

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY W.K. KELLOGG BIOLOGICAL STATION VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Welcome to the W.K. Kellogg Biological Station (KBS)! We thank you for your interest in wanting to join our team. We welcome the skills and expertise you bring, and are grateful and appreciative of your commitment.

This Guidelines describes our policies pertaining to health, safety, and business practices. It is our hope that this Guidelines will give you a sense of what you can expect by way of support. Welcome aboard!

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the W.K. Kellogg Biological Station is to increase our understanding of natural and managed ecosystems and their linkages to society.

This entails three main integrative activities:

- Promote and support multi-disciplinary research in ecology, agriculture, natural resources and the environment across the continuum of basic to applied research.
- Provide MSU students with inquiry-based educational opportunities in ecology, agriculture, natural resources, and the environment.
- Provide outreach programs that bring KBS expertise to bear on environmental issues of public importance.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteers have the right to:

- Be treated as individuals whose time and input are valued
- Be given a well-defined volunteer job description that outlines specific duties and assignments, along with clear expectations
- Be given a dedicated, safe workspace
- Receive training and ongoing education
- Know as much as possible about the organization they serve
- Be given the opportunity for varied experiences and be respected for their skills, dignity, and individual wishes, which KBS will do its best to meet
- Consult with staff and be kept informed of possible changes
- Apply the KBS equal opportunities policy
- Have protection from liability, harassment, and other workplace concerns

Likewise, volunteers have the responsibility to:

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- Complete a volunteer application prior to participation in any of the KBS activities or events and sign a [background check](#), consent form and a media release form prior to any participation as a volunteer.
- Interview with a KBS staff member or a designated volunteer.
- Follow KBS's procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities, to the best of their ability according to duties and assignments as outlined in the job description.
- Maintain confidential information of the organization and to its clients. Any proprietary information obtained while volunteering at KBS will be held in confidence and used only for the purpose of executing your duties or advancing the interests of KBS.
- Volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.
- Meet the time commitments and standards that have been mutually agreed to and give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible.
- Represent the organization well to the public.
- Accept the guidance and decisions of staff.
- Participate in orientation and training.
- Attend unit trainings appropriate for their assignment(s).
- Contribute a minimum of 20 volunteer hours per year. (We do recognize individual circumstances and availability change from year to year).
- Keep volunteer information and emergency contact information updated.
- Keep informed of changes in the area(s) or units(s) where they are volunteering.

Addressing Volunteer Concerns: We believe the best way to handle any misunderstandings is to communicate honestly about them as soon as they happen. We believe that good communication among all volunteers and staff will help prevent most concerns from becoming a problem. Any volunteer who is concerned about a work-related issue should discuss the issue with his or her staff mentor. Every attempt will be made to resolve a problem informally through a discussion process.

Contact Information

Volunteers may leave messages for staff in these areas.

Bird Sanctuary:	Phone: (269) 671-2510 Email: birdsanctuary@kbs.msu.edu
Kellogg Farm:	Phone: (269) 2509 Email: kelloggfarm@kbs.msu.edu
Kellogg Forest:	Phone: (269) 671-4597 Email: kelloggforest@kbs.msu.edu
Manor House:	Phone: (269) 671-2160 Email: manorhouse@kbs.msu.edu
Volunteer Coordinator:	Phone: (269) 672-2263 Email: volunteers@kbs.msu.edu

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Checking In: Check in with the unit mentor upon arrival and record your volunteer hours. This is so we can account for volunteers on site.

Time Sheets: All volunteers must record the hours volunteered, using KBS's official time sheets. Your mentor will review this during orientation. Time sheets are posted in different locations at each unit.

Name Tags: Please wear your name tag while on site. This raises the visibility of your contributions and helps us all get to know each other more quickly.

Attendance: Volunteers who sign up to participate in activities, but do not show without just cause will be asked to leave, pending a review by the unit mentor.

Attire: Volunteers must dress appropriately at all times and should reflect, to the extent possible, the same manner of attire as paid staff.

Personal Information: The personal safety of our volunteers is important to us. To that end, we will not release a volunteer's phone number, age or other personal information to anyone outside our organization or to any other volunteer without that volunteer's written permission to do so.

Personal Belongings: Volunteers working at KBS units should lock personal belongings in their vehicles.

Volunteer Recruitment and Training: We recruit volunteers throughout the year, but most volunteer opportunities occur in the spring, summer and fall months.

In-service Training: Various educational programs are offered to increase volunteer knowledge about KBS, MSU, W.K. Kellogg and the environment.

Unit Trainings: Volunteer training is offered in the spring. Different units will require additional training. Training sessions typically last between two to three hours.

Job Shadow: All tour guides and Manor House docents are offered an opportunity to shadow other guides. Shadowing allows all new volunteers to observe volunteer-guided tours and become better acquainted with subject matter prior to leading their first scheduled tour group.

KBS Seminars and Workshops: Kellogg Biological Station programs and workshops are open to volunteers, and volunteers receive free entry and a 10% discount for all programs and merchandise at the W. K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary. You also receive free admission to the Holiday Walk at the Manor House.

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Parking: Free parking is available at all KBS units. Volunteers should park their vehicles in the visitor lots unless otherwise instructed. Overflow parking is located along the exit drive.

If a volunteer is at KBS more than once a week, they need to attain a free parking pass. Volunteers can receive a free parking pass by making an appointment with Rene Wilson, office assistant, by contacting her at rene.wilson@kbs.msu.edu or (269) 671-2349.

Email: The email and Internet access provided by us to volunteers is solely for business purposes. No one may solicit, promote, or advertise any organization, product, or service through the use of our email accounts. Volunteers are not permitted to send email that contains ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything that may be construed to harass or disparage others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religious or political beliefs. If at any point you receive any email you feel is inappropriate for any reason and you believe you have received it in conjunction with your involvement with us, please forward the email and other details about the communication to the volunteer coordinator.

Tax Deductions: Mileage, parking, and training expenses are tax-deductible for volunteers who itemize on their tax returns. These items add up, especially if you volunteer for several organizations. Keeping track of your trips is easily done with a small calendar kept in your car. Time sheets are another record that will be helpful. Mileage time sheets are available through Misty Klotz, the volunteer coordinator, or on the KBS website: www.kbs.msu.edu.

Fundraising: Volunteers may encourage donations for KBS at any time. All correspondence should be handled through KBS to keep our books in order and eliminate any miscommunication. Please contact Sarah Carroll, development and community relations coordinator, at 269-671-2444 (Office), 269-838-8263 (cell), or scarroll@kbs.msu.edu.

Volunteer hour match: You may work for a company that matches the hours you spend volunteering by providing donations to your favorite organization. Many companies will match an employee's time volunteering with a financial gift to the nonprofit – and the donations help us do important things! **Volunteer Hour Matches should be directed to Sarah Carroll.**

Media Procedures: So that efforts are not duplicated and information is accurate, you must bring any dealings with the media to the attention of Sarah Carroll. Media includes anything printed, broadcast, or televised about KBS. We welcome any contacts or story ideas you may have and ask that you direct them to the Communications and Marketing Assistant, Bethany Bohlen.

Volunteer Recognition: A reception for active volunteers is held every summer. During this event special recognition is given to volunteers who have maintained active status for five, 10, and 15 years and more. Throughout the year the different KBS units also hold events for volunteers who donated their time to specific KBS units and projects.

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Feel free to bring your family to KBS! We welcome you to join us for various public events throughout the year and to walk the many KBS trails. Please leave your pets at home.

KBS COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICE: Volunteer coordinator's office is located on the first floor of the Carriage House. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Phone: (269) 672-2263 Email: volunteers@kbs.msu.edu

VOLUNTEER STATUS

Inactive Volunteers:

- No longer meet active volunteer status criteria of 20 hours of service per year.
- Will be contacted to inquire whether they wish to continue volunteering.
- One year following an individual being moved to inactive status, a volunteer update email will be sent.
 1. If the individual indicates a renewed interest, his or her name will remain on the volunteer mailing list.
 2. If there is not a renewed interest or there is no response within 30 days of the email.

An inactive volunteer may be re-instated to active status by contacting the Community Relations Office and completing a New Volunteer application.

Termination: If a volunteer's performance does not meet appropriate standards, she/he will be given a reasonable opportunity to correct and/or improve performance. The program coordinator, will meet with the assigned staff mentor, and give to the volunteer a statement summarizing the specific problem(s) that warranted the termination action. Possible reasons may include:

- Failure to adhere to volunteer policies and procedures.
- Negative survey results from the public.
- Conduct off duty that would adversely affect the organization.
- Reporting to any event under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Theft of property or funds.
- No call/no show for two events.
- Releasing of confidential information.
- Gross misconduct or insubordination.

Letters of Reference: Volunteers may request a letter of reference or a letter confirming number of hours served from their unit leader or the program coordinator.

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POLICIES

KBS reserves the right to make changes to policies without notice. If you have any questions about these policies, it is your responsibility to get clarification from your staff mentor.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT: Diversity is defined as the state or quality of being different, and as individuals we are all uniquely different. To be an INCLUSIVE campus is to RESPECT and VALUE differences. See [Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives](#)

Sexual harassment: Michigan State University and the Kellogg Biological Station are committed to maintaining a learning and working environment for all volunteers, students, faculty, and staff that is fair, humane, and responsible - an environment that supports career and educational advancement on the basis of job and academic performance. Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and offends the integrity of the University community. It is not tolerated at Michigan State University nor KBS See [MSU University Policy on Relationship Violence & Sexual Misconduct](#)

Americans with disabilities act (ADA): KBS is committed to compliance with the ADA and will make appropriate accommodations when possible. See [MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

Business Documents: Any documents produced by a volunteer during the course of his/her participation are the proprietary property of KBS and, therefore, are not to be copied or transmitted to any other parties by any method, including but not limited to email transmission or physical removal without the prior written consent of the volunteer coordinator.

Health and Safety: All volunteers should be in general good health. Any physical limitation should be noted on the application for volunteer service, so that appropriate work may be selected. It is KBS policy to provide our volunteers with safe equipment, quality materials, and established work procedures and rules to create a safe place to work and volunteer.

For your personal protection, volunteers should use proper lifting methods when moving boxes of files or supplies. A dolly should be used to move heavy items. Use proper ergonomics when sitting at desks or computer terminals. Be aware of the location of the exits from office buildings and keep all exits clear and unobstructed. You must be aware of the location of fire alarms and fire extinguishers in buildings. Report any unsafe conditions so they can be corrected as soon as possible. A volunteer will not be discriminated against for bringing to our attention any unsafe conditions or participating in our safety activities.

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Insurance: MSU staff, students, faculty, and volunteers are covered under the University's general liability policy. In general, this covers bodily injury and property damage that we may cause to others. The general liability insurance certificate also provides evidence of Automobile Liability and Workers Compensation (Michigan). [See MSU Risk Management Office and Insurance; you may contact this office at 517-355-5022 \(phone\), 517-432-3854 \(fax\), or at \[riskmgmt@msu.edu\]\(mailto:riskmgmt@msu.edu\).](#)

Driving: University-owned vehicles may not be used by volunteers. [See MSU Risk Management Office and Insurance.](#)

Smoke Free Campus: MSU and KBS have a [Smoke-Free Policy](#).

MSU Drug and Alcohol Policy: Behavior at any site where individuals on behalf of Michigan State University perform work must be consistent with state and federal laws regarding drug-free workplaces, schools and communities. This policy applies to all MSU facilities, buildings and vehicles and to all KBS Units, Kellogg Forest and Brook Lodge. **Use of alcohol and controlled substances is not permitted on MSU/KBS grounds or in facilities.**