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CAMP AND SITE HOST OVERVIEW

CAMP HOST INTRODUCTION

Volunteers are integral to Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department and act in many different roles. Volunteer Camp and Site Hosts (Camp Hosts) are a great asset to the Department and offer rewarding opportunities for qualified candidates.

CAMP HOST MISSION

The mission of the volunteer Camp Host program is to increase capacity through volunteer services in partnership with park staff to provide a presence in various campgrounds and park facilities that enhance the safe, educational, and enjoyable experience of park visitors.

OVERVIEW

To be considered for a volunteer Camp Host position with Santa Clara County Parks, candidates must first pass an interview process, and meet the specific availability needs of the park to which they are requesting to be assigned. All volunteer Camp Hosts work under a specific volunteer position description and must pass a Live Scan© background screening process following a conditional offer to a Camp Host position. Orientation and training are provided by the Senior Park Ranger and Senior Park Maintenance Worker (Senior Park Staff), who oversee the day to day operation of Camp Host volunteers. Camp Hosts are individual volunteers that fall under the direction of park personnel who, of their own free will and without compensation or financial gain, contribute goods and services to assist Santa Clara County Parks in the accomplishment of its mission. Volunteers are not considered Santa Clara County employees, nor may they be otherwise be employed by Santa Clara County either part-time or full-time while concurrently serving as a volunteer Camp Host. In the event a Camp Host obtains paid employment with Santa Clara County while concurrently serving their volunteer Camp Host term, they must advise their Senior Park Staff and/or the Volunteer Program office immediately and they shall forfeit their volunteer license agreement and vacate their site within seven days or be subject to payment of site fees.

Hosts are recruited to be visible representatives of County Parks at campgrounds, day-use areas, and other County Park facilities that may require additional human presence and supervision. Camp Hosts are always expected to set an example by exhibiting professional behavior, practicing good housekeeping in and around their host site, and observing all County rules and policies. Please note: smoking is prohibited anywhere on Santa Clara County Park property, including host residences. Camp Hosts are volunteers under a Camp Host Volunteer Service and License Agreement, performing volunteer service that enhances the safe, educational and enjoyable experience of park visitors. Camp Host assignments are temporary and not meant to provide semi-permanent housing or places for individuals to reside while working elsewhere in the community. A clear operational connection must be evident between the duties the host performs and the location of the host site. Duties
include providing information and assistance to park visitors, conducting campground checks, performing basic maintenance tasks, and assisting with interpretive programs and visitor center staffing. Hosts must also be able to activate emergency medical response and may assist Park staff in the event of an emergency. Hosts must not perform any law enforcement duties.

Hosts are to provide their own self-contained recreational vehicle that will serve as their primary place of residence within a designated Camp Host site in a County Park. Other equipment needed to perform volunteer duties may be provided by and at the discretion of park staff.

Camp Hosts are “on-call” to assist other campers and/or visitors at all times of the day or night. Hosts should attempt to greet new campers and visitors, introduce themselves and share information about the campground and the park.

Camp Hosts sites are to be well identified and Host volunteers are required to wear the designated volunteer uniform provided by Santa Clara County Parks while performing volunteer duties.

Each park has unique facilities, features and needs and therefore volunteer Camp Host duties at each host site may vary. On-duty hours will be mutually agreed upon by the Park Senior Staff and the volunteer Camp Host. Prior to assignment, prospective hosts will meet with park staff to ensure hosts can meet expectations.

Below are the Santa Clara County Parks with Camp and Site Host Placements:

- Alviso Marina County Park
- Chitactac Adams Heritage County Park
- Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear County Park
- Hellyer County Park
- Joseph D. Grant County Park
- Martial Cottle Park
- Mt. Madonna County Park
- Sanborn County Park
- Santa Teresa County Park
- Uvas Canyon County Park

The Department is not obligated to accept or retain any person who volunteers his or her services.

PARK ORIENTATION

Camp Hosts will receive an orientation from Park Staff. During orientation staff may issue items to the Camp Host. It is the responsibility of the Camp Host to return these items at the conclusion of his/her stay at the park.
CAMP HOST HOURS SURVEY

Camp Hosts are required to complete a weekly hour’s survey in SCCVolunteer, the County’s online volunteer management site. These surveys must list any volunteer services performed for the reporting period.

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Camp Host volunteers agree to provide a minimum of 20 hours per week of volunteer service in exchange for the complementary use of a Camp Host site with available amenities. Additional service hours may be desirable for sites that have a greater need or for site hosts that have two occupants willing to contribute service hours. Most sites require that hosts commit 3 to 6 months of volunteer service, but alternative appointments may be available. Volunteer Camp Host terms are awarded in increments of three-month terms for up to a year at a time, and for a maximum of three years total. No exceptions will be given to occupancy of a Camp Host site beyond the three-year maximum. Volunteers may wish to apply for a Camp Host site at a different park location at any time, however, a volunteer may not re-apply for the same park location until at least one year of non-occupancy has passed in the interim.

Camp Hosts must be available during times specified by the Park Senior Staff, according to the park needs. Outside jobs shall not interfere with the park’s scheduling needs. Hosts shall not vacate their host site for more than two days during the host commitment period without prior knowledge and approval by the Park Seniors.

Hosts must possess and maintain a valid State-issued vehicle driver’s license, current vehicle registration with the proper Department of Motor Vehicles, current vehicle insurance that meets the minimum insurance requirements set forth by the State of California and eligibility for issuance of a County Driver Permit.

REGISTRATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Hosts must follow the same registration steps as long-term volunteers. Permanently placed Camp Hosts must have read and be familiar with the Camp and Site Host Manual, the Camp and Site Host Position description, and the specific volunteer duties of their host position.

Hosts must complete the following training within 4 months of placement:

- Radio Training (conducted at Park with Park Staff or as part of the Trail Watch Academy)
- Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED Certification (provided by the Parks Volunteer Program office roughly every four months)
- Sexual Harassment Prevention Training (online class through Learning Development – training link provided by the Volunteer Program office)
- County Driver’s Training (online class through Learning Development – training link provided by the Volunteer Program office)
- (Optional) Visitor Services Host training (3-hour course provided approximately every 3 months to volunteer Visitor Center Hosts)
CAMP AND SITE HOST PLACEMENT

New prospective Camp Host volunteers will remain under a temporary “referral” status until they have completed their basic onboarding requirements. Once the background and onboarding process has been approved by the senior park staff and the Volunteer Program Manager or Coordinator, Camp Hosts will be offered an initial 3-month placement in their assigned Camp Host site. Placements may be extended for additional 3-month terms for up to one full year, and up to three years maximum, when the relationship is determined by the park senior staff to be mutually beneficial to the volunteer and to Santa Clara County Parks. All spouses or non-volunteer members of the Camp Host residence over the age of 18 must also undergo Live Scan© background clearance prior to hosts conducting any volunteer service. The volunteer position description and recruitment information for the specific park define the individual volunteer hosts’ duties. The Camp Host Service and License Agreement will list all site occupants and pets (maximum of 2 pets permitted) occupying the site. Any changes to the volunteer Camp Host occupancy must be pre-approved by Senior Park Staff and the Volunteer Program Office. This also applies to hosts returning from a previous Camp Host placement.

Camp Hosts may not perform volunteer duties or reside on-site free of charge without a current volunteer Camp Host Service and License Agreement, Camp Host opportunity placement, and an updated online volunteer profile in SCC Volunteer. Upon expiration or termination of a Camp Host placement, Camp Hosts will no longer be considered volunteers and will thus be charged for the use of the campsite until the site is vacated.

OCCUPANCY

The resident household may include the Camp Host’s spouse, dependent children, or other adults residing with the resident volunteer. The total site occupancy may not exceed 4 people. Hosts may have guests stay for up to 3 days without prior approval from the Park Senior Staff. Guests staying beyond 7 days must be approved by the Park Manager. Overnight guests staying in the resident household are limited to 14 consecutive days.

Occupants are expected to be considerate of other park visitors and campers including monitoring noise levels (radios, televisions, gatherings, etc.) to ensure that fellow residents and park visitors are not disturbed. Hosts are responsible for ensuring that all members of their resident household obey all laws in the residence areas and in the park. Failure to comply may result in the cancellation of the volunteer placement and disciplinary action up to and including termination and dismissal of the volunteer Camp Host.

Hosts are prohibited from conducting any non-park business within the park.

If a designated host site has become uninhabitable for circumstances outside the volunteer’s control, such as a loss of basic services (power, water, septic) and/or natural disaster, the volunteer office may temporarily offer the volunteer an alternate host site at another park until the original site is repaired or until the host can make other residency accommodations, for which the County will not
be held responsible. Depending on the estimated length and circumstance of a temporary relocation, a host may temporarily renegotiate their volunteer service hours.

Camp Hosts are responsible for the security of their own belongings and the County cannot be held responsible for loss of personal property. Camp Hosts must always have the means and the capacity to relocate their motorhome, RV, fifth-wheel, or trailer, in case of emergency.

RESIDENT PETS

Hosts may have a maximum of 2 pets. Pets are prohibited from roaming outside the confines of the housing unit or designated yard areas and all leash rules must be obeyed. No vicious animals or noisy or nuisance pets may be kept in the volunteer residence areas or Camp Host sites. Pets must not be tied up to the exterior of the residence trailer or left unattended outside their residence.

No livestock (horses, cows, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, etc.) is permitted in park residence areas without written permission.

HOST SITES

Hosts may only have one RV and two additional personal or tow-vehicles on site, and the site must always be kept clean and presentable. Only outdoor furniture may be used outside. No additional site amenities (fences, enclosures, sheds, etc.) may be erected without prior Senior Park Staff approval. A storage area may be provided to the Camp Host by Santa Clara County Parks as part of the site amenities.

REIMBURSEMENTS

In lieu of direct reimbursement for expenses, volunteer Camp Hosts will be temporarily provided with the complimentary use of a designated recreational site, along with associated water, electrical, septic, and garbage services, which shall be limited to reasonable and normal use.

To respond to emergencies, telecommunications access is crucial. At sites where cellphone coverage is unavailable, Camp Hosts may be reimbursed a flat rate for the monthly cost of basic local telephone service. Please contact the volunteer program office for the current reimbursement rate.

HANDLING SITUATIONS INSIDE THE PARK

VISITOR CONTACTS

The Camp Host volunteer provides a readily available, hospitable presence for park visitors. Hosts are “on call” with scheduled hours, as designated by the senior park staff based on the needs of the park. Typical visitor contacts include providing information about fees, available camping sites, and park features; handing out park maps and informational brochures; selling firewood; and answering questions that visitors may have.

At no time is a Camp Host to engage in any type of law enforcement. Engagement in law enforcement activities by a Camp Host is grounds for immediate dismissal. All law enforcement-
related problems should be reported to the on-duty Park Ranger, County Communications (Dispatch), or 911.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

If you receive a report of a serious medical emergency or encounter one yourself, call 911 to notify EMS, and then notify the on-duty Park Ranger or County Communications. If you are on-scene, tell the 911 operator and the operator will ask you relevant questions.

With emergencies that occur after park hours, you may be asked to assist in guiding responding EMS personnel. If directed by park staff or the 911 operator, you may need to leave the scene and go to the park entrance to direct responding emergency personnel.

As a volunteer, involve yourself in the situation only to the extent to which you are trained and are confident of your role.

- Be courteous, calm and act in a business-like manner.
- Inspect the scene carefully.
- Be a good witness for responding emergency personnel and note any factors that may have caused the accident.
- Do not enter a dispute with claimant over the cause of the accident.
- Do not reprimand anyone at the scene.
- Do not speculate out loud about the cause of, or responsibility for the accident.
- Do not offer to pay for medical expenses.
- Do not admit responsibility.
- Do not mention insurance.
- Do not discuss the accident with anyone who is not emergency personnel or responding park staff.

**POTENTIAL CRIME SCENES**

If you encounter a potential crime scene, immediately notify the on-duty Park Ranger or County Communications. Then if safe, protect the scene of the crime from disturbance from yourself or others.

**REPORTING MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS**

If you notice a maintenance problem or a potential maintenance problem, contact or leave a note for park maintenance staff. Explain in detail the exact nature of the problem. If the problem requires immediate attention call the appropriate park staff member by phone or radio or contact County Communications (Dispatch).
LOST AND FOUND ITEMS

Lost and found items shall be immediately turned over to the on-duty Park Ranger for processing. Accepting found items from visitors is considered one of the Camp Host’s duties. A Camp Host should not, under any circumstances, retain a lost and found item for their own personal use.

The following information should be included with the item when turned over to Park Staff: name, address, phone # of individual who found the item (if interested in keeping the item after the claim period expires), description of the item, the date, and the location the item was found. If you receive a report of a lost item from a park visitor, write down the person’s name, addresses, phone number, date the item was lost, where they think they may have lost the item, and an accurate description of the item.

RULES, REGULATIONS, AND EXPECTATIONS

- In general, park hours are 8:00 a.m. until sunset daily, except at designated overnight campgrounds. Trails are open for use from sunrise to sunset. All parks are closed to non-campers at sunset.
- Motorists and bicyclists must observe posted speed limits. Vehicles are allowed only on designated roadways and parking areas.
- Dogs and other pets are allowed on leash in designated areas of parks. Please check with the park staff on any pet restrictions that may be in place at your assigned park. Several park locations also offer additional pet amenities such as watering stations and off-leash pet enclosures.
- Garbage and litter must be placed in receptacles.
- Fires are allowed in designated areas only. Additional fire restrictions may be implemented during the summer months or during red-flag watch or warning periods.
- Firearms, air guns, and bow and arrows are prohibited except on ranges specifically established and authorized for target practice.
- Smoking is prohibited in all County Parks.
- Reporting for volunteer duty while under the influence of intoxicants or illegal drugs is grounds for immediate termination of volunteer service. If you are taking prescribed medications that influence your ability to fulfill your volunteer assignment, notify your Park Senior.
- Present a positive attitude and ability to rise above personal disagreements. Always seek to aid and support fellow volunteers and park staff.
- Respect the cultural and ethnic diversity of Santa Clara County and refrain from anything that may be perceived as harassment or discrimination.
- Be dependable and on time for your scheduled volunteer assignments.

Additional information regarding park rules and regulations may be obtained from Park Staff.