

VOLUNTEERING AT AQUARIUM OF THE BAY: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do you have questions about volunteering at Aquarium of the Bay? Check out the FAQ's below to find the answers to many common questions we receive.

What are the benefits of volunteering at Aquarium of the Bay?

There are many perks that go along with volunteering at the Aquarium including:

- Smiles and thanks of visitors from all over the world;
- On-going professional training;
- First-hand look at behind-the-scenes operations;
- Complimentary "Individual Plus" Aquarium membership;
- Recognition, guest passes and awards for hours served;
- 20% Aquarium gift shop discount;
- Volunteer appreciation events;
- New friendships; and
- Satisfaction knowing you are essential to the success of the Aquarium.

Do I need a science background to volunteer at the Aquarium?

No! What you do need is an interest in marine biology and conservation issues. But there are a wide variety of volunteer roles available, each requiring a different set of skills or experience. For example, if you want to work as an Education Volunteer interpreting our exhibits for our guests, familiarity with marine science or biology is a plus and being comfortable talking with guests is a must. The Volunteer Photographer position, on the other hand, requires experience with photography and social media.

For more information on what the specific requirements are for the various volunteer roles at the Aquarium, please visit

<http://www.aquariumofthebay.org/upload/Volunteer%20Roles.pdf>.

What is the volunteer commitment?

All volunteers at the Aquarium must commit to a minimum of 6 months of volunteering one four-hour or eight-hour shift per week, depending on the department and position. Volunteers must also commit to attending the mandatory volunteer orientation training, as well as department specific training once you are accepted into the program.

Are all volunteer candidates accepted?

While we endeavor to find a match for each applicant, it is not always possible to find a volunteer role that is appropriate for both the applicant and the Aquarium.

I need to complete Community Service hours – can I volunteer at the Aquarium?

Unfortunately, we do not have a volunteer program that offers Community Service hours at this time.

What happens after I submit my volunteer application?

You will be contacted to set up a time for an interview to discuss your interests and the role you are applying for. The interview process also includes a background check.

After I have been accepted into the volunteer program, what is the next step?

The first step in your training as an Aquarium volunteer is attending a mandatory volunteer orientation. Orientations are held every second Tuesday of the month. Orientations last about three hours, during which you will review volunteer policies and procedures, learn general San Francisco Bay ecology, tour the Aquarium, fill out necessary paperwork, and receive your volunteer uniform. You will also pay the volunteer fee at this time (a non-refundable fee of \$50 payable by check or money order to “Aquarium of the Bay”).

Is there a fee to volunteer and what does it cover?

Yes, there is a non-refundable \$50 volunteer fee, which is paid at the Volunteer Orientation training. This fee goes towards defraying the costs of the background check, training materials and uniform.

Where do I park when volunteering at the Aquarium?

Aquarium of the Bay staff and volunteers do not have a designated parking area. Most staff either take public transportation to the Aquarium, park on the street or in one of the many local parking garages. For more information on public transportation and parking, go to <http://www.aquariumofthebay.org/visit.aspx?q=10035>

How do I get started?

If you are interested in volunteering at Aquarium of the Bay, first check out the Volunteer Roles to see what opportunities currently exist at <http://www.aquariumofthebay.org/upload/Volunteer%20Roles.pdf>.

Then, fill out an application, available at <http://www.aquariumofthebay.org/about.aspx?q=10087>.