MISSISSIPPI Department *of*

MDA&H

ARCHIVES & HISTORY

Volunteer Handbook

William F. Winter Building
200 North Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39201

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A Message from the Director

Dear Volunteer:

History has shown us the positive impact that volunteers have had on our communities, and more specifically, on the work of this department. Volunteers have worked side-by-side with our staff over the years to preserve historic sites, add rare items to our collections, and educate the public about our rich and varied history. In the early twentieth century, a group of civic-minded volunteers lobbied the legislature to establish the Department of Archives and History and to save our most historic building, the Old Capitol, from ruin. Through good times and bad, Mississippians from across the state have worked with us to ensure that our history is saved for future generations.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff, please accept our sincere gratitude for your service to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Sincerely,

H.T. Holmes

Greetings from Volunteer Services

Congratulations on being accepted as an MDAH volunteer! This handbook is given to all MDAH volunteers. At some sites, you will be given an additional site-specific volunteer handbook.

Please do not hesitate to ask your immediate supervisor if you have any questions regarding your volunteer service. If you have any questions about the many volunteer opportunities within our organization, please feel free to contact me at 601.576.6985 or ecoleman@mdah.state.ms.us.

We look forward to our partnership with you and hope you will enjoy learning more about our department — its history, its holdings, and its offerings.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Coleman, CVA
Volunteer Services Coordinator

About MDAH

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History was founded in 1902. It is the second-oldest state department of archives and history in the country. The department comprises five divisions—Administration, Archives and Records Services, Historic Preservation, Historic Properties, and Museum. The department is headquartered in the state-of-the-art William F. Winter Archives and History Building, located at North and Amite streets in downtown Jackson.

To learn more about the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, please follow this link: http://mdah.state.ms.us/admin/about.html.

Mission Statement

A comprehensive historical agency, the department collects, preserves, and provides access to the archival resources of the state, administers museums and historic sites, and oversees statewide programs for historic preservation, government records management, and publications.

MDAH Volunteer Services

Statement of Purpose

Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) volunteers shall partner with MDAH employees to further the mission of the department. Volunteers and employees shall work together to enrich the visitor/client experience and provide visitor/client services vital to the operation of the department. MDAH volunteers are a diverse, knowledgeable, talented, and skilled resource highly valued and appreciated by MDAH staff and the community they serve.

Volunteer Services Policies

- Volunteers must be eighteen years of age. MDAH does not have a junior volunteer program. Exceptions may be granted for youth service groups whose members are fifteen to seventeen years of age. Youth service groups (*i.e.* Boy Scouts, local school group) must be accompanied by adult supervisors.

- Volunteers must serve a minimum of twelve hours per calendar year to remain on active status. Some volunteer positions are continuous service assignments, requiring a set number of hours or scheduled days to fill the volunteer obligation.

- Volunteers must wear badges at all times while performing work for MDAH. Volunteer badges shall remain on MDAH property when not in use.

- Volunteer hours will be tracked by MDAH employees. This information is needed for accreditation, grant proposals, recognition of volunteers, summary of service letters for work or school, and letters of recommendation.

- For active volunteers to participate in MDAH volunteer appreciation activities, MDAH staff who work with volunteers must report each volunteer's annual total hours of service to Volunteer Services at the end of the calendar year. The deadline is January 15 of the following year.

- Beginning July 1, 2010, all direct service MDAH volunteers must sign the MDAH Volunteer-Agency Agreement.

- Liability: Volunteers are considered unpaid employees and therefore are covered under Tort Claims. If a volunteer is hurt while performing volunteer duties, a Tort Claims Form and an Incident Report Form must be completed by an MDAH employee.

- Periodic review and feedback between MDAH employees and volunteers will be conducted to maintain a successful volunteer program.

- If a volunteer violates MDAH policies repeatedly, or fails to represent MDAH in a professional manner, he or she may be dismissed. Other reasons for dismissal may be determined at the discretion of the MDAH director and/or division directors.

Important Information for Volunteers

- When possible, MDAH facilities are handicapped accessible. Service animals are always welcome at MDAH facilities.

  Note: NEVER ask why a visitor/client has a service animal (some people with hidden disabilities utilize service animals). Service animals are working and need to concentrate, so do not handle or engage them in any way.

- MDAH facilities are smoke-free.

- Be mindful of areas designated for eating and drinking. Many of our buildings are under strict guidelines that prohibit food and drink of any kind.

- Undesirable visitors (visitors who are panhandling, threatening, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs)—alert an MDAH staff member or Capitol Police.

- If you witness an accident involving a visitor, notify an MDAH staff member so that proper action may be taken.

- Office equipment (copiers, computers, printers, etc.) is the property of the State of Mississippi and is not available for use by organizations outside the MDAH staff.

Best Practices for Volunteers

Volunteers will sign in and out on the Volunteer Register. It is important that arrival and departure times be recorded.

Volunteers should notify their supervisors in a timely manner if they are unable to work their assigned shift.

Volunteers must wear volunteer badges at all times while performing work for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Volunteer badges shall remain on MDAH property when not in use.

Purses and personal property should be placed in a secure area designated for volunteers.

Volunteers should dress appropriately for the job to which they are assigned. Professional dress is preferred for volunteers who will deal with the public; however, those volunteers who will be working behind the scenes or with special events may need to wear more casual dress (check with supervisor).

Always keep in mind that we are on state property and that we must remain neutral at all times concerning "hot topic" issues such as politics, religion, current events, etc.

Place all communication devices on silent when volunteering for MDAH. If it is necessary to use your communication device while volunteering, please inform your supervisor that you need a break to make your call or text.

Emergencies

- If severe weather/power outage occurs in your area, immediately notify the site director or their designee, State Capitol Police, or security officer assigned to the site. Follow the Emergency Evacuation Procedures as instructed by MDAH staff. Employees and volunteers, as directed, should guide/direct visitors to a designated safe area.

- In case of fire, immediately notify State Capitol Police or law enforcement assigned to the site, then call the site director or designee, and follow the Emergency Evacuation Procedures as instructed by MDAH staff. Employees and volunteers, as directed, should guide/direct visitors to the designated safe place.

- If you are staffing an MDAH phone and receive a bomb threat, immediately notify State Capitol Police or law enforcement assigned to the site, then call the site director or designee, and follow the Emergency Evacuation Procedures as instructed by MDAH staff. Employees and volunteers, as directed, should guide/direct visitors to the designated safe area.

Take notes during the conversation and attempt to obtain the following information:

1. Time the bomb is set to explode
2. Location of the bomb
3. Type of bomb
4. Description of bomb
5. Caller's location

- Pay attention
  - To the voice in an attempt to determine the sex and age of the caller, also any accent the caller may have.
  - Listen for background noises to help identify the caller's location.
  - Does the caller sound nervous, stutter, or is the voice familiar?

How Do I Get Started?

Volunteer candidates are required to complete an application and interview, followed by orientation, training, and placement. When a match is made between the volunteer and the department, the volunteer may be given additional training or asked to complete additional paperwork.

Rewards and Benefits

As a volunteer, you will serve as an ambassador for the Department of Archives and History and represent the state of Mississippi to people from many cultures.

You will have the opportunity to attend continuing education seminars, workshops, lectures, etc.

MDAH will document your service and provide this information at your request.

Active volunteers will be included in volunteer appreciation activities and will receive the quarterly electronic newsletter.

Further, volunteers will receive a 15% discount on most merchandise at the Old Capitol Museum and Eudora Welty House.

Evaluation

Ongoing communication is a major component to a successful volunteer program. Periodically, you will be asked to provide information to us with the purpose of enhancing volunteer training and assessing your satisfaction level as a volunteer. You may be asked to evaluate your own work. Later, your supervisor may conduct an evaluation so that our volunteer program can better meet needs and challenges as they occur.

Volunteer Job Opportunities

Please click http://volunteer.mdah.state.ms.us/ to view the volunteer positions for which we are currently recruiting.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History
Volunteer-Agency Agreement

The work of volunteers is critical to the Department of Archives and History. It is essential for volunteers and staff to clearly understand each other's roles in order to effectively conduct the work of the Department. *This agreement, to be signed by the volunteer and an agency representative, spells out the responsibilities of each party.*

AGENCY:
We, the _____Section/Division of MDAH, agree to accept the services of _____ beginning _____, with the following understanding:

- Staff will provide the necessary information, training, and assistance for the volunteer to meet the responsibilities of the position.
- Staff will provide supervisory support and feedback (evaluation) on the volunteer's performance, as needed.
- Staff will acknowledge the individual skills and knowledge of each volunteer and adjust the requirements, within reasonable parameters as deemed by staff, and as time allows.
- Staff will accept the volunteer's wish not to fulfill a volunteer assignment that the volunteer feels may be inappropriate, unsafe, or unacceptable.
- Staff will recognize the partnership with the volunteer as one that helps fulfill the mission of MDAH.

VOLUNTEER:
I, _____ (please print) agree to serve as a volunteer and commit to the following:

- To perform my volunteer duties to the best of my abilities (as detailed by the volunteer job description to which I have been assigned)
- To meet the time requirements — always providing adequate notice when unable to make assignment
- To accept supervision, abide by MDAH policies and procedures, participate in record-keeping requirements, and respect confidentiality rules governing my volunteer assignment
- To seek help in a timely manner when problems arise that need staff assistance
- To attend agency-supplied training that staff deems necessary
- To act at all times as a conscientious member of the team
- To understand that when using my personal vehicle for MDAH volunteer service, I must have a valid driver's license and proof of personal automobile liability insurance. I understand that MDAH will not be held responsible or liable for any traffic violations or accidents while on MDAH volunteer-related tasks.
- To understand that to remain on active status, I must serve a minimum of twelve hours per calendar year.

AGREED to:
*Volunteer: _____ Agency Representative: _____
**Signature acknowledges receipt of Volunteer Handbook by volunteer*

Date: _____ Date: _____

Mississippi Department of Archives and History
Contact Information
mdah.state.ms.us

Administration and Archives and Records Services Division
Physical address:
200 North Street
Jackson, MS 39201
601-576-6850
Administration:
http://mdah.state.ms.us/admin/about.html
Archives and Records Services:
http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/index.php

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205

Historic Preservation Division
Charlotte Capers Building
100 South State Street
Jackson, MS 39201
601-576-6940
http://mdah.state.ms.us/hpres/index.php

Historic Properties Division
Grand Village of the Natchez Indians
400 Jefferson Davis Blvd.
Natchez, MS 39120
601-446-6502
http://mdah.state.ms.us/hprop/gvni.html

Historic Jefferson College
P. O. Box 700
Washington, MS 39190
601-442-2901
http://mdah.state.ms.us/hprop/hjc.html

Winterville Mounds
2415 Highway 1 North
Greenville, MS 38703
662-334-4684
http://mdah.state.ms.us/hprop/winterville.html

Museum Division
929 High Street
Jackson, MS 39202
601-576-6800
Outreach Services:
http://mdah.state.ms.us/museum/outreach.php
Museum of Mississippi History:
http://mdah.state.ms.us/museum/index.php

* Send all Museum Division mail to
P.O. Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205

Old Capitol Museum
100 South State Street
Jackson, MS 39201
601-576-6920
www.oldcapitolmuseum.com

Governor's Mansion
300 East Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39201
601-359-6421
http://mdah.state.ms.us/museum/mansion.html

Manship House Museum
420 East Fortification Street
Jackson, MS 39202
601-961-4724
www.manshiphouse.com

Eudora Welty House
1119 Pinehurst Street
Jackson, MS 39202
601-353-7762
www.eudoraweltyhouse.com

Mississippi Historical Society
P.O. Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205
601-576-6849
http://mdah.state.ms.us/admin/mhistsoc.html