

Mascoutah Historical Society

Volunteers and Interns Policy

Article I – Purpose

The Mascoutah Historical Society is run entirely by volunteers. The purpose of the Volunteers and Interns policy is to ensure fair, consistent, and respectful treatment of volunteers, to establish training procedures and responsibilities, and to establish guidelines for acceptance of interns.

Article II – Training

Volunteers shall receive training as part of their volunteer service with the Mascoutah Historical Society. Training may be tailored to assigned tasks and will include details about the skills and knowledge necessary to perform the assignment, i.e. accessioning, computer data entry, docent activities, exhibit creation.

Volunteer orientation shall provide an overview of the Mascoutah Historical Society, its mission, history, and goals. The orientation shall be designed to provide a framework for volunteering.

Safety training shall be provided to all volunteers who assist at the Heritage Museum. This shall include such information as emergency procedures, first aid provisions, and the importance of reporting any injury that occurs while volunteering. Safety training refresher sessions will occur on a yearly basis.

The President of the Society shall be responsible for initiating the orientation and safety training programs.

Volunteers are urged to ask other staff, officers, and directors if the process of a task is unclear. In addition, volunteers are always encouraged to offer suggestions on any aspect of the Society's operations.

Article III – Volunteer Responsibilities

The following are areas in which the Society uses its volunteers:

- Education
 - Conduct tours of the Heritage Museum and/or Berger-Kiel Log House
 - Walk-ins: sign guest book, give overview of the museum or log house
 - Group tours
 - Educational programs
 - Respond to basic requests for information or historical research from the public via phone, e-mail, written communication, or in-person
 - Assist with Research Request Forms for more complex research questions
 - Identify what we don't have and/or can't help with
 - Assist with the design and creation of exhibits
- Outreach

- Respond to requests for information about the Mascoutah Historical Society in a timely and professional manner.
 - Heritage Museum and Log House location and hours
 - Contact information and website address
 - Membership
 - Making “the pitch”
 - Cost to tour the Heritage Museum
 - How to reserve a time for a special group tour of the Heritage Museum or Berger-Kiel Log House
 - Information about special events
- Accept monetary donations
- Record sales of items in the Gift Shop for proper payment of taxes
- The Society’s Collection
 - Complete a Deed of Gift form to accept an item into the collection
 - Accession, inventory, and store items into the collection
 - Follow accepted standards for the care and maintenance of collection items
 - Enter accessioning information into the database
 - Maintain and reorganize our extensive vertical files as needed
 - Clip and file pertinent articles from the Mascoutah Herald on a weekly basis, including obituaries of local residents
 - Know the locations of storage for various collection items, including books, maps, photographs, newspapers, and files
- Research and Publications
 - Assist visiting researchers
 - Fulfill Research Requests
 - Refer to the listing of our resources to choose best sources of information
 - Refer to subscription computer resources to aid research, i.e. Newspapers.com, Ancestry.com
 - Assist in preparing the Society’s quarterly newsletter for publication and distribution
 - Assist in the preparation of newspaper articles for publication in the Mascoutah Herald
- Administration
 - Know the location of office and cleaning supplies, as well as other equipment
 - Provide support for planning and executing special programs and events
 - Assist with facilities maintenance
 - Participate in the twice-yearly cleaning of the museum
 - “If you see something, say something.”

Article IV – Policies

Youth Volunteers

Any volunteer under the age of 18 must have written consent of a parent or guardian before volunteering. Youth volunteer activities cannot interfere with school attendance. Any volunteer aged 14 or under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Use of Facilities, Property and Equipment

The facilities, grounds, collections and equipment owned by the Mascoutah Historical Society exist for the benefit of our membership and the community at large. Inappropriate use of telephones, computer equipment or systems, e-mail, copy machines could lead to dismissal. Any moveable property belonging to the Society, including all items in the museum collection, shall not be taken off the premises without prior authorization of a member of the Executive Board. All such property must be checked out, inspected upon return, and checked back in.

Schedules and Attendance

Scheduling of volunteer hours shall be arranged among the volunteers. The goal of scheduling is to provide adequate coverage during the regular Heritage Museum hours. Scheduling shall be done as much in advance as possible with adequate knowledge of potential scheduling conflicts. Schedules are flexible and, at their best, shall allow each volunteer to serve at his or her discretion at a time that is convenient.

Volunteers are also needed for special events, including visits by groups arranged at times outside the regular Museum hours, annual visits by school children to the Berger-Kiel Log House, and the annual City Cemetery Walk. Any additional time donated by volunteers is appreciated.

The Society shall work to place volunteers in positions that are best suited to their talents and abilities.

Equality and Discrimination

The Mascoutah Historical Society does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, religion, national origin, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or mental/physical disabilities. The Society is committed to providing volunteers with an environment that is free from discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic shall not be tolerated. Reporting of any such behavior shall follow the procedures outlined in the Society's Code of Ethics policy.

Communication and Confidentiality

Communication with the general public and with the Society's membership is central to pursuing and fulfilling its mission. Volunteers shall assist in reaching this goal by forwarding all requests for information from the press to a member of the Executive Board. Occasionally, in the course of their duties, volunteers may encounter confidential information. This may take the form of programs, fundraising information, donor research, contact lists, financial information, and other forms of data. Any access to this data is given in the strictest confidence and volunteers are expected to repay this trust with their confidentiality.

Conduct

Volunteers shall conduct themselves in accord with the Society's Code of Ethics. Volunteers are representatives of the Society, and should dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

The following are some examples of inappropriate conduct which could lead to dismissal:

- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and/or illegal or unauthorized possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the volunteer environment
- Creating a disturbance on Society premises, at sponsored activities, or in areas which could jeopardize the safety of others
- Violating federal, state, or local safety and health rules
- Accepting payment of any kind (including gifts, cash, discounts, concessions, services or other similar item or benefits for services rendered as part of his or her volunteer service, including payment for speaking engagements or for participation in workshops or similar activities)
- Engaging in political activities during volunteer services

Article V – Interns

The Mascoutah Historical Society shall not provide paid internship programs. Proposals for unpaid internship positions shall be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Board. Such proposals must include the intern's name and contact information, the school name and contact information of the supervisor, and a description of the proposed project. Any student accepted as an intern shall be expected to adhere to all volunteer policies as outlined in Article IV of this document.

The Executive Board retains the right to review and approve any materials resulting from an intern's project before those materials are distributed to the public.

Initial Volunteers and Interns Policy adopted January 8, 2023

Annie Holmes, Secretary