



OUTER BANKS  
CONSERVATIONISTS

# **Volunteer Manual**

*Revised March 2025*

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 About Outer Banks Conservationists

*A lighthouse. A farmhouse. Two historic sites. One mission.*

More than just a collection of buildings, the Currituck Beach Lighthouse in Corolla and Island Farm on Roanoke Island invite education and exploration through hands-on experience. From climbing those same spiraling steps the lightkeepers once ascended each day to light the beacon warning ships away from shore, to climbing the narrow steps of an 1840s farmhouse where generations of island families tucked their children into bed, visitors can learn, share, and celebrate life on the Outer Banks as seen through the eyes of those who came before us. Growth and change are inevitable; our saving grace is to preserve those elements that represent the best of times, even the worst of times, to prepare for a better future.

The mission of Outer Banks Conservationists (OBC) is to protect natural, cultural, and historic resources through preservation and conservation of a sense of place, and through public education, interpretation, and outreach, to instill these values in others for the benefit of future generations.

## 1.2 Purpose of this Manual

This manual describes the volunteer policies and practices applied by Outer Banks Conservationists (OBC). Any questions regarding the meaning or application of these policies should be directed to the Finance Officer or Executive Director. This manual applies to all volunteers of OBC. Should any provision in this manual be found to be unenforceable or invalid, such a finding does not invalidate the entire manual, but only that particular provision.

OBC, at its option, may change, delete, suspend or discontinue any part or parts of the policies in this manual at any time without prior notice.

## 1.3 Equal Employment Opportunity

OBC is committed to equal opportunity in employment. OBC actively seeks and employs qualified persons, and administers all personnel policies and practices affecting its volunteers, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, political affiliation, ancestry or other status protected by law. OBC is also committed to providing a workplace free from intimidation, harassment or bias based on any of these grounds. These policies apply to all aspects of employment, including but not limited to recruitment, benefits, wage and salary administration, scheduling, disciplinary action, termination and other programs.

## 1.4 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

OBC fully supports the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and has taken steps to make work facilities barrier-free and accessible as required by state and federal statutes. OBC has identified the essential functions and physical requirements of all distinct jobs at OBC, and will make reasonable adjustments to reasonably accommodate applicants and volunteers with disabilities, absent undue hardship. Volunteers or applicants needing accommodations are encouraged to inform management so that reasonable accommodations can be considered and provided as necessary.

## 1.5 Drug/Alcohol Free Workplace

In order to maintain a safe and productive work environment, OBC prohibits the use, sale, possession or solicitation of illegal drugs and the unauthorized use of alcohol on work premises. OBC will not tolerate a volunteer in the work environment (either on-premises or off-premises, but engaged in OBC business) who is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

## 2. Organization of Staff

*The intent of the organizational structure of Outer Banks Conservationists is to provide clear lines of authority so as to encourage good communication, a collegial work atmosphere, and smooth operations for the benefit of visitors to its various public sites.*

OBC is governed by the Board of Directors. As of the publication of this edition of the Personnel Policy Manual, those members are listed below by name and title:

- John Wilson, President
- Beach Gray, Secretary/Treasurer
- Billy Parker, Director
- Angel Khoury, Director

OBC Year-Round Staff:

- Ladd Bayliss, Executive Director
- Melody Leckie, Finance Officer
- Meghan Agresto, Site Manager, Currituck Beach Lighthouse
- Luis Garcia, Lighthouse Keeper, Currituck Beach Lighthouse
- Terri Meeks, Site Manager, Island Farm
- Victoria Syrowski, Livestock Manager, Island Farm
- Gabe Maready, Farm Steward, Island Farm
- Jane Bailey, Administrative Coordinator, Island Farm

## 3. Volunteer Management

### 3.1 General Volunteer Policy

*The intent of Outer Banks Conservationists' volunteer policy is to recognize and celebrate the contributions of volunteers who enhance the visitor experience at the lighthouse and the farm, and through their generous donation of time, skills, and enthusiasm, add vital support to the non-profit's mission to be good stewards of these historic resources.*

Volunteerism is an essential piece of OBC's successful function. OBC tracks all volunteer hours to better report on the efforts of its volunteers, and the hours it takes to complete various tasks and events. A volunteer's time is highly valued and will be tracked at the current federal rate. As of 2021, the federal government estimates your time spent volunteering to be worth \$28.54 per hour.

When volunteering at one of our sites, volunteers are required to fill out a liability waiver prior to beginning work, and a timesheet at the conclusion of each shift. The Administrative Coordinator or Site Manager will provide volunteers with the necessary forms.

### 3.2 Protocol for Requests

During the course of your volunteerism at Island Farm, the need may arise for requests of supplies or personnel. It is the intention of Outer Banks Conservationists that these requests are identified and fulfilled in a timely manner to ensure efficiency of work and productivity.

If you find, as a volunteer, that you require a specific item or resource to facilitate the completion of (or efficiency of) a task please direct all requests to the Island Farm Site Manager via the Issues and Needs Log on the Employee and Volunteer Homebase webpage. Examples include a dead or precariously-hanging tree near a building, a hole in the ground near the graveyard, a broken fence post, no spoons in the cookhouse, a leaky hose, a need for a new bar of lye soap, or a fresh pair of shears for cutting flowers. The farm operates by prioritizing work tasks based on priority and need. Your request will be identified and catalogued with other ongoing farm requests for maintenance, supplies, or staff resources. It is the Farm's priority that all volunteer's needs are identified, recorded, and met whenever possible. Open lines of communication between staff and volunteers is a key piece of Island Farm's long-term success!

### 3.3 Confidentiality of Volunteer Records

*The intent of Outer Banks Conservationists' policy governing confidentiality is a reflection of the non-profit's respect for volunteers and their expectations for privacy.*

Volunteer records are the property of OBC. All volunteer records are privileged and confidential. The Executive Director and Board of Directors has discretion to determine access to and use of volunteer records at all times.

### 3.4 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

*The intent of Outer Banks Conservationists' policy governing sexual misconduct is to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive work environment for all.*

#### Objective

Outer Banks Conservationists (OBC) is implementing and enforcing this policy to define unlawful workplace harassment and prohibit it in all forms.

#### Scope

Harassment of any volunteer in the workplace by management (including the President, Executive Director and other executives), supervisory personnel, co-workers, volunteers, interns or non volunteers (including contractors and vendors) on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, transgender status and sexual orientation), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status or other characteristic protected by applicable law is a form of discrimination that violates the law and OBC policy.

Unlawful harassment will not be tolerated. All harassment reports will be investigated. If harassment is found to have occurred, remedial action and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

#### Prohibition Against Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

OBC is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes or comments based on the following "protected characteristics" such as an individual's sex, race, color, ethnicity, age, religion or any other legal protected characteristic will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexual discussions or comments and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a. submission to the conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's

- employment;
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a volunteer's work or performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to deliberate, unwelcome touching; suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats; pressure of sexual activity; continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body or physical characteristics; sexually degrading words used towards an individual or to describe an individual; or the display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures. Sexual harassment does not include personal compliments welcomed by the recipient or social interactions or relations freely entered into by volunteers or prospective volunteers.

Any other act of harassment based on a person's protected characteristics that is demeaning to another person or group of persons, undermines the integrity of the employment relationship, or creates a hostile or offensive working environment is strictly prohibited.

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during work-related trips, meetings and social events.

Any volunteer who feels they have experienced or witnessed an incident of sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly report the matter (preferably in writing) to his or her supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or the volunteer believes that the supervisor has caused the harassment, then the volunteer should immediately contact the Executive Director. If the volunteer believes that the Executive Director has caused the harassment, then the volunteer should contact the President of the Board of Directors or any other Director the volunteer feels comfortable reporting their concerns to.

Anyone who becomes aware of perceived harassment or retaliation must immediately report such matters to one of harassment report recipients listed in this policy above. Anyone who receives such a complaint must:

- a. Take all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment or discrimination seriously no matter how minor or who is involved.
- b. Ensure that harassment or inappropriate sexually oriented conduct is immediately reported to the appropriate individual(s).
- c. Take any appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from recurring during and after any investigations or complaints.
- d. Managers and supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate sexual harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such misconduct, are in violation of this policy and subject to discipline.

OBC will investigate the complaint as promptly and confidentially as practical. OBC will take action necessary to correct, prohibit or remedy the harassment, and to protect the volunteer from further harassment.

Complaints of unlawful harassment that are found to be malicious, willful attempts to misrepresent or tarnish the reputation of any individual may be dealt with through appropriate disciplinary action. Retaliation against a volunteer who reports improper conduct in good faith is strictly prohibited.

Any volunteer engaging in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.