protected from certain types of civil liability by Federal and State of Colorado statutes. Volunteers are not protected from liability for acts performed outside the scope of written policies and procedures, criminal acts, or civil rights violations.

B. Limited Availability of Positions

5. Logistics constrain the amount of volunteers the museum can accommodate at one time. Perspective volunteers will be placed on a waiting list and contacted if positions become available.

C. ToM and MNHM reserve the right to implement and conduct background checks on volunteers for the safety of the program.

\_\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

\_\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

### III. Age Restrictions:

D. Minimum age is 14, without a parent or legal guardian volunteer.

E. Under age 14 permitted, when accompanied by a parent or guardian who is also a MNHM volunteer.

F. Volunteers under age 18 must have written permission of parent or legal guardian.

\_\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

\_\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

### IV. Time Commitment, Scheduling, and Shift Expectations

A. Volunteers are expected to complete training and begin to contribute non-training service hours within six months of acceptance into the program.

B. Volunteers must work a minimum of 8 hours per calendar month.

C. Volunteers self-schedule in advance.

1. Schedules are created by Operations management (Deputy Director or Museum Education Coordinator).

2. Regular schedules: For operational reasons, a predictable, periodic service schedule is preferred over sporadic service hours. If volunteers can commit to a regular day and time of the week 1X/week, 1X every two weeks, or 1X a month, museum staff can improve the volunteer experience by ensuring we are not over or under staffed on any given day.

3. Unscheduled volunteering: Contact Operations management by email, text, or phone if you wish to volunteer if you are not on the schedule.
4. Unscheduled visits: The museum has limited space. Staff have limited time. In general, volunteers stopping by just to “hang out” is discouraged due to space and time constraints.

\_\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

\_\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

## V. Attendance, Absence, and Inactive Status

- G. Once committed to a duty or activity, volunteers are required to communicate late arrivals, early departures, or absences with the Deputy Director or Museum Education Coordinator via email, text, or phone *prior* to their scheduled shift.
- H. Prolonged absence from the museum (more than 90 days) must be communicated with the Deputy Director and/or Museum Education Coordinator via email.
- I. Volunteers with a >90 day absence will receive a check-in email. Failure to respond to the check-in email will result in a non-active status designation.
  1. Volunteers who wish to return to active service may be required to complete refresher training or re-certify, depending on the role and the period of absence.

\_\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

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## VI. Dismissal (Termination)

- J. Participation in the MNHM volunteer program is “At Will” meaning termination of a volunteer can occur for any violation of these policies and procedures without notice.
- K. Volunteers who do not meet Workplace Behavior or Expectations (Section IX) will be dismissed from the program.
- L. In addition to Section IX of this document, violation of the policies and procedures outlined herein may result in dismissal from the volunteer program.
  1. Volunteers are expected to be actively contributing service hours for the museum within six months of acceptance into the program.
  2. Volunteers who do not meet the minimum time requirements in one consecutive 90 day time span will be removed from the volunteer program.
  3. Two unexcused (no call/no show) absences will result in removal from the volunteer program.
  4. Volunteers who do not complete required training for their role may have limited participation and may eventually be dismissed from the volunteer program.

- 5. Volunteers who do not complete certification training may be able to participate in limited aspects of the certified role.
- M. Dismissed volunteers will be notified by email with a copy provided to the Director.
- N. Dismissed volunteers may be eligible to reapply to the volunteer program at their own discretion.

\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

## VI. Science Policy:

- O. Science Policy
  - 1. MNHM operates within a scientific worldview.
  - 2. The museum accepts and embraces modern scientific concepts like biological evolution, extinction, geologic time, and a spherical Earth.
- P. Science Communication Policy
  - 1. The museum recognizes that many people hold beliefs that are not supported by modern science. Staff will treat those with alternative views with respect and without endorsing pseudoscience or antiscience.
  - 2. Volunteers must be comfortable communicating scientific concepts to the general public.
    - a) Should the need arise, volunteers agree to ask staff for assistance understanding scientific concepts.

\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

## VII. Expectations:

- Q. Volunteers are required to abide by MNHM Volunteer Policies and Procedures under penalty of dismissal from the program.
- R. Volunteers are expected to remain current on all museum and volunteer program policies, guidelines, and procedures.
- S. Volunteers are expected to read and respond to email communications (our primary form of communications).
- T. To ensure quality control and personal growth, volunteers are subject to periodic evaluation and constructive feedback.
- U. Volunteers agree to appear for their scheduled shift.
- V. Workplace Behavior:
  - 1. Volunteers are public service ambassadors for MNHM and the Town of Morrison. Volunteers are expected to be friendly, courteous, and represent the museum in a positive, professional, and supportive manner at all times.
  - 2. Smoking, use of marijuana products, use of psilocybin products, illegal drugs, or consumption of alcohol is not permitted while on museum grounds or ToM property.

3. Language should be appropriate for a workplace environment. A respectful volume, tone, and discussion content should be maintained when visitors are on the museum grounds or inside the building.
4. Volunteers are expected to focus on their assigned tasks.
  - a) Use of personal electronic devices must not interfere with any aspect of Museum operations.
  - b) Volunteers must respect staff time and attention. Staff may not be able to participate in casual conversation or provide assignments during museum down time.
  - c) Volunteers are encouraged to engage in non-disruptive personal activities such as reading, art, and homework, when there is quiet time. They can also engage in museum stewardship activities such as light cleaning and groundskeeping.
  - d) Volunteers are not permitted to use museum property and equipment for personal projects and purposes without permission from the Director.
5. Complaints about the behavior of volunteers in the presence of visitors should be reported immediately to staff on duty.
6. Complaints or concerns about interactions between volunteers or volunteers and staff should be immediately brought to the attention of the Director via email.
7. Complaints or concerns about interactions with the Director should be reported to Town of Morrison administration (provide email)

#### W. Uniform

1. Dress Code
  - a) For volunteers interacting with the public:
    - (1) MNHM namebadge
    - (2) MNHM logowear, paleo-coded clothing (t-shirts, hoodies, and shirts with dinosaurs or other ancient life on them), and/or field-coded clothing are ideal.
      - (a) No large non-MNHM logos visible.
    - (3) Closed-toe shoes
    - (4) Hats acceptable (avoid non-MNHM logos)
2. Dress code exemptions:
  - a) Preparators - must wear required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - b) Stewards - may require task-appropriate workwear such as long sleeves, sun protection, hiking shoes, or boots
  - c) Behind-the-scenes crew members such as collections, special projects, and animal care workers may require task-appropriate workwear.
  - d) Some specialty role volunteers
3. Personal hygiene
  - a) We work in close quarters with other volunteers and our guests. Volunteers are expected to:

- b) Use deodorant
- c) Wear clean clothes
- d) Monitor their breath (use gum, mints, or brush your teeth after eating or drinking)
- e) Avoid excessive smells associated with perfumes, cologne, or scented lotion.

\_\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

\_\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

## VIII. Social Media

### A. DO:

- a. Follow MNHM on our various social media channels
- b. Like and comment on MNHM posts, as appropriate
- c. Tag us on your posts that share and support MNHM's mission (ancient life, scientific literacy, critical thinking)
- d. Use good judgment. Your actions and statements have the ability not only to affect yourself, but also MNHM and ToM. Posts on social media may be replicated quickly, be taken out of context, and will remain public for an indeterminate amount of time.

### B. DON'T:

- a. Disclose embargoed information, research findings, or collaborations that have not formally been made public.
- b. Disclose sensitive geographical information such as dig and quarry locations
- c. Tag MNHM in posts that are of a political nature. Your political opinions can be expressed in your individual capacity on your own social media accounts. Avoid the appearance that you are speaking or acting for MNHM in political matters.

### C. INFLUENCERS AT THE MUSEUM:

- a. Social media influencers are required to read and acknowledge a MNHM Videography Request form. Influencers may not identify themselves immediately. If and when they do, refer them to staff for proper orientation.

## IX. Traditional Media

- A. Volunteers are not permitted to speak to media representatives (TV, radio, printed, digital media) on behalf of the Museum or ToM. If you are approached by the media during your shift, immediately defer any media contacts (phone, email, or in person) to staff on duty.

## X. Volunteer Work Environment:

- A. The museum is generally open daily. MNHM is closed on New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve Day, and Christmas Day.

4. The Museum can be closed by the Director for extreme weather conditions (e.g. blizzard) or other unusual circumstances that inhibit safe operation (extended power outage).
  - X. MNHM volunteers work with people of diverse backgrounds and special needs. Volunteers are expected to interact with everyone in a fair and respectful manner.
  - Y. Volunteer activities take place in both indoor and outdoor conditions. Outdoor activities can take place in all weather conditions (heat, cold, rain, snow, wind, etc.).
  - Z. Volunteer activities can require lifting, climbing, reaching, carrying, walking, and standing for extended periods in all environmental conditions, both indoors and outdoors.
  - AA. Volunteers must take responsibility for their own personal safety and those of museum visitors by preventing simple accidents (e.g. drying a liquid spill from a smooth floor) or immediately reporting a hazard and/or broken or missing equipment to museum staff.
- \_\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)
- \_\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

## XII. Volunteer Roles

### BB. Museum Host

1. Host volunteers help greet, orient, and check-in museum guests and non-tour guests. Hosts may also assist with light maintenance and chores as time permits.
2. Training requirements: Orientation, Core, and on-the-job

### CC. Paleontology Interpreter

1. Paleontology Interpreters are trained to provide tailored exhibition tours for guests of all ages and ability levels.
2. Training required: Orientation, successfully complete PI study questions, shadow, staff audit(s). Attendance at in-person PI sessions is strongly recommended.
3. Ongoing training required: tour audits, attend at least one volunteer enrichment annually, remain up-to-date on exhibition updates such as new specimens, signs, and research.

### DD. Museum Steward

1. Museum stewards assist with light maintenance and cleaning inside the museum. Stewards may also help with groundskeeping and Time Trail maintenance.
2. Training requirements: Orientation, chore/project list, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and tool safety.

### EE. Special Projects Volunteer

1. Specialized volunteers serve in a specialized role that is outside of all other roles and duties.

- a) An application must be completed. Special Project volunteer applications are diverted to a wait list for the Director’s consideration.
- b) Standard volunteer training may not apply. A waiver can be issued at the discretion of the Director.
  - (1) Paleontology Technician (Fossil Preparator Lab Volunteer)
    - (a) Preparators engage in duties in the paleontology lab, typically removing rock from fossils. Other duties in support of Collections may also be assigned.
    - (b) Secondary training required (for certification).
  - (2) Collections Assistant
    - (a) Collections Assistants assist Collections management staff with the documentation, preservation, and storage of fossil specimens.
    - (b) Secondary training required.
  - (3) Research Associate
    - (a) An academically-trained or otherwise experienced person who offers seasoned expertise for museum efforts.
    - (b) Research Associates engage in projects that benefit the museum mission.
    - (c) Research Associates will coordinate their activities with the Director.
  - (4) Intern
    - (a) A volunteer engaged in a specific project in support of educational goals.
    - (b) Internships are coordinated with the Director and delegated to appropriate staff.
- 2. Volunteers in training
  - a) Are identified by trainee credentials.
  - b) May shadow staff and trained volunteers in their role.
- 3. Community Service
  - a) This position exists for those who are in need of service hours for legal or academic reasons. Community service volunteers do not need to complete a MNHM application. All inquiries should be diverted to Deputy Director or Museum Education Coordinator for interview and scheduling.

### XIII. Training & Certification

FF. Complete descriptions of volunteer roles and training opportunities will be listed in a separate document entitled, “Volunteer Training Catalog.”

- GG. Training and continuing education are offered at no cost to the volunteers.
- HH. Museum staff offer extensive training and mentorship with continuing education programs to prepare volunteers to perform tasks with skill and confidence.
- II. Volunteers must relay accurate information about the museum's collection and displays, as guided by the latest edition of the "Interpretation Guide."
- JJ. Training Schedule
  - 1. In-person Paleontology Interpreter (PI) training series are offered year-round and are highly recommended for both new and continuing volunteers of all roles.
  - 2. Host and Steward training is offered throughout the year.
  - 3. Collections and Preparator training are offered at the Director's discretion.
  - 4. All volunteers must complete volunteer orientation (slideshow and study questions)
  - 5. Orientation training is completed at the museum and can be scheduled with museum staff.
  - 6. The schedule of certified volunteer trainings will be:
    - a) Emailed to your address on file
    - b) Can be found on the website calendar, mnhm.org (or Google)
    - c) May be arranged and scheduled independently of the website calendar.
  - 7. Enhanced training (lectures, field trips) will be offered periodically. Notice will be sent out:
    - a) Emailed to your address on file
    - b) Website calendar, mnhm.org
- KK. Certification
  - 1. Volunteers will receive certification upon completion of attending training and study questions from the attended training.
  - 2. Certification will include a permanent name badge and a certificate given marking your completion of the program.

\_\_\_\_\_(Volunteer initials here)

\_\_\_\_\_(If Volunteer is under 18 years old, Parent/Legal Guardian initial here)

## XIV. Benefits

- A. Active volunteers enjoy the following MNHM benefits:
  - a. 10% gift shop discount
  - b. Free museum admission for friends and family

# MORRISON NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

## VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to serve as a Volunteer for the Morrison Natural History Museum (MNHM). I have read and understood the volunteer policies and procedures. I agree to abide by these policies and procedures.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Pronouns: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteers under age 18 (Section IV. C.)

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_